



Forward!
Into The Breach

A Leadership Seminar for Men Based on

“Into The Breach”

an Apostolic Exhortation for Men

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Summer 2016

St. John Neumann Catholic Church

Gaithersburg, MD

INTO THE BREACH Syllabus

- **WEEK 1 – A CALL TO BATTLE; PURPOSE OF EXHORTATION
CONTEXTS**
- **WEEK 2 – ECCO HOMO-BEHOLD THE MAN; SAINTS; OUR
HEROES OF FAITH
CATHOLIC MAN’S IDENTITY; BELOVED FREE SONS
-CALLED TO BATTLE WITHIN; PRACTICES OF A CATHOLIC
MAN**
- **WEEK 3 – HOW DOES A CATHOLIC MAN LOVE
A FRIEND IN CHRIST – BANDS OF BROTHERS
MAN AS HUSBAND – THE PURPOSE OF MASCULINE
EROTIC LOVE**
- **WEEK 4 – FATHERHOOD IS ESSENTIAL-GRANDFATHERS YOU ARE OF
GREAT IMPORTANCE-HOPE IN THE SHADOWS OF LOST
FATHERHOOD
CONCLUSION: SENT FORTH BY CHRIST - WHERE IS THE FAITH OF OUR
FATHER’S NOW**

A CALL TO BATTLE – WEEK 1

- † **Commit to reading *Into the Breach* and to the adventure of bringing Christ to the world.**
- † **Seek out men of faith to form a “band of brothers” in your council or parish who will move forward to fill the breach in the Church.**
- † **Make a plan to read a portion of the Bible daily.** Those who are new to this practice might start simply with a few lines of the Gospel each day or reflect on the readings for the day’s Mass.

A CALL TO BATTLE – WEEK 2

- **Find additional time for prayer or reading of Scripture this week and ask Jesus and the Holy Spirit to form your mind and heart in the light of the Gospel. Identify several areas of your life that are “old and tired, sinful and broken” that may be made new in Jesus Christ.**
- **Taking into account your station and vocation in life, think of at least three ways that you can embrace “more deeply the beauty and richness of the sexual difference” by following Pope Francis’ admonition to men and women to “speak to one another more, listen to each other more, get to know one another better, and love one another more.”**

A CALL TO BATTLE – WEEK 3

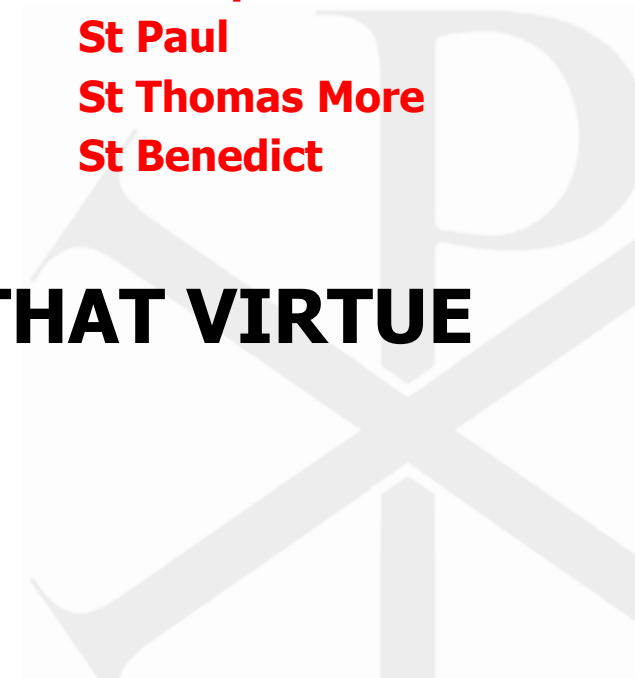
• IDENTIFY THE CORE SIN IN YOUR LIFE AND THE CORE VIRTUE TO REPLACE IT

- **Pride**
- **Passivity**
- **Lust**
- **Selfishness**
- **Mediocrity**
- **Double Mindedness**
- **SLOTH**

- Humility**
- Defend the Weak**
- Chastity**
- Trust In God**
- Adherence To Truth**
- Integrity**
- Diligence**

- St John the Baptist**
- St John Paul II**
- Bl Pier Giorgio Frassati**
- St Joseph**
- St Paul**
- St Thomas More**
- St Benedict**

