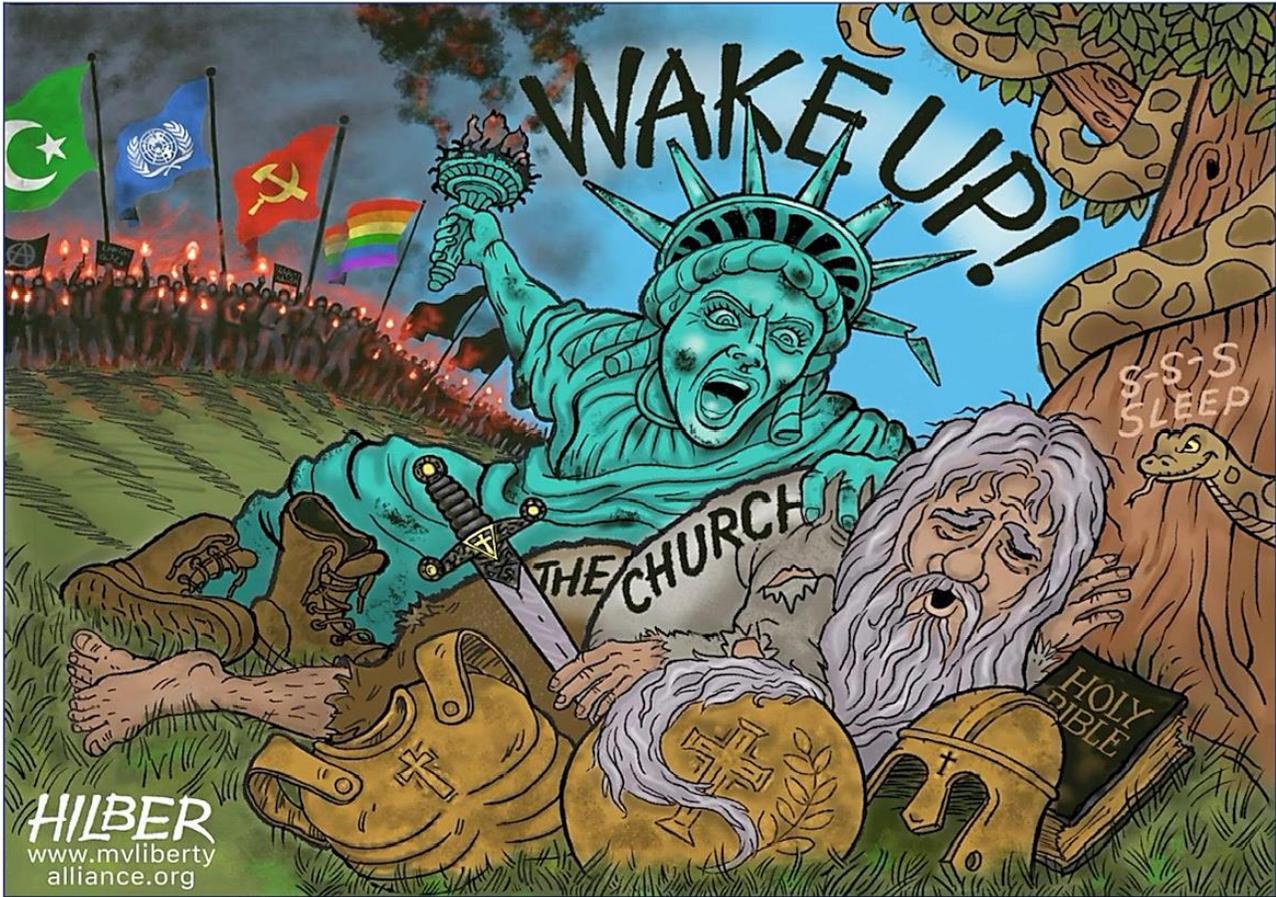


An Open Letter to Our Shepherds



Woke radicals are coming for our families, our children, our churches, our freedoms, and our country. And they're backed by major corporations, big tech and big media, and every department and agency within our government.

Whether the Orthodox Church will be found complicit, complacent, or courageous depends on its shepherds doing the following:

- Affirm what is our Christian duty in defending the faith against the attacks and lies of our day.
- Teach and train the way of the saints and martyrs, and of the Church Fathers.
- Affirm what is our civic duty in protecting our neighbors, especially our children, against deadly radical ideologies.

Now, more than ever, not only are your prayers needed but your guidance, your voice, and your action.

Sadly, the silence emanating from too many of our parishes and our archdioceses has become deafening, and grievously evermore concerning. To me, the silence has reached the level of the sins of consent and omission, and a capitulation to the mob tactics of fear and intimidation.

The Rainbow Elephant in the Church

The biggest problem with the rainbow elephant inhabiting our parishes today is that both clergy and laity have yet to admit such an elephant even exists, because shepherds and laity don't want to talk about it, much less deal with it.

