

Stephen Christoforou and Nick Lionas shoot a scene for YouTube.

"Be the Bee" – A New YouTube Series

They say bad news always travels faster than good news. It seems as if we are addicted to finding and accentuating the negative about virtually anything. Tabloids and talk shows rarely focus on the positive things happening in people's lives.

So... instead of focusing on the negative, the Department of Youth and Young Adult Ministries (Y2AM) wants to focus and draw from the positive. Also, the Y2AM wants each person to seek out and choose those things that are good, spirituallybeneficial, and fruitful.

Thus, the YouTube series "Be the was born! The Department of Youth and Young Adult Ministries now is bringing you a regular series of short and informative videos, focusing on the good things in our everyday lives... a refreshing change from the negativity that surrounds us on a daily basis. Hosted by Youth Protection/Parish Ministries Coordinator, Steven Christoforou, the series is sure to be entertaining and educational. More importantly, it will be relevant and applicable to today's Orthodox Christian and their journey toward salvation.

Viewers can access the channel by searching "Y2AM" on YouTube, or going to www.youtube.com/user/y2am. New episodes are released every Thursday

BE REAL – "REAL" MINISTRY FOR YOUNG ADULTS

by Nicholas Lionas

"What is REAL?" In a world where image is so important, where it seems people wear masks all the time, it's difficult to find something authentic. We're all searching for a direction, but it's easy to become disoriented in the "mists" of sin that cloud our vision. However, we're not alone: Christ is always with us, the lamp that cuts through the fog, and the beacon illuminating the

"But how can Christ and His Church be relevant in my life?" You're not the only one who's wondered that. All over the country, young adults are coming forward and asking questions, wrestling with faith and struggling with daily issues. We are thirsting for answers. But mostly, we are starving for God's love.

The Church has always been there. Unfortunately, it's become the best kept secret from people our age. Now is the time we begin changing that. Representing Emerging Adult Leaders (REAL) is the new initiative from the Archdiocese. Church isn't just for little kids and old ladies. It's for us, too. In fact, it's essential, and REAL is designed to finally let the secret out to emerging adults. The tough part is, there are ten billion different directions we're being called in, and they're not all right for us. There are easy ways and there are ways that take a little bit of work. But we're not afraid of things that take work. We've fought for things that we believe in, we've scraped and clawed for grades, for jobs, for success. But are we willing to fight for what's real?

In the REAL logo, you might notice two



things: the symbol for infinity and the fish. This is not just any program. This is about something eternal, something true: Christ and His Church. This is about our connection with the infinite, with Iesus Christ, the Son of God, our Savior. You may have seen the Jesus Fish on the back of a car before but don't allow Christianity to be reduced to nothing more than a bumper sticker. when it is a life changing reality that has moved voung men and women, just like you and me, to do incredible things for the glory of God.

We invite you to authenticity. To live Orthodoxy, to Be REAL. We invite you to join and be a leader as REAL Orthodox Christians, as members of the Body of Christ

REAL offers resources and programs that present the Orthodox Faith in an honest, smart, sometimes humorous, and always relevant way. One that will offer everything from podcasts and videos to fellowship and service opportunities. Check out the links below for more information. Look for us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, Tumblr, and of course here on YouTube. And mark your calendar now

BE BRAVE! Take a Stand Against Bullying

much unless you do what's right." - Theodore Roosevelt

A 12-year-old Florida girl, Rebecca Ann Sedwick, committed suicide in early September 2013 after months of bullying... including messages online from bullies saying, "You should kill yourself."

A 15-year-old Connecticut boy, Bart Palosz, committed suicide Aug. 27 after constant bullying... because of his height (6'3") and his Polish accent.

A 13-year-old Georgia boy, Devin Brown, committed suicide in April after physical and mental bullying... allegedly being labeled a "snitch" for reporting a fellow student had a knife.

These stories are all too common in today's news. Here are some statistics from www.dosomething.org:

More than 3.2 million students are victims of bullying each year.