• CHOOSE A PATRON SAINT FOR THAT VIRTUE



A CALL TO BATTLE – WEEK 4

- **FAST – BREAD AND WATER FOR _____**
 - OFFER FASTING FOR AN INTENTION
- **START THE 7 PRACTICES**
 - PUT A LIST IN A PROMINENT PLACE UNTIL THEY BECOME A HABIT
 - PRAY EVERY DAY
 - EXAMINE CONSCIENCE DAILY – PRAYER PROCESS
 - GO TO MASS - REFUGE IN THE SPIRITUAL BATTLE
 - READ THE BIBLE – WITH FAMILY; IMPACT ON CHILDREN
 - KEEP THE SABBATH
 - GO TO CONFESSION – AT LEAST MONTHLY
 - BUILD FRATERNITY WITH OTHER CATHOLIC MEN

A CALL TO BATTLE – WEEK 5

- **RECALL THE 7 PRACTICES**
- **CONSIDER COMMITMENT TO BUILDING FRATERNITY WITH OTHER CATHOLIC MEN**
- **ASK JESUS TO KEEP YOU ACCOUNTABLE TO YOUR COMMITMENT BY PLANNING A MONTHLY MEETING**
- **IDENTIFY TWO WAYS TO BUILD HEALTHY BONDS WITH IMMEDIATE/EXTENDED FAMILY AND BROTHERS IN CHRIST**
- **THRU EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE ASK HOLY SPIRIT TO CENTER YOUR LOVE ON 'WILLING THE GOOD OF OTHERS'**

A CALL TO BATTLE – WEEK 6

- **Consider factors in your own life that may contribute to falling into the temptation of lust, as well as how you might avoid this temptation in the future**
- **God assigns the dignity of every woman as a task to every man. Think about what you can do to concretely to honor the dignity of women in your life – wife, girlfriend, sister, daughter**
- **Follow Bishop Olmstead's instruction and imagine yourself before the throne of God at judgment and how sins against chastity will appear in that light**

WEEK 7

Fatherhood is Essential

- In revealing and in reliving on earth the very fatherhood of God (cf. Eph 3:15), a man is called upon to ensure the **harmonious and united development of all the members of the family**: he will perform this task by **exercising generous responsibility** for the life conceived under the heart of the mother, by a **more solicitous commitment to education**, a task he shares with his wife (cf. Gaudium et spes, 52), by work which is **never a cause of division in the family but promotes its unity and stability**, and by means of the **witness he gives of an adult Christian life** which effectively introduces the children into the living experience of Christ and the Church

WEEK 7

Fatherhood is Essential

- Men, your presence and mission in the family is **irreplaceable!** Step up and lovingly, patiently take up your God-given role **as protector, provider, and spiritual leader of your home.** A father's role as spiritual head of the family must **never** be understood or undertaken **as domination over others,** but only as a **loving leadership and a gentle guidance**
- Our enemy's underlying plan: to **remove our reliance on God, the benevolent father** – damage or abolish human fatherhood, in the man and relationship where each of us first glimpses what God's fatherhood might be like

WEEK 7

Fatherhood is Essential

- The question for every man is not “Am I called to be father” but “**What kind of father am I called to be?**”



WEEK 7

Grandfathers, You are of Great Importance

- **Few cultures have ever expected less and shown such indifference**
- **Be strong for them; share your wisdom; fight for them**
- **Never know what great plans God has for the last years of our lives**



WEEK 7

Hope in the Shadows of Lost Fatherhood

- **For those who have suffered the absence of your own father**
 - Many reasons why men abandon their responsibilities
 - Fatherlessness is NEVER God's plan
 - Do not give in to discouragement; Do not give up
 - Jesus will not leave you without grace enough to **forgive** and heal your father
- **For those who have failed in fatherhood**
 - True for all in greater or less degree
 - Due to abandonment, addiction, marital conflict, failure to guide
 - Ask God to make up for the ways that we fail
 - Christ strengthens us thru confession and the holy Eucharist

WEEK 7 – [Questions](#)

WEEK 7 – [Call to Battle](#)

WEEK 8 - CONCLUSION

- **Friendship between St Gregory Nazianzen and St Basil**
 - **Description – “...we were a rule and standard for each by which we learned the distinction between what was right and what was not.”**
 - **Inspired each to grow in virtue and freedom, to be less concerned for self and more eager to place his life at the service of others.**
- **Our life in Christ is not a life of “do’s and don’ts” but an adventure of authentic freedom**

WEEK 8

WHERE IS THE FAITH OF OUR FATHER'S NOW

- **No American citizen, and certainly no man, can remain silent about the travesty of our times – ABORTION**
- **Get off the sidelines and stand up for LIFE**
- **We are needed to step into the breach**
 - **Stem the tide of those leaving the church**
 - **Be an example of faith – living virtuously and serving others**
 - **Support our faith, our church, against those who would destroy values – both ours and our countrys'**

WEEK 8 – [Questions](#)

WEEK 8 – [Call to Battle](#)

Prayer of St. John Neumann

"Lord, there is nothing that is going to happen to me today that you and I cannot get through together."

