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Raising Warriors for Christ

GUEST COLUMN

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By Nicholas – member of the Western Rite Vicariate, a part of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese in America

Against all common sense, Western society is actively at war with both authentic masculinity and authentic femininity. While sex distinctions may drive the “woke” cultural elites to distraction, they are a permanent feature of the human condition. Decades of trying to erase these distinctions has done nothing more than produce weak men, unhappy women, and self-destructive adolescents who can find no place for themselves in a world gone mad.

Fortunately for society as whole, and especially for parents who wish to raise healthy children, the Orthodox Church still defends human nature as created by God – encompassing both sexes equally, yet distinctly. In our currently confused and chaotic society, both young men and women are in need of attention. In this article, however, I want to focus on helping the acute crisis in young men.

First, if we want a better society with better men, we need to raise better sons. In raising my sons, I have always set expectations for them to live up to. Boys need challenges. They need a sense of accomplishment from meeting and overcoming those challenges. They need a sense of their own strength – both physically and spiritually.

Here are some of the expectations I have set for my sons, and for other boys whom I have counseled over the years:

You will die first.

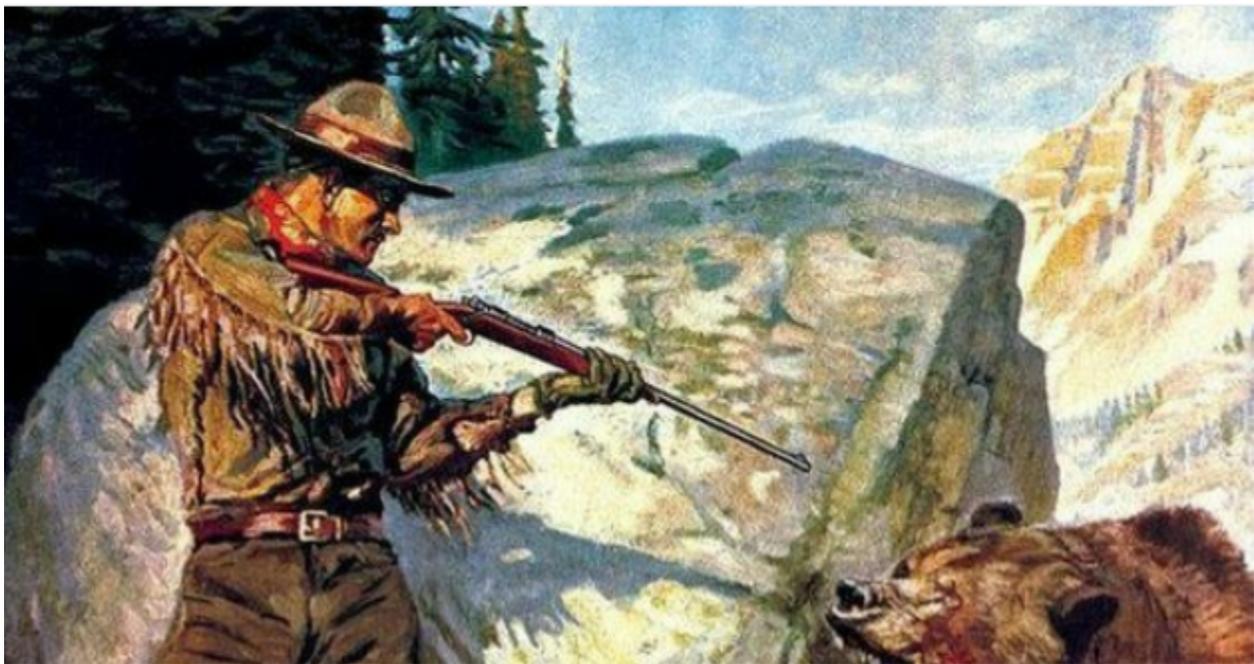
You will eat last.

If a grizzly bear or a pack of wolves attacks your family, you will fight them with your bare hands while your family escapes. Same for a pack of human animals. Whatever the threat – deal with it. Do not come back to us in one piece at the expense of your family. You are a warrior. You. Will. Stand.

Masculine men are born by overcoming adversity and suffering.

Feminine women are preserved by masculine men who protect them from adversity and suffering.

If men get soft, everything crumbles.



Your wife may be an engineer, but in the cold on a rainy night, you will be the one changing the tire on the side of the road. That is your job. Along with all the other dirty, cold, hot, miserable jobs that exist. Be thankful you did not have to give birth to the children, and just get it done.

Get married and have children while you are young. The world will tell you to wait, but they do not have your best interests at heart.

You are the **priest of the home**. Your children will not be Orthodox Christians because of your wife.

They will be Orthodox Christians because you bow before Christ. The father sets the religious tone for his home. You go golfing on Sunday, your kids are lost but for the grace of God. Step up, and be the father they need.

Love your family and always care for them first, before helping others.

Pray with your children.

Take your family to Church every Sunday, even the Sundays that aren't special.

Make sure your boys are acolytes.