Until then:

Our churches will remain filled with unaware, unprepared, and unequipped parishioners against an increasingly hostile pagan cancel culture, will continue to come under the culture's influence (rather than the other way around) and be at ever greater risk to submitting to it. This is the way of apostacy.

Such blinders will continue to undermine your credibility as capable shepherds that parishioners can turn to for leadership, or as trustworthy role models of faith and courage under fire, capable of publicly proclaiming the truth in love.

You will be seen as preferring to sit on the sidelines of comfort and safety, as people pleasers, or simply indifferent to the destruction happening outside your parish doors.

If you are not willing to be courageous with the relatively small trials we face now, there's no reason to think you will have what it takes to lead when serious persecution strikes in the future. Wait too long, and mustering the courage of the saints will become impossible.

When Shepherds Stay Away, Sheep Pay



Without your leadership, wokeism is able to freely seduce your flock away from following Christ courageously. They will think they follow Jesus, but without faith in action, they will become merely His admirers.

Without shepherds, parishioners lack examples of how to counter abortion, predatory Marxist ideology, the poisonous ideology of transgenderism/transhumanism, the indoctrination of children through explicit public school sex ed.

Without a call to moral courage, parishioners will cower to protect their own comfort and survival, and willingly live with the lies of wokeism as demoralized Christians. Totalitarianism depends and thrives on this demoralization.

Demoralization leads to self-loathing for being a hypocrite, which inevitably leads to mental health issues, and escaping into unhealthy forms of self-soothing (addiction, endless entertainment, materialism) and abandoning our principles.

Once a person becomes demoralized, they're unable to access true information. Education becomes indoctrination. Entertainment becomes hypnotism. Criminals become leaders and lies become truth.

— Yuri Bezmenov, former KGB informant

Eventually, parishioners will learn to prefer the false peace of conformity to the tensions of liberty, thereby losing their ability to witness to the world. Conformity is a silent acquiescence to evil.

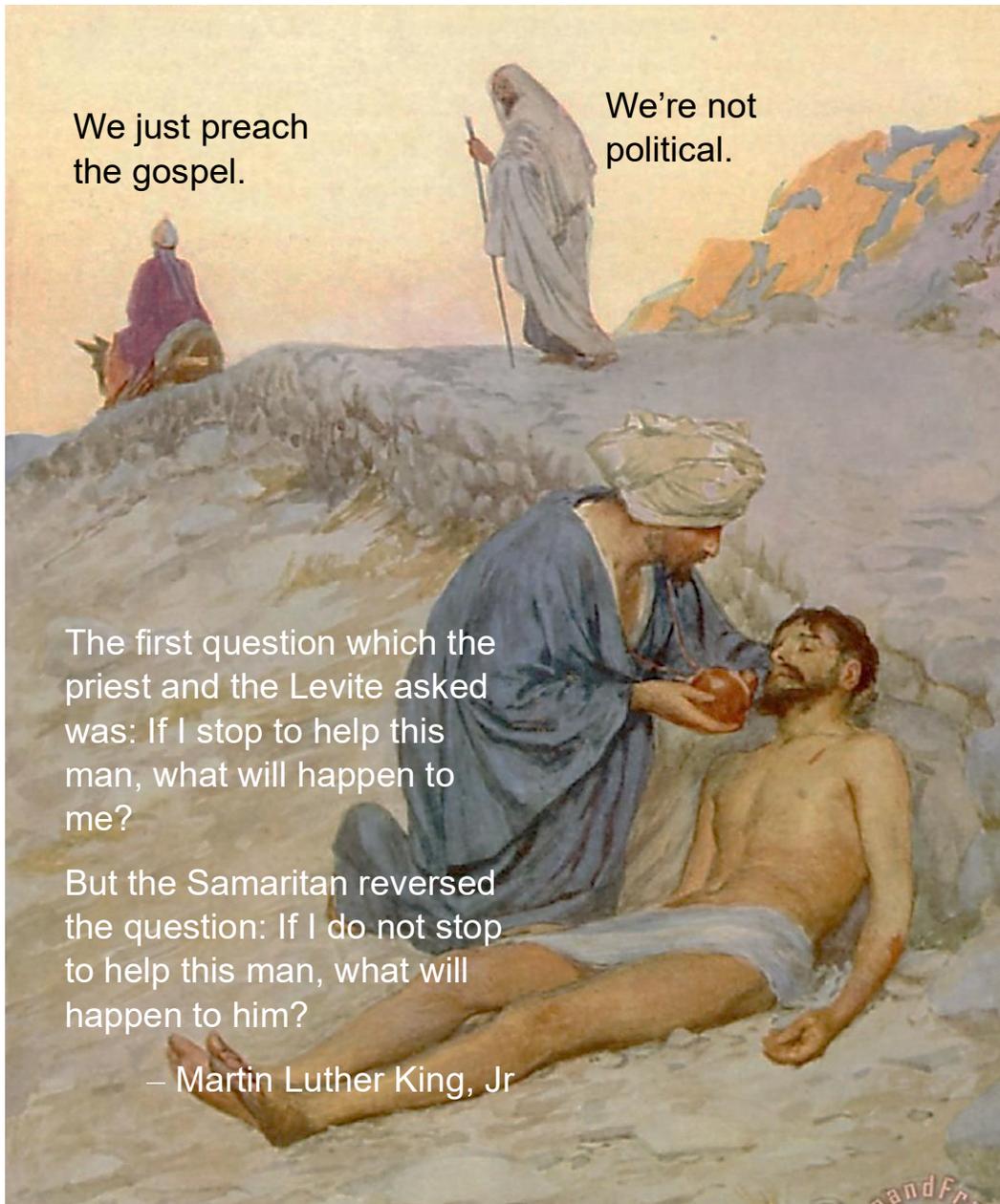
Without a unified outcry from leadership against attacks on prolife centers and churches, shepherds are sending the message that the unborn and our faith are not worth defending.