Prayer of St. Francis De Sales

"Send me, Lord, wherever you please for when I am sent by you, then I am quite sure that you will help me-in whatever situation I find myself-to fulfill what you ask."

SESSION 4 - CLOSING PRAYER

**OH JESUS,
HELP ME TO PRAY FOR MY (ADULT) CHILDREN.
GIVE ME THE RIGHT WORDS AND THE RIGHT
TIMING.**

**OPEN THEIR HEARTS AND THEIR MINDS TO YOUR
WORDS (AND MINE).**

**WHERE THEY HAVE FALLEN OFF THE NARROW
PATH USE YOUR SHEPHERD'S CROOK TO PULL
THEM BACK ON THE PATH.**

**I THANK YOU FOR PROTECTING THEM FROM
THEIR ENEMIES**

**WHERE THEY(WE) HAVE DEVELOPED EVIL OR
DESTRUCTIVE BEHAVIORS HELP FREE THEM(US)
FROM THOSE EVIL OR DESTRUCTIVE BEHAVIORS**

WEEK 7

QUESTIONS

- **In The past, fatherhood did not need to be deeply pondered or well-define because its meaning and purpose were obvious.**
 - **Why is this no longer true? What forces seek to diminish or redefine fatherhood? How does Pope Francis' definition "giving life to others" highlight the inherent fatherhood to all men**
- **How does father absence affect children and society at large?**
- **How can grandfathers play a key role, especially where fathers are absent? What can children learn about the dignity of life from having regular time with their grandfathers?**

WEEK 7

QUESTIONS

- **How can the church and her sacraments play a key role in the renewal of fatherhood and provide a positive image of fathers?**
- **The document claims there is a concerted “attack on fatherhood”**
 - **How do you experience this attack in your own life? In what ways can you fight back and defend fatherhood?**

WEEK 7 - CALL TO BATTLE

- **REFLECT ON FATHERHOOD**
 - **WHAT AREAS DO YOU EXCEL? WHAT AREAS DO YOU NEED TO IMPROVE? MAKE THESE TWO QUESTIONS A PART OF YOUR DAILY EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE AND DEVISE WAYS TO DEVELOP THE VIRTUES OF A GOOD FATHER**
- **CONSIDER HOW YOU ARE CALLED TO EXERCISE FATHERHOOD BY GIVING LIFE TO OTHERS. PRAY TO GOD FOR GUIDANCE ON THIS IMPORTANCE FOCUS ON YOUR LIFE**
- **A FATHER MUST BE PROVIDED, PROTECTOR, AND SPIRITUAL HEAD OF HIS FAMILY, THE DOMESTIC CHURCH. HOW SHOULD A MAN FULFILL THESE ROLES? WHAT ABUSES OF THESE ROLES MUST BE AVOIDED? IF MARRIED, ASK YOUR WIFE HOW SHE CAN HELP YOU TO BECOME THE FATHER GOD CALLS YOU TO BE.**

WEEK 8- QUESTIONS

- **What do you plan to do to “get off the sidelines?” are there areas in your life you need to change? What areas do you need to change? What commitments do you need to make? What bad habits or sins do you need to overcome?**
- **Catholic faith is not a set of rules but an adventure**
 - **What is the difference between a faith that is alive and one based on religious obligation? Has your perspective changed during this study?**
- **Which practices have been most helpful and which do you plan to continue?**

WEEK 8- QUESTIONS

- **Which of the Bible passages in the book resonated most strongly? Which do you think is God saying to you? How can you put this message into action in your life?**

WEEK 8 - CALL TO BATTLE

- IF YOU DO NOT HAVE A FRIEND IN CHRIST WITH WHOM TO SHARE YOUR FAITH, SEEK TO DEVELOP SUCH A FRIENDSHIP. START A CONVERSATION ABOUT THE SUPPORT AND ACCOUNTABILITY YOU CAN PROVIDE TO EACH OTHER AS CATHOLIC MEN**
- DETERMINE ONE CONCRETE ACTION YOU WILL TAKE TO STEP "INTO THE BREACH" IN YOUR FAMILY, IN YOUR PARISH, AND IN YOUR COMMUNITY. TALK TO YOUR FRIENDS, WIFE/GIRLFRIEND, OR PASTOR ABOUT YOUR PLAN.**

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