Kiss the icons. Kiss the hand of the priest. Prostrate yourself before God in front of your children. He is worthy of all your devotion.

If you don't like my advice, if you think it is too hard a burden, then take it up with Christ. He made

you a man, and this is what being a man means. You are the protector. The provider. The shield against the world. That is your calling, as well as your salvation and your joy.

When you look for a wife, be aware that women without fathers are often badly damaged emotionally. Be careful. Remember too, that you must be present in the lives of your own daughters or you risk their emotional health. Daughters need fathers every bit as much as sons do.

Above all, remember that *Christ is your King and God*. He is not your buddy. He is Lord of All Creation. You are a warrior in His earthly army – the Church Militant. Keep your mind and heart focused on Him and let His Church guide you.



Everything I have written above runs contrary to the lies pumped incessantly into our culture by those who actively want to transform human nature into something unrecognizable. It is simply a given that every expectation I set for my sons would be labeled “toxic”. There is no place for such archaic thinking in our new “gender neutral” world. Men and women are so interchangeable, in fact, that putting on a dress or getting a spiky haircut is sufficient to change a person’s gender. The insanity of all this is plain to see for anyone not held captive by an insidious, [modern religion](#).

As a father, I am grateful to God for the help of the Orthodox Church in raising my sons. Orthodoxy is an unabashed Patriarchy. The altar is an all male space. My sons get to enter that space as acolytes. They must stand and kneel for long hours. They must learn the services intimately in order to assist the priest. Everyone is watching them as they work. They must stand before God, and all their community, each service, whether they “feel” like doing it that day or not. A duty is a duty, regardless of your emotions. There is pressure. There is pain. There is learning. There is growth. There is becoming a man.

In Church, some women are readers. Some are chanters. Women serve on the parish council, or even head it up. Women are essential to the Orthodox Faith and welcomed in practically every capacity.

except at the altar. That space is reserved for men and boys. In our increasingly confused society, the Orthodox altar might be the last public space reserved exclusively for males. Small wonder that young men outside the Orthodox Church are in such a crisis.

Academics seem to dwell a lot on the topic of women's ordination. In 25 years of Orthodoxy, I have never met an actual lay Orthodox woman who wanted to serve at the altar. My daughters, for example, want no part of it. They do not feel as if they are missing out on anything. They much prefer to sit in a pew and sing while their brothers work.

Orthodoxy has the most beautiful Churches, vestments, liturgies, and hymns of any Christian body. Orthodoxy combines all that with fasting, ascetic discipline, a commitment to holiness, love, unabashed proclamation of timeless truth, and the **protection of the weak**, even at the cost of one's own mortal existence. There are many things worse than physical death. Orthodoxy is the perfect environment in which to raise boys into what one priest recently called examples of "beautiful masculinity".

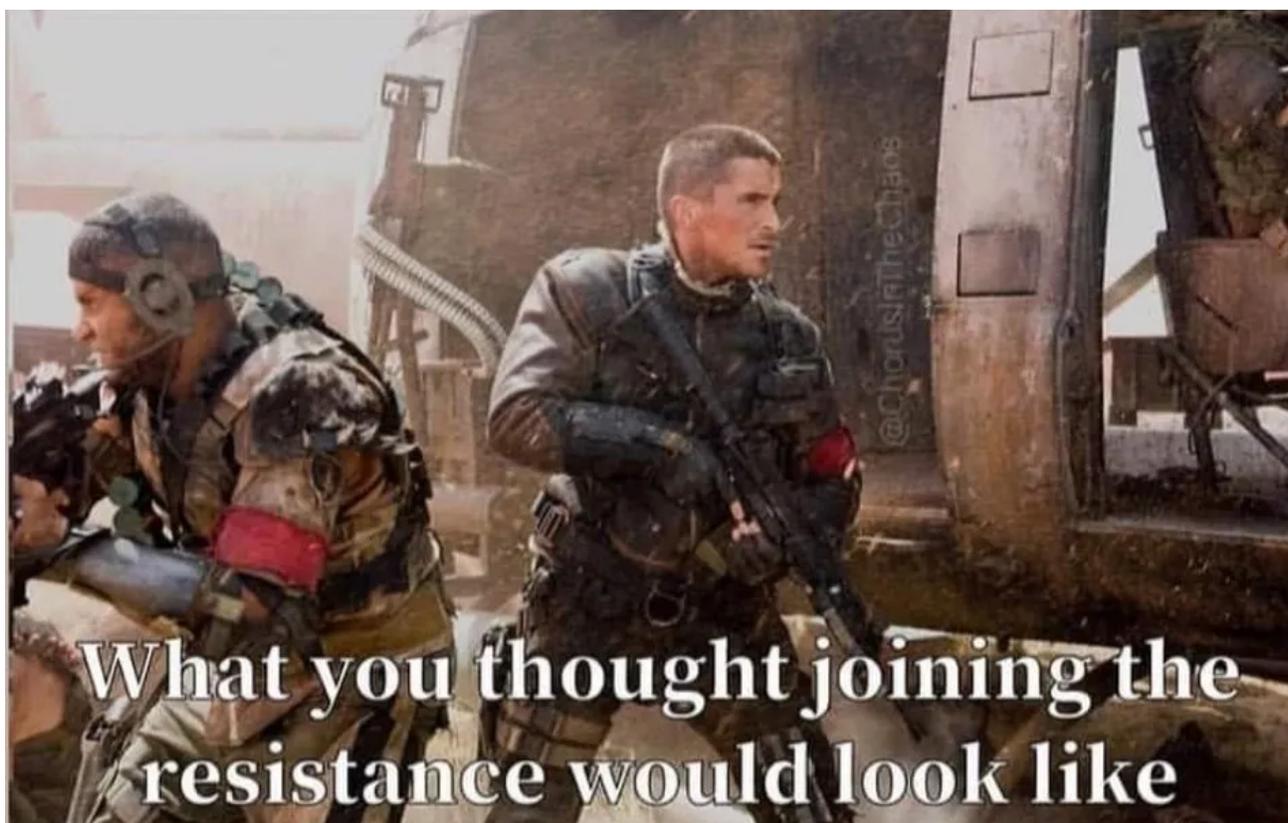
Orthodox is also highly attractive to men searching for all of the things above in a world that provides none of them. Orthodox priests all over the country are reporting that not only is Church attendance up overall, but many of the new people showing up are young men, by themselves, with no previous Christian background. These young men want to learn how to be *real men*, and so have turned to the Orthodox Church to find out how. This trend has even led one priest, Fr. Hans Jacobse, to found an organization called the **St. Paisios Brotherhood** to assist in mentoring and helping these young men.

