

# Winning the Spiritual Battle

*How the Knights of Columbus can help defeat the Enemy of Christ*



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## Summary: Strengthen the Church, Win the Battle

**H**ere in the United States, we are engaged in a spiritual battle against the Enemy of Christ. We are losing. Consequently, the Enemy is destroying American families and defiling children's souls.

The Enemy is winning by working to eliminate the Strong Father in our society. To defeat it, we must train a great many young men to be strong fathers. That is, men who can lead and protect their families.

The Knights of Columbus can do this. The order can create a "boot camp" that initiates boys into manhood, as well as follow-on courses that teach young men how to be good husbands and strong fathers.

Many of these young men will become practicing Catholics. They will bring their families with them, and strengthen the Church. A strong Church can then defeat the diabolical and win this spiritual battle.





## The Battle: A Spiritual Fight Being Lost

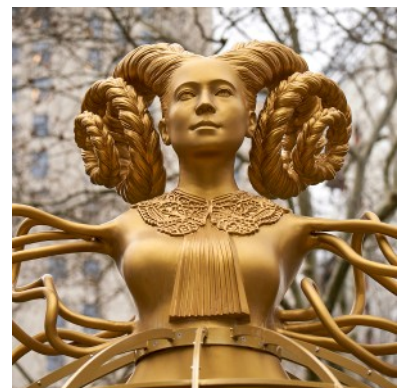
In his 2015 apostolic exhortation *Into The Breach*, Bishop Thomas Olmsted described “*the battle that is raging,*” a “*battle that is wounding our children and families.*”

“*This battle is often hidden,*” he wrote, “*but the battle is real. It is primarily spiritual...*” A decade later, this battle is still raging in our society.

It’s a battle against diabolical forces.

“*The world is under attack by Satan,*” wrote the Bishop. That’s why the battle is primarily spiritual, and often hidden: it’s a battle of divine grace vs. diabolical forces, being fought in our hearts, our minds, and the depths of our souls.

The demonic nature of this attack is revealed in our culture. It’s no coincidence that mainstream fashion, music, art, and architecture now reflect the decadent, the transgressive, the bestial, and the ugly.



## We are losing this spiritual battle.

Right now, we are losing this battle. This is evident in how our society has become dispirited, in debilitating and deadly ways:

- Mental illness has exploded in the US, with one in five teenagers suffering from clinical depression or crippling anxiety. Around half report serious emotional distress.
- “Deaths of despair” from alcohol poisoning, drug overdose, and suicide have doubled since the year 2000. Nearly 200,000 Americans die every year in these ways.



Degeneracy now runs rampant in America. For example:

- Drag Queen Story Hour, at which cross-dressing men read to children at libraries and schools, has become a nationwide nonprofit, with chapters in 17 states.
- The number of students in New Jersey public schools who identify as “non-binary” increased by 4,000% in four years.
- The number of American children aged 6-17 diagnosed with gender dysphoria skyrocketed from 15,000 in 2017 to over 42,000 in 2021.



Pope John Paul II noted that the family is “increasingly menaced by forces of disintegration on both the ideological and practical planes.” His words remain true:

- Ideologically, families here are damaged by the widespread promotion of single parenthood. The US has the world’s highest rate of children in single-parent households.
- Practically, families here are also damaged by the unrestricted use of internet devices. In many American families, cell phone addiction has replaced strong family relationships.

## The Church is weak and in decline.

These diabolical forces are formidable. There is a power, however, that exists to stand against them and prevail: Ecclesia, the Holy Mother Church.

Can the Church defeat them? Not in its current state. Right now, in America, the Church is weak and in decline. Bishop Olmsted noted that between 2000 and 2015, 14 million American Catholics left the faith, and Catholic marriages dropped by almost half.



Since the Bishop wrote his exhortation, things have gotten worse for the Church. It's losing American Catholics at a rapid rate, especially men:

- More people in America are leaving the Church than are leaving any other religious tradition. For every one person who becomes Catholic, eight leave the faith.
- Only one-third of Catholic men attend mass every week.
- Fewer than half strongly agree that it's important for their children to be Catholic.



The Church was once regarded as a place for strong, courageous men. It brought into its service men such as the warrior monks of the Knights Hospitaller, and the former soldier Saint Ignatius of Loyola.

To prevail against the diabolical forces corrupting our society, the Church needs such men now. Until it enlists more of them in its service, its decline will continue, and those forces will gain ground.



## The Enemy: Diabolical, Strategic, and Cunning

**M**any people outside the Church, and even outside Christianity, have come to see, as Bishop Olmsted did, that diabolical forces are at work in the world.

