Spiritual Warfare

Equipping yourself to become and remain Battle Ready
Never underestimate the power of your leadership as a man. Here's a telling statistic about the influence of a father:

• When the mother is the spiritual leader of the family, the percentage of children who continue to live out and practice their Christian faith when they become adults is around 35%.

• When the father is the spiritual leader of the family that number is greater than 90%!
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Lifelong Combat & Lifelong Journey
(not a destination you will reach on earth!)

If you doubt that this life is a battle, then you need to read this:

"The whole of man's history has been the story of dour combat with the powers of evil, stretching, so our Lord tells us, from the very dawn of history until the last day."

- *Catechism of the Catholic Church, 409 –*

*dour*  |ˈdoːr, dou(ə)r| adjective
relentlessly severe, stern, or gloomy in manner or appearance
Pope Francis:

“Christians must guard against slyness of the devil.”

"On this point, there are no nuances. There is a battle and a battle where salvation is at play."

He exhorted those in attendance to question themselves, asking,

"Do I guard myself, my heart, my feelings, my thoughts? Do I guard the treasure of grace? Do I guard the presence of the Holy Spirit in me? Or do I let go, feeling secure, believing that all is going well?"
The War Against Christians
The persecution of Christians is “the most dramatic religion story of the early 21st century,” according to the latest book by religion reporter John Allen.

- From 2000 – 2010, an estimated 100,000 Christians have been killed EACH year
- Bloody persecution in the countries of Africa, Middle East, and Asia
- Western countries are consistently attacking religious liberty
Spiritual Warfare

A REAL ACTION HERO

Follow the lead of this great man. **St. Joseph** was as BATTLE READY as it gets.

He has been given many titles.
- **Guardian of the Redeemer**
- **Guardian of the Mother of the Redeemer**
- **Pillar of Families**

One title that really emphasizes the nature and position he has been given is **Conqueror of hell**. He was fearless in his obedience to God. He dedicated his life to defending TRUTH Himself.
Spiritual Warfare

The best weapons that we have to fight against the temptations of the world, the flesh and the devil are those that we have been given by God.

- Prayer
- Sacraments
- Fasting
- Sacred Scripture
- Adoration

These should be an integral part of our daily lives. Use these powerful weapons everyday to fight for your soul and for those you love or who have been given to your care.

From Father Josh:
“Holiness is fidelity to the Sacraments and fidelity to Prayer”
What is the Angelic Warfare Confraternity?

The Angelic Warfare Confraternity is supernatural brotherhood or fellowship of men and women bound to one another in love and dedicated to pursuing and promoting chastity together under the powerful patronage St. Thomas Aquinas and the Blessed Virgin Mary.

• The Society of Angelic Warfare was founded in the 15th Century
• Under the patronage of St. Thomas Aquinas for the preservation of virtue and purity
• Pope Benedict XIII constituted the Angelic Warfare Confraternity in 1727
• It is one of the ancient confraternities of the Dominican Order
• 8 Popes have recommended it
An inspiring story of St. Thomas in his early days of formation
Why make such a pact?
Because some goods are easier to pursue together rather than alone.

Does the Church recognize such a pact and brotherhood?
Yes, a Confraternity is an organization officially recognized by the Church.

Who is in on the pact?
Both heaven and earth are in on it. The Church has the authority to establish special, supernatural bonds between people on earth and Saints in heaven (traditionally known as “patronage”).
Why is this Confraternity called the “Angelic Warfare”?

It is called by this title in honor of St. Thomas being girded by the angels. But the name is also appropriate because the pursuit of chastity is often a fierce struggle with the world, the flesh, and the devil. The world, the flesh, and the devil all work together to destroy chastity. The Holy Spirit, the good angels, and the Confraternity work together to build up chastity.

Is St. Thomas Aquinas a powerful patron for those who pursue chastity? Yes. He is an extremely powerful patron for those seeking to live a chaste life.

Have people’s lives been transformed by joining the Confraternity? Yes. Many people testify to a noticeable and sometimes great difference in their lives after joining.
In this warfare, what are the essential practices of the Confraternity?

- Enrollment and Registration
  - In the enrollment ceremony, a Dominican priest confers the blessing upon the cord and medal of St. Thomas Aquinas and the person who will wear it. The name of the person enrolled and place of the enrollment ceremony goes into the official Register.

- Wearing either the blessed cord of St. Thomas or blessed medal of St. Thomas (or both) as continuously as one reasonably can for the rest of one’s life.

- Daily prayers for purity for oneself and all the members of the Confraternity. The daily prayers consist of two special prayers for chastity and fifteen Hail Mary’s, each proceeded with a specific petition.
Requirements to become a member

• Those who seek the graces of the Angelic Warfare Confraternity may become a member through a representative of the Dominican Order
• The obligations of members of the Confraternity are:
  • To guard holy purity
  • To seek the truth
  • To honor our Lady of the Holy Rosary under the patronage of St. Thomas
  • To have one’s name inscribed in the official register
  • To wear the cord and/or metal of the Confraternity
Benefits of becoming a member of the Confraternity

• You will enjoy the intercession of St. Thomas and certain aids for the purpose of formation and perseverance in the virtue of chastity
• All members receive a plenary indulgence:
  • Once on the day of enrollment
  • Every year on the feasts of Christmas, Easter, St. Thomas (Jan. 28), the Annunciation (March 25), the Assumption (Aug 15), All Saints Day (Nov 1)

Are there other supernatural effects of enrollment in the Confraternity? St. Thomas Aquinas becomes an official personal patron of each Confraternity member, the treasure chest of graces merited by the Dominican Order is opened up to all in the Confraternity to draw upon, and the prayers of thousands of other members of the Confraternity come to the aid of all the other members every day. People often say they no longer feel isolated in the pursuit of chastity but tied to others in the same pursuit. They often say they feel stronger and more equipped for the battle.
Are the enrollment ceremony and blessing powerful?
The blessing is supernatural dynamite. Many people who go through ceremony and wear the blessed cord or medal testify to experiencing great relief from temptations and greater strength in resisting temptations.

What is the cord of St. Thomas?
The cord of St. Thomas is a thin cord with fifteen knots in it and blessed by a Dominican priest. It is worn around the waist underneath one’s clothing.

Is there also a medal of St. Thomas?
Yes, the medal has on one side it has the image of St. Thomas being girded by the angels, and on the other side it has the image of Our Lady of the Rosary. It too is blessed by a Dominican priest. It is worn like any other medal.

What is so special about the blessed cord and medal of St. Thomas?
The blessing of a cord and medal of St. Thomas is special because it is, in effect, a blessing of one’s human sexuality.
Questions to discuss:

- Will membership in a worldwide organization dedicated to Spiritual Warfare strengthen you as the Spiritual Leader of your family

- Is your spiritual Spiritual Battle being fought alone, or do you fight with the weapons that God has given you? (e.g., Sacraments, Prayer, Saints, Angels, His Church community...)

- Can you begin a fresh battle campaign now in your current stage of life (e.g., father, husband, grandfather, widower...)?