The Crisis



When interacting with young men who have found Orthodoxy, one is immediately struck by how most want a life that previous generations would have taken for granted – a loving wife, children, a job, a home, a community, and a relationship with God. All the world having slipped into insanity around us, these traditional desires are now "counter cultural". Within the Orthodox Church, these young men find

their aspirations reinforced rather than mocked. It is no wonder more are coming to Orthodoxy by the day.



We should rejoice that Orthodoxy offers a haven for lost and troubled young men, and a source of help to those struggling to be good fathers. But we must also acknowledge that we could be doing some things better. Here are three things, as we close out this article, that we should work on as we raise our young men and attract ever more:

Some of our young people complain they can't find anyone to marry. Some parishes have too many young men. Some too many young women. Sometimes, a young person is the only single member of his/her parish. How can the Church, sprawling across a continent and broken into jurisdictions, help young Orthodox Christians marry within the Church? There are always young people lamenting on social media that they are looking for genuine Orthodox Christian marriage, but can't find it. While monasticism is a good and holy vocation, it is not for everyone. Is there anything we can do to help young Orthodox Christians find each other?

American Orthodoxy needs to do a better job of equipping Orthodox Christians to explain and defend Patriarchy. The Orthodox Church is a Patriarchy, and will never be organized any other way. But why is that? Why are clergy all male? Why does Patriarchy exist? How does Patriarchy defend women, children, and the vulnerable? Why are women and children happier in a Patriarchal society than in the current cultural chaos spawned by feminism? Our society has successfully equated "Patriarchy" with the systematic abuse and oppression of women. In truth, the opposite is the case. It is the absence of protective fathers and husbands that jeopardizes women, not their presence.

Closely related to the previous point, Orthodox must deal with the Fifth Column within our ranks. There are "Orthodox" clerics and academics who openly embrace toxic feminism, Gender Theory, homosexuality, promiscuity, abortion, anti-natalism, and other perversions that have destroyed our society. We have covered quite a number of them in this category about [Leftist infiltration](#) of the Orthodox Church. These [revolutionaries](#) are funded by [big money](#), and often occupy Church [sinecures](#). Too few of us are speaking out about such pernicious influence. We cannot allow struggling men, and women, to get the wrong impression about the Holy Orthodox Church and believe it is the same as the world they are rejecting.

Men are in crisis. They need what only the Orthodox Church, as the fullness of the Christian Faith, can provide. They will keep coming, and we must be ready to receive them, bind up their wounds, and teach them how to be as God intended. We have to do all that, even as we raise our own sons to be faithful warriors for Christ in world that tries to crush their very souls.

Nicholas – member of the Western Rite Vicariate, a part of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese in America

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HERITAGE

The Church and clergy on social media

Any clergyman who participates in discussions on Facebook, Twitter, LiveJournal and other online communities must constantly remember the responsibility that is imposed on him by speaking in a public space. People look at you primarily as priests. The careless and sometimes outrageous statements of individual clergy cast a shadow on the entire Church of God, causing waves of reciprocal discussions in the blogosphere, in which the subject of attacks becomes not so much the author of the lines him-self as the Russian Orthodox Church as a whole. Nobody forbids you to participate in the life of Internet communities and leave your comments in the topics, but it is necessary to act with judgment and discretion.

Anatoly Torkunov
students are bloc

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ANDREY SOROKIN

Raising Warriors for Christ

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