Even the feminist writer Naomi Wolf has perceived what she calls “negative energies,” or “devils,” in our society, “transmitting powers that are bad and dangerous.”

These powers are transmitted in ways that suggest a grand strategy, one created by a cunning mind. This strategy can be summed up as: eliminate the Strong Father.

### The strategy: eliminate the Strong Father

Jesus spoke of God the Father for a reason: the Father represents Order, Authority, and Wisdom. These things are needed for people to thrive, in families and societies alike. A Strong Father is good, because he has the power to provide them.



If you're a malign being, and you want to cut us off from God, you start by eliminating the Strong Father in our families. Our earthly fathers shape our view of God the Father, so if you can make them weak, it's easier to turn us away from Him.

Once you've removed the Strong Father from the household, you can do even more spiritual damage by installing the Devouring Mother as its head.

The Devouring Mother is the opposite of the Strong Father. She is a selfish, controlling woman, estranged from real love. Afraid of being alone, she works to emotionally cripple her own children. That way she thinks, they can never leave her.

### *The Strong Father*



Supports his children with good guidance and healthy boundaries, helping them develop their natural strengths, so they grow up to be independent adults.

### *The Devouring Mother*



Manipulates her children with emotional strokes and pokes, rewarding them if they remain dependent on her, and punishing them if they try to do otherwise.

This diabolical strategy of eliminating the Strong Father is very effective. That's because it sets off a self-perpetuating cycle of family dysfunction:

- In depriving boys of a good paternal role model, and keeping them dependent and insecure, it turns many of them into weak or absent fathers.
- In denying mothers Strong Fathers to support them, it sets them up to become Devouring Mothers, whose daughters follow in their footsteps.

## The tactics: defile children, reverse roles, use media

To achieve its strategic goal of eliminating the Strong Father, the Enemy uses three main tactics:

1. *Defile and distort the souls of children.*

Stifle kids' natural inclinations, and indoctrinate them to make the unnatural seem normal. That way, they'll grow up into twisted, stunted adults, ready for use as vessels of the depraved.

2. *Reverse gender roles and characteristics.*

Feminize men. Disempower them, denigrate them, and discriminate against them. At the same time, masculinize women. Then push these masculinized women into positions of authority.

3. *Employ bureaucracy and mass media.*

Impose this agenda on society using big, impersonal bureaucracies that dehumanize the people they purport to serve, and vast, invasive electronic media that stupefy the people who use them.

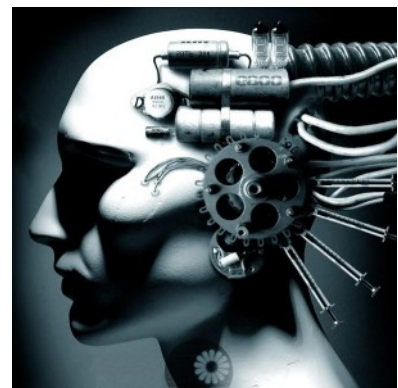


## The World Economic Forum: an unholy “church”

To execute its strategy, the Enemy employs an unholy “church.” If the medieval Church was the original international institution, then the World Economic Forum—the nerve center of Globalism—is its evil modern counterpart.

Globalism is an ideology based on the idea that humanity should not be guided by God in the form of Jesus Christ, but rather controlled by a small group of “gods” in the form of transnational financiers, corporate officers, and bureaucrats.

The globalists who fund the WEF are extremely rich men who lack a spiritual foundation. They worship technology and progress. Many of them subscribe to “transhumanist” schemes to meld man and machine.





They seek to hoard vast amounts of wealth, and in pursuit of that, they run and own:

- Social media companies, with global reach, that cultivate then exploit children's insecurities, and employ algorithms that encourage addictive behavior.
- Multinational pharmaceutical firms that produce artificial hormones, psychoactive drugs, and promote their widespread use by adults and children alike.
- Studios that make, for global markets, shows that promote reversed gender roles, the masculinization of women, and the feminization of men.
- Huge financial firms that have governments illegally import masses of migrants, in order to destabilize societies, raise asset prices, and drive wages down.



Unfortunately for us, the globalists are very good at turning their ill-gotten wealth into political power, so they now dictate government policy throughout the Western world.

## Woke professionals: a false, secular “clergy”

To implement its tactics, the Enemy works through a secular “clergy:” woke professionals. These are the people who run our universities, family courts, public schools, and mental health practices, most of whom adhere to wokeness.

