



Live4More
Men's Discipleship Ministry

"A three-ply cord is not easily broken."Brothers better together

Tool Kit

for

Men's

Discipleship Groups

Empowering men to become better disciples of Jesus Christ

www.Live4More.us

To God be the glory!! Jesus we trust in You!

Live4More Men's Discipleship Ministry

A recognized 501(c)(3) non-profit organization

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ALL MEN DIE; NOT ALL MEN LIVE

Start a Men's Discipleship Group Today!

"Where one alone may be overcome, two together can resist. A three-ply cord is not easily broken."

~ Ecclesiastes 4:12

"As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another." ~ Proverbs 27:17

Live4More is a non-profit ministry with the mission to promote the development of small groups where men can comfortably discuss and grow in their faith within Catholic parish life.

The goal is to encourage men to form small groups to grow in faith, learn from each other and help hold each other accountable in their faith journey so they can go out to their family, friends, parish, workplace and community living out their Catholic faith as it is intended to be lived.

At **Live4More**, we believe that we, as men, are simply better disciples when we are walking our spiritual journeys as a band of brothers growing in faith together. Iron cannot sharpen iron if iron doesn't repeatedly touch iron. A three-ply cord cannot be formed with only a single strand. We need to meet regularly to grow in our faith together so that we are fully empowered to go forth and live out our faith in every aspect of our lives. We were made for relationship. We were made for greatness. We need each other! Brothers are better together!!

"We should not stay away from our assembly, as is the custom of some, but encourage one another, and this all the more as you see the day drawing near." ~ Hebrews 10:25

What is a **Live4More Men's Discipleship Group?**

A small group of men who are committed to meet regularly to grow in their faith, learn from each other, support each other and hold each other accountable in their faith journey. They are a band of brothers!

How can **Live4More help?**

We provide **Free On-Going Support** – Guidance, Coaching and Encouragement to help with:

- Getting Your Group Started
- Promoting & Sustaining Your Group
- Selection & Use of Materials
- Leadership & Facilitation Training
- Meeting Formats
- Growing Your Parish Men's Ministry
- Events – Men's Night / Conference

Live4More is with you every step of the way!

www.Live4More.us

Tool Kit for Men's Discipleship Groups

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Starting a Men's Discipleship Group

"As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another." ~ Proverbs 27:17

Step 1: LEADERSHIP

- Pray for the Lord's guidance in selecting two or three key men who will make up the core leadership team for the group.
- Choose two men to be the initial facilitators for group gatherings.
- As the group grows, encourage others to become more involved in leadership roles.

Step 2: APPROVAL

- Set an appointment with the Pastor so that you can get his approval and invite him to join in with you in the group gatherings as a participant.
- Make sure you understand the mission, purpose, and goals for the Discipleship Group before meeting with the Pastor.
- Be prepared to explain to the Pastor the format of the gatherings and the benefits to the Parish.
- Invite any other priests and deacons who serve your parish to join in with you in the group gatherings as participants.

Step 3: LOCATION

- Choose a meeting room in the Parish facility that gives you some privacy and the ability to expand.
- Make sure the area you choose is able to handle a TV, monitor, laptop, iPad or other electronic devices so that you can be free to select materials which contain audio or video presentations.
- The group could also meet in a group member's home or in a public place, but this may limit the materials you can select or reduce the privacy you can reasonably expect.

Step 4: TIME & FREQUENCY

- Choose when the group will meet. This should be a day and time that is good for the core leadership team and that they think will work well for the parish.
- Choose how often the group will gather – weekly (recommended) or bi-weekly.

Step 5: MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT

- Select solidly Catholic study materials for use at the group gatherings which are attractive to the men and are based on Scripture and the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Live4More is glad to provide suggestions and guidance on the advantages and disadvantages of different materials.
- Bring copies of any written materials and discussion questions along with a Bible.
- The Facilitator for the gathering is responsible to bring any DVD or technology devices which may be needed to the gathering.

