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by NCR Staff

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May 24, 2024

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Following are NCR reader responses to recent news articles, opinion columns and theological essays with letters that have been edited for length and clarity.

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Butker wouldn't recognize Christ's masculinity

Having just read Madison Chastain's "'Stay in your lane' says KC football player far outside his lane," I was impressed by Chastain's careful analysis of Harrison Butker's commencement speech at Benedictine College, especially concerning Butker's

contradictory remarks that urged the graduates to be good Catholics, while in the same breath demeaning the authority of the bishops (ncronline.org, [May 16, 2024](#)).

But what Chastain does not remark on is Butker's message to the male graduates, telling them to "be unapologetic in your masculinity" and "to fight against the cultural emasculation of man." What would he have thought of Jesus, who went against the cultural norms of his day by not marrying, by engaging women in long conversations, by standing with the woman taken in the act of adultery, and eating and drinking with sinners? For Harrison Butker, Jesus would have been a "sign of contradiction."

## **JOHN HOPKINS**

### **Whitman, Massachusetts**

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Don't underestimate traditionalism's impact

Having read the original AP article which this editorial speaks to, I believe the AP article is spot on (ncronline.org, [May 16, 2024](#)). At 65, I have relocated across the country nine times. I grew up in the Detroit Diocese in the '60's and find myself in the rural St. Paul, MN Diocese. I need to drive 20 miles each way to attend a parish which I consider "Mainstream". In the local parish (less than 2 miles from home), we continue to kneel for communion, have Latin placards in the pews and have a priest who was a top story for MSP news for an Anti-Muslim homily he delivered on the day the diocese defined as "Immigration Sunday" (and yes, he is still there).

Your editorial fails to recognize this rapidly growing movement of Anti-Pope Francis/Anti-Vatican II Catholics and failed to take advantage of the groundwork laid by the AP Article to expose the real threat this movement poses to the U.S. and global church. You need to travel through small and mid-size communities and see just how much U.S. Catholicism is devolving. You missed a chance to send a wakeup call, which is unfortunate for those of us in the shrinking cohort of Mainstream Catholics.

**LES JOE SCHALM**

**Lonsdale, Minnesota**

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Stay at home motherhood not the problem

No one needs to be concerned about the rise of “trad wives” in rural America or anywhere else (ncronline.org, [May 17, 2024](#)). For those who welcome and enjoy that role, more power to them. As for their desire to homeschool their youngsters, I offer my deepest admiration and heartiest congratulations.

In small rural communities such as mine the homeschooled youngsters are always easy to spot: socially confident, friendly, articulate, polite and focused achievers. Most of the teens are very active in their church communities and happily integrate into the public school athletic programs and advanced learning classes at their community colleges. Some of these students transition easily to some of the best universities in America. What’s not to like?

There is much good to be said about a return to an “old fashioned” pre-Vatican II lifestyle that does not include the Latin Mass. As a stay at home Catholic mother of eight, I have been there and done that — having been on record for changing and washing approximately 32,000 cloth diapers between the years 1960-1978.

However, this lifestyle is not for everyone. If freely chosen with mutual commitment from both parents, it can, ultimately, be a joy. But if a Catholic wife is caught up in a Marian cult that suggests her complete “submission” to possibly stressful demands from her husband and/or spiritual community, it could become fertile ground for

mental illness, domestic violence and an abusive nightmare. In other words....very un-Mary-like.

**NANCY MCGUNAGLE**

**Kalispell, Montana**

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Trad wives traditional?

I found the article about the "trad wives" both interesting and horrifying. I do have a question though about the supposed devotion to Mary. If I recall correctly, Mary (according to Catholic tradition) is a perpetual Virgin.

If these women are so devoted to Mary, surely they should be following that path, with their husbands also following Joseph's example of chastity?

I find it interesting that this hard core devotion to motherhood is modeled after a woman that had ONE child and never had sex.

**DALE CEBULA**

**Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio**

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