Wokeness is an ideology based on the values of sensitivity, compassion, and equality, taken to unhealthy extremes. In it, sensitivity becomes neurosis, compassion becomes indulgence, and equality becomes inversion.

Its adherents think of themselves as a sort of secular clergy that's uniquely qualified to decide how everyone else should live. Unlike the real clergy of the Catholic priesthood, this false clergy is poorly-educated.



The woke professionals who comprise this false clergy promote a deranged reversal of gender roles and characteristics. According to them:

- Women should be hard and aggressive, while men should be soft and sensitive.
- Women should strive and struggle, while men should prance and primp.
- Men can be women, women can be men, and “transitions” should be normal.

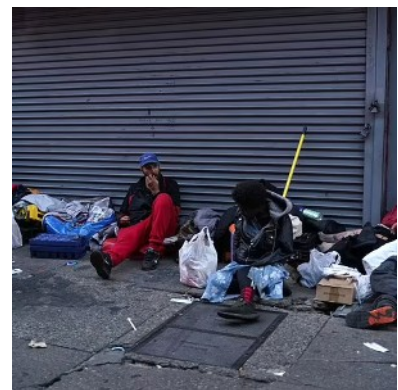


The most dangerous thing about this false clergy is that it regards wokeness as absolute truth. The philosopher Ken Wilber noted its absolutist bent, and wrote about it:

*“It says all worldviews are arbitrary, all truth is relative... But that stance itself claims to be universally true. It is claiming everybody’s truth is relative except mine... I alone have the universal truth... And their absolute truth ends up being very ideological, very power-hungry, very elitist in the worst sense.”*

That’s what we see today in the United States: woke professionals who are ideological, power-hungry, and elitist, imposing their “absolute truth” of wokeness on others through the bureaucratic social systems they control.

They produce awful outcomes wherever they go: terrible schools, ruined cities, epidemics of mental illness. They never admit that, however. Invariably, they attribute their failures to something other than themselves, such as Covid.





## The Army: Strong Fathers as Spiritual Soldiers

**T**o fight a battle, you need soldiers. To fight a spiritual battle, you need spiritual soldiers. To fight an Enemy working to eliminate the Strong Father, you need an army of strong fathers to serve as spiritual soldiers.

To build an army of strong fathers, we must recruit young men in large numbers. How can we do this? By offering them brotherhood, tradition, and a rigorous initiation.

### The model: the French Foreign Legion

At a time when most militaries struggle to fill their ranks, one brings in new recruits by the thousands: the Foreign Legion.

Young men from all over the world flock to the Legion because it offers them a chance to prove themselves as men. They also join it for its strict code of honor, its strong traditions, and the real camaraderie among its soldiers.

These things are very difficult to find in modern society. They are also tremendously attractive to the masculine soul.



In the Legion, recruits are trained in what is called the “old-fashioned way:” They’re put through a month-long ordeal of physically- and mentally-demanding field exercises, and held to very high standards of cleanliness and order.

The Legion is also “old-fashioned” in its observance of Catholicism. All of its soldiers participate in Catholic rites, even if they are Buddhist, Hindu, or Muslim. Every unit within it has a patron saint that all of its soldiers honor.

Other old-fashioned aspects of the Legion are its men-only units, its insistence on selfless service, and its reverence for tradition. Your duty is to fight and maybe die, its soldiers are told, and if you do, you will have been part of the Legion’s 194-year history of sacrifice in battle, emblazoned on its flags.



## The organization: the Knights of Columbus

What organization can recruit young men as spiritual soldiers, by offering them initiation, tradition, and brotherhood? The Knights of Columbus. It’s not something the Knights currently do, but they recognize the need for it.

In its series of videos based on *Into The Breach*, the Knights’ Supreme Council pointed out that Catholics are engaged in a spiritual battle for the soul of the family, a battle in which men must lead and fight.



In these videos, the Supreme Council also noted that mainstream American culture provides boys with little guidance in how to be men. It provides few models of real masculinity, and tries to make fatherhood irrelevant.

With over a million members in the US, the Knights have the manpower and resources to address the problems they’ve identified. They can do that by creating a program to recruit and train an army of strong fathers.

## The “boot camp:” initiation into manhood

For tens of thousands of years, boys were initiated into manhood. Their tribes initiated them in accordance with the timeless truth that women are born, but men are made.

Through trials and ordeals, boys proved to themselves and their tribes that they could fulfill a man’s primary purpose: to protect and provide.

Through pilgrimages and rituals, they sought and received spiritual guidance, and established a personal connection to the Divine.

This is part of humanity’s cultural DNA. That’s why, after we became civilized, male initiation persisted in new forms.