Parishioners remain woefully unprepared in defending their faith and families against intimidation, coercion, cancel culture, mandates, and the coming persecution.

Because there is no one to show them the pagan origins behind the meteoric rise of LGBTQ and transhumanist ideologies sweeping post Christian America, parishioners misinterpret these religious-based ideologies as exclusively political and social concerns, and best left to politicians and social activists to tackle.

Thus, too many Christians are woefully absent from the spiritual battlefields of school boards, legislative floors, city councils, and library boards where the powers and principalities of paganism runs wild.

The Church is in danger of repeating the same mistakes Russian Orthodox made during the communist revolution. Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn wrote of how Christians “burned in the camps” in shame for not resisting when they had the chance.



And Our Neighbors Pay

Being complicit and complacent blocks us from being grieved, compassion-based Samaritans to our neighbors who are falling prey to radical woke ideologies, drag shows, corporate and media grooming of children, after school Satan clubs, and explicit public school sex ed indoctrination.

Without shepherds to warn them otherwise, our law-abiding neighbors will continue to naively assume that the woke mob will leave them alone in peaceful co-existence for their good behavior. (Tyrants don't co-exist; they insist.)

Without Christian leaders to expose the pagan-based ideological lies with biblical truth, our neighbors have no spiritual compass to guide them.

Eventually, our demoralized and isolated neighbors will become too morally compromised to muster the courage to defend their values, their families, and their country.

Neighbors in a constant state of pretending will come to deny the truth they can see with their own eyes. The shame of capitulating to woke bullies will inevitably cause them to give into the chorus of lies, and even join in celebrating the lies.

Lead With What the Church Has Given You

Thanks be to God who has richly equipped His Church with everything shepherds need to help their flocks defend the faith and publicly speak the truth with boldness and love, to each other and to their neighbors.

- The examples of the lives of the saints and martyrs in the Synaxarion, who toppled pagan temples, took on tyrants, and stormed the strongholds of powers and principalities of their day.
- The writings of the Church Fathers to equip and embolden us.
- The witness of icons to remind us that we are the Church of the saints, martyrs and confessors.
- The sacrament of confession to restore us from the sins of complacency, people pleasing and fearing man more than God.
- The sacrament of communion to empower us.
- The Holy Spirit to protect us.
- Fasting and prayer.
- The anointing of oil before traveling into strongholds of powers and principalities within our schools and woke-controlled institutions.
- Departments and organizations within each archdiocese to train and mobilize clergy and laity, such as Ancient Faith Ministries, Conference and Retreat Centers, Christian Education, Inter-faith Relations, Lay Ministries, Marriage and Parish Family Ministries, publications, and communications.
- The Holy Synod of Bishops, and the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops to rally and guide us.

And we have the holy Scriptures:

Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely for my account – Matt. 5:11

All who desire to live a godly life in Christ will be persecuted. – 2 Tim. 3:12

*Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them.
– Eph. 5:11*

*Therefore, put on the full armor of God, so that ... when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand ... and after you have done everything, to stand.
– Eph 6:10*

Call Us to Courage

Help us become the saints God has called us to be. For we are not called to fit in but to stand out.

And so: We need not be the first to set out on this path, ours is but to join! The more of us set out together, the thicker our ranks, the easier and shorter will this path be for us all! If we become thousands – they will not cope, they will be unable to touch us. If we grow to tens of thousands – we will not recognize our country! But if we shrink away, then let us cease complaining that someone does not let us draw breath – we do it to ourselves!

– Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn 1974 essay, *Live Not By Lies*

He reminds us of three realities: First, we must have the courage to refuse to affirm what we do not believe. Second, we must be willing to be vilified even as we speak the truth. Third, we have no idea what God will do with our witness.

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