Step 6: PROMOTION/RECRUITMENT

- All men are invited! (Recommendations from the Pastor/Deacon would be helpful)
- A personal invitation from a group member is the most effective way to bring new men into the group.
- Make an effort to invite men from other existing men's groups such as the Knights of Columbus or Men's Club, especially the leaders of these groups. These leaders are great resources of information about potential group members. Being careful to include these existing groups on the front end will help alleviate the possibility of these existing groups seeing your new group as "competition".
- Make an announcement from the pulpit at Mass.
- Place a continuous announcement in the parish bulletin regarding group gatherings.
- Distribute postcards or business cards with information about the group gatherings.

Step 7: GROWTH

- One of the core team leaders should regularly send an email prior to every gathering to keep men informed of the next gathering.
- All members should continuously strive to invite new men to the group and do everything reasonably possible to help men get to the group gatherings.
- The man who brings a new member should follow up with a phone call to make sure everything is okay and to remind him of the next gathering.
- Make every effort possible to help new members feel welcomed and cared for.
- The core team should be aware of men that are constant "no-shows" and let them know they are missed and invite them to the next gathering.
- When the core team feels that the gatherings are running smoothly, that is a good time to invite key men from other parishes to attend so that they might be encouraged to start a Live4More Discipleship Group in their parish.



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Resources for Formation Materials

"Do you not know that the runners in the stadium all run in the race, but only one wins the prize? Run as to win. Every athlete exercises discipline in every way. They do it to win a perishable crown but we an imperishable one." ~ 1 Corinthians 9:24-25

- **Live4More – Playbook for Disciples**

A directed exploration of intentional discipleship available for [free](#) download focused on discussion questions based on Scripture and the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Topics include; [Our Personal Relationship with God](#), [Life in the Spirit](#) and [Spiritual Growth Essentials](#). Contains [free](#) live streaming video content provided by *Crossing The Goal*.

Website: Live4More.us/Playbook

- **Crossing The Goal – Spiritual Fitness Workouts**

About a dozen Topical Video Series for men such as *Godly Man* and *Spiritual Combat*. [Free](#) live streaming video with associated *Workout Guides* containing discussion questions, Scripture and catechism. DVD's also available for purchase.

Website: CrossingTheGoal.com

- **Interior Freedom – Fr. Jacques Philippe**

Written in a simple and inviting style, this short book of 126 pages seeks to liberate the heart and mind to live the true freedom to which God calls each one of us. Generates fruitful small group discussion and personal spiritual growth.

Website: FrJacquesPhilippe.com/book/interior-freedom

- **Be A Man – Becoming the Man God Created You to Be**

A direct and easy to read book by Fr. Larry Richards exploring 10 topics on how to grow in holiness as a man. Includes discussion questions and action plans for each of the 10 topics. Great for small group discussion.

Websites: Ignatius.com; Amazon.com

- **Into the Breach – Authentic Catholic Masculinity**

A call to battle for Catholic men which urges them to embrace wholeheartedly masculine virtues in a world in crisis. Each of these 12 videos produced by the *Knights of Columbus* explores a different aspect of authentic Catholic masculinity featuring well-known Catholic commentators. The companion [Study Guide](#) facilitates reflection and discussion on the topics presented in the videos and guides men on a journey of brotherhood in faith.

Website: kofc.org/en/campaigns/into-the-breach

- **Consecration to St. Joseph – The Wonders of Our Spiritual Father**

A 33-day process of reading and prayer which explores the life and virtue of St. Joseph, the earthly father of Jesus. This man whom God chose to teach Jesus how to be a man, has much to teach us today on how to be the men we were made to be. *Go to Joseph!* He will increase your faith and virtue. This is very rich material for small group discussion.

Website: consecrationtostjoseph.org

- **Hearts Afire Parish Programs – Fr. Michael Gaitley, MIC**

A set of “Do it Yourself Retreats” focused on Marian Consecration and Divine Mercy designed for small group discussion. Topics include; Consecration to Jesus through Mary, Consoling the Heart of Jesus, The Holy Trinity, Merciful Love and the Second Greatest Story Ever Told. Materials include DVD’s, a book for each topic and discussion questions.

Website: allheartsafire.org

- **Heroic – Become the Man God Created You to Be**

This *free* and *very* easy-to-use tool is designed to help men develop deeper relationships with Christ, His Church and each other through meaningful discussions over 6 sessions. No preparation required. Get your [free study guide](#) today!