Ritual hunts were replaced by military training, and vision quests gave way to knightly vigils.

It persisted because boys have an innate desire to confront fear and danger, perform difficult tasks, and connect with the Divine. They feel that they must do these things to become men. Sadly for boys today, initiation isn’t part of the modern world.

Boys in our society make do with substitutes, as when they join the Marines, practice martial arts, and take hallucinogenic drugs. These pursuits, however, lack the spiritual component of initiation: the experience of the Divine needed to transform a boy into a man in full.

To build an army of spiritual soldiers strong enough to win the battle that’s raging today, we Catholics must revive the practice of male initiation. When we do, we’ll likely get an overwhelming response from the young men of America.





## The Program: Basic and Advanced Training for Men

**T**o defeat the Enemy, with its strategy of eliminating the Strong Father, the Knights should strive to restore the Strong Father.

The order can do that by creating a program of courses that teach young men how to be a man, lead a woman, and lead a family:

1. Before he can become a strong father, a boy must first learn how to be a man. He does that by completing an initiation into manhood.
2. Once he has learned what it is to be a man, a young man must be trained in how to lead a woman in a relationship. He must learn how to be a good husband.
3. Next, a young man must be trained in how to lead a family: how to protect and provide, lead and guide. He must learn how to be a strong father.



# Initiation Into Manhood

The first step towards restoring the Strong Father in our society is to create a course of male initiation. It might look something like this:

## BASIC ARRANGEMENTS

Participants must undergo a doctor's physical exam, and pass a physical fitness test.

If a boy doesn't pass the fitness test, he's given a daily diet and exercise program to follow (and assigned a fitness coach) until he can.

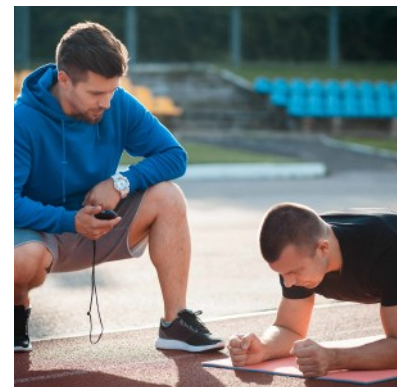
Two dozen teenage boys come together for three weeks during the summer, after their freshman year in high school. They live, eat, and sleep at a local Catholic high school.

No electronic devices are allowed. The boys all eat in the cafeteria, and sleep on cots in the same room. Two adult Knights serve as monitors each night.

Each boy brings with him only these items: six pairs of underwear, towels and toiletries, two plain t-shirts, pants, shower shoes, and a belt.

Each is issued a set of exercise clothes: two t-shirts, a pair of shorts, socks, sneakers. Each gets a cot and a blanket as well.

A cook prepares the meals, but the boys wash the dishes and clean the cafeteria. The boys also wash and dry their own clothes, and keep their sleeping room neat and tidy.



## INITIATORY ACTIVITIES

- Each boy receives a short uniform haircut. This physically marks his separation from the world of boyhood and entry into the sphere of manhood.
- Every morning, the boys do physical training and run in formation, during which they sing a running song—in Latin. This builds cohesion in the group.
- Each boy must keep his personal area well-organized, tidy, and clean. If it's not, he is put on laundry duty. This builds discipline and independence.
- On Sunday morning, the boys go to mass. It's a rest day, during which they can read from exemplary books, such as *Wild at Heart* and *Profiles in Courage*.



### *Week One:*

- During the day, the boys receive training in boxing or another weaponless martial art. They also spar with each other, which builds confidence and courage.
- Each boy also undergoes an ordeal of pain or hardship, withstanding something that's not physically damaging, but tests his fortitude and commitment.
- At a one-hour class every evening, they're taught about the three masculine qualities of Structure, Strength, and Independence, with examples and exercises.



### *Week Two:*

- The boys participate in teamwork exercises. First, pairs of boys negotiate an obstacle course. Later, teams of five work their way through obstacle scenarios employed by the US military to train its junior officers.



- They also undertake building projects. In these, the boys split into two work crews that take a pile of large stones and use them to build a “cathedral:” a stone structure large enough to comfortably contain the whole crew sitting. Later, all the boys form one crew, and build an even larger structure using the stones.
- At a one-hour class every evening, they’re taught about the manly virtues of Honesty, Courage, Discipline, Fortitude, and Generosity, with examples and exercises.