- · Approximately 160,000 teens skip school every day because of bullying.
- 1 in 7 students in grades K-12 is either a bully or a victim of bullying.
- 56 percent of students have personally witnessed some type of bullying at
- 71 percent of students report incidents of bullying as a problem at their school.
- 90 percent of 4th through 8th graders report being victims of bullying.
- 1 out 10 students drop out of school because of repeated bullying.
- · Harassment and bullying have been linked to 75 percent of school-shooting incidents

October is Bullving Prevention Awareness Month. Unfortunately, bullying is an ever-present issue in the lives of teenagers.

This bullying happens for many different reasons: race, sexuality, gender, appearance, disabilities, and much more. U.S. News and World Report states that "more than 62 percent of American students are bullied because of the way they look and or the way they speak."

For some young people, they endure the bullying and move on. For others, the bullying results in emotional distress and social withdrawal. But the most startling trend is for young people to commit suicide

for July 3-6, 2014 for REAL Weekend: Philadelphia, which promises to be an incredible experience. This is only half the equation. REAL can give us the resources, but the choice is ours. We can say we're Orthodox, or we can truly live Orthodoxy.

No more illusions. We're done with what's fake. It's time for something REAL. Find us on:

Facebook: GOA Young Adults Twitter: @GOA YoungAdults Instagram: @GOA_YoungAdults Pinterest: GOA YoungAdults Tumblr: GOA Young Adults Youtube: Y2AM – REAL Orthodoxy Blog: The Ladder

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"Knowing what's right doesn't mean as a result of bullying, referred to as "bullycide." It is contributing to the rising statistic that suicide is the 3rd leading cause of death among 16-25 year olds.

> We've heard the horrible, heart-breaking stories and we know the statistics. So. the question is... what can we DO to prevent bullying?

> Be Kind! One of the easiest way to start the fight against bullving is to be an example of kindness and respect. Our greatest commandment from Jesus Christ is to love God AND to love our neighbor. If we all took time to follow that one lesson, the world could be a different place. But it starts with YOU! Smile at someone, give a friend a compliment, stop yourself before you make fun of someone's appearance, and think twice before gossiping.

> Be Educated! Teen bullying prevention starts with education. It is important to discuss issues like this with your family, friends, and teachers. It is important to know how bullying affects the victims of bullying so you can encourage your peers to take a stand against bullying. Also, it is very likely that some of them are either currently being bullied or have experienced bullying.

> You can stand together and support one another!

> Consider the following questions and discussion about bullying:

- 1) What is bullying? How do you see bullying happen among your peers and friends?
- 2) Do you know bullies at school or in your other activities? If so, what do they do?
- 3) Have you ever been a victim of bullying? (Ask for volunteers to speak about their experiences)
- 4) Why do you think people bully other people?
- 5) What should you do if you or someone you know is being bullied?
- 6) Do you think you might have been a bully? How can we be bullies, maybe without knowing it? (Judging others, gossip, not being inclusive, etc.)
- 7) What are some of the effects of bullying? (Depression, self-esteem issues, separation, anger and violent retaliation, sometimes self-violence or suicide, etc.)
- 8) In what ways can Christ and the Church help an individual who might be a victim of bullying? (Discuss the importance of community and how the youth group is a no-tolerance zone for bullying, discuss how the Church is full of trusted individuals that will listen to your concerns, discuss God's unconditional love, discuss Christ's own humiliation at the hands of those who He has come to save, etc.)
- 9) What does the Church say about how we should treat others? Should we EVER be bullies? (Read and discuss any of the following and how it pertains to bullying: The Greatest Commandment, the Parable of the Last Judgment, Luke 6:31-36 "Do unto others..." etc.)

Be Brave! Stand with the Department of Youth and Young Adult Ministries (Y2AM) against bullying. Even if we are not the bully, we still have a responsibility to stand up for those who are not strong enough to defend themselves. Be brave enough to love every person because everyone is created in God's image. Check out the YouTube video about bullving www. voutube.com/user/v2am.