Website: Live4More.us/formation-materials

- **Exodus 90 – A Spiritual Exercise for the Renewal of the Church**

A challenging 90-day period of prayer and asceticism, supported by a fraternity of 5-7 like-minded men. The exercise focuses on gaining greater interior freedom through daily readings and reflections from the book of Exodus and weekly fraternity meetings with your brothers. Exodus 90 fraternities are spiritually directed by a priest whenever possible.

Website: Exodus90.com

- **The Activated Disciple – Taking Your Faith to the Next Level**

Practice is over. It’s game time! *The Activated Disciple* by Jeff Cavins teaches you to imitate Christ and overcome the obstacles which keep you from being the disciple you are called to be and begin radically living your faith.

Website: ascensionpress.com/products/the-activated-disciple

- **Messy & Foolish – How to Make a Mess, Be a Fool and Evangelize the World**

A simple and easy to use 6-part exploration of evangelization designed for small group discussion. The book is *very* inexpensive and a *free* study guide with challenging discussion questions is available for download.

Websites: MessyAndFoolish.com; DynamicCatholic.com

- **Catholic Christian Outreach – Faith Studies Series**

A collection of helpful resources to clearly and simply explain truths and principles for living the Catholic faith. Each of the 5 topics includes at least 6 sessions which integrate Scripture and Church teachings in its small group discussions.

Website: cco.ca/resources/faith-studies-series

- **Beginning Apologetics – How to Explain and Defend the Catholic Faith**

Basic tools to effectively explain and defend Catholic doctrine on 12 of the most commonly challenged Catholic beliefs.

Website: CatholicApologetics.com (San Juan Catholic Seminars – Other apologetics materials also available)



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Discipleship Group Meeting Format

"We should not stay away from our assembly, as is the custom of some, but encourage one another, and this all the more as you see the day drawing near." ~ Hebrews 10:25

Live4More generally recommends that a typical Men's Discipleship Group consists of about 4 to 12 men that meet every week or at least twice monthly.

Step 1 – Gathering, Worship and Prayer (About 15 minutes)

- **Worship** - Beginning with a worship song which is easy for men to sing is *highly recommended* but optional. "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord."
- **Prayer** - Spend a few minutes in prayer asking the Holy Spirit to guide the group through the discussion of the topic of this gathering. Including a brief time for intercessory prayer is suggested for established groups.
- **Life Sharing** - Group members are encouraged to share how things went personally and spiritually since the previous gathering with a **focus** on their personal action item from the previous gathering.

Step 2 – Presentation of Material (About 25 minutes)

- The Discussion Facilitator presents a very brief introduction of the topic.
- The Discussion Facilitator leads the group in reading of the material (or portions of the material) or watching a video presentation.

Step 3 – Group Discussion (About 40 minutes)

- The Discussion Facilitator leads the group in discussion of the topic by utilizing discussion questions and references provided with the materials or developed by the core leadership team prior to the gathering.
- If the group is greater than 10 members consider breaking into smaller groups of 4-6 men during this Group Discussion time. These smaller groups are led by facilitators pre-selected before the gathering.

Step 4 - Action item/Prayer (About 10 minutes)

- Take just a few minutes to share briefly the tone of the smaller group discussions, if the group was divided during the Group Discussion time.
- Each group member takes a couple of minutes to silently write down one personal action item he would like to accomplish before the next gathering.
- Make any needed announcements. Keep it *brief!*
- All the men sing together a worship song (Optional). Keep it simple!
- Close the meeting with a brief time of prayer led by one group member and concluding with all the men reciting together a common prayer such as the Our Father, the Universal Prayer or St. Michael the Archangel prayer.

Total Time – 90 minutes

Schedule Commitments: (All group members should adhere to)

- Make it a priority to attend all group gatherings.
- Prepare for the next gathering by reviewing the selected material and reflecting upon the discussion questions and reference material provided with the materials.