*Week Three:*

- A priest teaches the boys how to pray effectively: not just reciting the words of prayers, but considering the meaning behind those words; not just asking God for favors, but for blessing and guidance.
- At a one-hour class every evening, the boys are taught how Jesus exemplifies the highest form of masculinity. They’re also taught about the saints and angels most helpful in attaining true manhood.
- On Friday, each one fasts for 24 hours, and keeps an overnight vigil like the knights of old, seeking guidance from his guardian angel or patron saint. On Saturday, a priest helps him to understand what he experienced.
- On Sunday, after mass, they graduate. Each one wears dress clothes, and receives a symbol of achievement: a Knights of Columbus tie, representing his new status.
- The young men put on their new ties, and then go to a ceremony, with their families in attendance. Here, the young men receive personal congratulations from all the Knights in the Council, and a blessing from a priest.

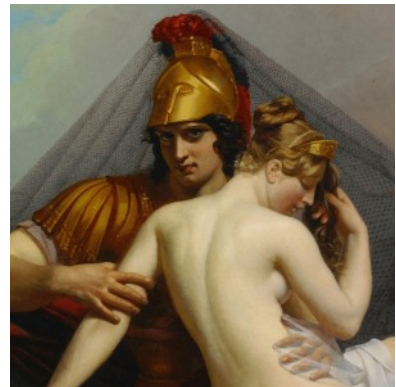


## Leading a Woman

After a young man has been initiated into manhood, his next course is on how to lead a young woman in a romantic relationship. Before he can become a Strong Father, he must learn how to date, and find the right mate.

Most women want to be led in a romantic relationship as they're led on the dance floor. That is, they want a man to provide them with a firm, secure "frame," and to respond to their signals. So, in this course, the young man learns:

- The essence of the Masculine (structure, strength, independence) vs. the Feminine (flow, sensitivity, relationship).
- How the Masculine complements the Feminine, and vice-versa, illustrated with examples from good romantic relationships. The woman is the man's "radiant beauty" and he is her "warrior of love."
- How men communicate and socialize, and how it differs from the way women do these things. The general idea is, "Men are from Mars, women are from Venus."
- How to lead a woman on a date: asking her out, picking her up, walking her down the street, showing her courtesy during the date.
- The purpose of dating: finding the right woman to marry. Also, general principles for determining what sort of woman he might be most compatible with.
- How to lead a woman on the dance floor, in a two-step, swing step, and salsa step. Young ladies attend this dance class, as the young men's practice partners.

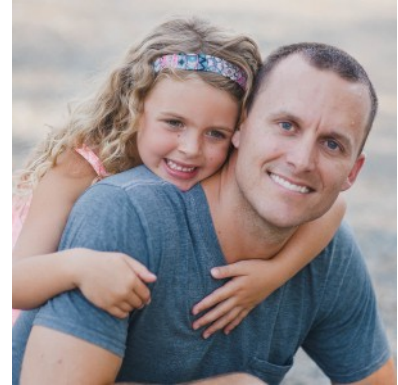


## Leading a Family

This course is for young men who are engaged to be married. It teaches them how to exemplify the Strong Father as the head of a household. It equips them to fulfill a man's purpose as a father: to protect and provide, lead and guide.

For a father, protecting his family from harm is his first responsibility, so each young man is taught how current mainstream American culture harms families:

- How today's popular culture and public institutions discourage and even prevent fathers from leading their families, and induce their children to disrespect them.
- What dangers lurk online, in unrestricted social media, widespread pornography, and streaming media content produced by companies such as Disney.
- Which institutions pose the greatest threats to their children's spiritual well-being: public schools, counseling practices, and family courts after a divorce.



In this course, men are also taught how to lead a family well. This includes training in how to:

- Set and enforce healthy boundaries
- Provide discipline and structure for kids
- Create a calm, secure home environment



## Our Opportunity: Join the Fight, Rise to Greatness

**T**his spiritual battle we're fighting presents us with an opportunity to renew the Church, and with it our society. To seize it, we must, "*Be confident! Be bold!*" as Bishop Olmsted wrote. We must go, as he said, "*Forward, into the breach!*"

The Knights of Columbus seem ready to do that. They assert that our nature as men is one of service and challenge, and that we're here to bring greatness into the world.

By training young men to be men in full, the Knights can make the Catholic faith a place for real men. These men will lead their families to the Church, and the Church will grow stronger. A strong Church can then defeat the Enemy and renew our society.



Can the Knights spark a flame of righteousness that spreads to burn throughout America? Yes. As Archbishop Ireland wrote:

*"The need in the Church today, the need in the world, is of men among men who can rise higher, who can see further, who can strive more nobly than others. They need not be many. They never were many. But, though the few, they will rise, and bring with them the whole of humanity."*