Spiritual Training: (All group members should practice)

- Daily Prayer
 - Set aside at least 15 minutes each day for personal private prayer. (Gradually try to increase this time).
 - Include at least 5 minutes in this time for reading of the Scriptures.
- Mass
 - Attend Mass each Sunday.
 - Prepare by reading the Scriptures prior to Mass (if married, with family).
 - Perform a private examination of conscience before attending Mass.
 - Daily Mass — Try to attend once or twice per month - if possible.
- Confession
 - At least Quarterly (Gradually try to increase this frequency)
 - As needed when not in a state of grace



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Group Gathering Guidelines

"Love one another with mutual affection; anticipate one another in showing honor." ~ Romans 12:10

The ideas presented in this brief guide are intended as guidelines to help lead you on your journey as a group and not as hard and fast rules. Every group is unique and has its own special character. Think of these ideas as the guardrails on a bridge. They are here to keep you from falling over the side so that you stay on the road moving forward, but you get to choose which lane to drive in.

Group Priorities

- Live4More generally recommends that a typical Men's Discipleship Group consists of *about* 4 to 12 men who meet every week or *at least* twice monthly.
- We have found that it works best when the gatherings are about 90 minutes long. However, 60 minutes can also work well. See our [Discipleship Group Meeting Format](#) resource for more details regarding our suggested meeting format.
 - Whatever your group chooses, commit to a standard format and follow it *religiously*.
- Each man should make a commitment to make his attendance at each gathering a priority in his life. Of course, on occasion a man might not be able to attend, but it should not be because he would rather watch the game!
- It is important that each gathering be a safe environment where each man can share his thoughts freely and *confidentially*. What is shared in group gatherings stays in the group!
- Select a quiet place to gather so that you will not be disturbed.
 - Turn off or silence your phones.... and better yet, just leave them in the car!
 - Each man should keep an open mind and heart to grow in faith in the Lord.
 - Select a meeting room at church or a private home where distractions can be removed.
 - One or two men should take the responsibility to make sure the room is properly reserved and set-up for your group before the gathering begins.
 - Work together after the gathering to clean up and put things back where they belong.
- Select a leader (or facilitator) for each group gathering.
 - Rotate the role among multiple men in the group.
 - Select the facilitator for each gathering in advance of the gathering, preferably before concluding the current gathering.
 - The leader's role is to keep the discussion on topic and to watch the clock so as to keep the gathering on schedule.
 - The leader should make clear what is going to be covered at the next gathering (readings, videos, action plans, etc.).

- Be respectful of each other's time and schedule by starting and ending on time.
 - Always begin and end with prayer.
 - Ask different members of the group to lead the prayers.
 - The prayer may be one we all know or spontaneous – the Lord loves them both!
 - Including intercessory prayer at the beginning of the gathering is *highly suggested*.
 - Consider including a worship song or two as part of the prayer. Worship helps to open our hearts for listening and sharing.
 - Keep it simple.
 - It's okay to sing off-key. "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord" (see Psalm 98:4-6)
 - If the song is not well known, provide copies of the lyrics.
 - If your group typically does sing, consider developing a song sheet with the lyrics for the songs you use most frequently.
 - Remember, there is no rush! You can continue the discussion at the next gathering.
 - Live4More is about spending time together as a band of brothers learning and sharing our faith and having a little fellowship too!
- Each man should have a Bible (print or electronic) and bring it with him to each gathering of the group.
 - Take turns doing the scripture readings.
 - Share your thoughts on the questions and ideas presented.
 - There may be different views and some may be strongly felt.
 - Listen to your brothers and embrace different viewpoints. God loves the discussion and we all grow when we share our faith with each other.
 - The New American Bible is a good version for Catholics and includes footnotes with explanations and other references.
 - Ideally, a Catechism of the Catholic Church would be available at the gathering.
- Relax and enjoy each other. Lean on the Holy Spirit for guidance!

Action Plan

- Always complete this activity near the end of every gathering, even if you don't finish all the other sections.
- Take a few minutes for each man to make an action plan to work on between now and the next group gathering. Write it down.
 - Use the actions suggested or make your own plan.
 - You can make individual plans or the entire group could decide to take on one common challenge.
- At the beginning of the next gathering, each man should have an opportunity to share on how he is doing with his action plan and how things are going in his life.
 - Celebrate together when things go well.
 - Support one another when challenges are encountered.
- Close the gathering with prayer and perhaps a short worship song.