MEN'S GROUP ACTION PLAN SUMMARIES

SIGNPOSTS
How To Be a Catholic Man in the World Today

PART I; MAN AND GOD

Lesson 1  SEARCHING FOR THE LIVING GOD - GOD IS ALIVE.
I will be more consistently aware of God’s presence in my life by:
+ looking for God’s presence in the ordinariness of my life.
+ imagining myself as seeing God in the burning bush and reflecting on my feelings.
+ spending a few minutes each day looking for evidence of God in my life.
+ living in Thanksgiving since everything we are and have comes from him.

Lesson 2  OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS - JESUS IS OUR LORD AND KING
I will examine my relationship with Jesus by:
+ reading the Gospels and imagine being with Jesus during his earthly ministry.
+ asking Jesus to come into my heart in a deeper way.
+ surrendering all things in my life over to Jesus, my King.

Lesson 3  PRAYER- NOW I LAY ME DOWN TO SLEEP
I will pay more attention to my prayer life by:
+ scheduling a specific time each day for prayer (intimacy).
+ spending a few minutes each day reflecting on my prayer habits and prayer growth and how they impact my life.
+ praying each day for my family and others.
+ pray each day for at least one person who has fallen away from our faith or who has no faith

Lesson 4  OUR DEPENDENCE ON GOD – SEEK FIRST THE KINGDOM
I will examine my dependence on God by:
+ turning to God first when I am in need.
+ making a list of all that I believe is a gift from God.
+ remembering when something didn’t work out because I had the attitude, “I’ll do it my way.”

Lesson 5  GOD’S UNCONDITIONAL LOVE – I HAVE CALLED YOU BY NAME; YOU ARE MINE
I will look for the manifestations of God’s love in my life by:
+ asking God the Father to reveal his deep love for me, just like a father has for his son.
+ spending time each day reflecting on where I encountered God.
+ trying to be more aware of the reflection of God in the people I meet.

Lesson 6  CONVERSION – REPENT AND BELIEVE!
I will be more aware of my continuing conversion process by:
+ writing about the significant conversion experiences in my life.
+ sharing my conversion story with another person.
+ trying to identify ongoing conversion experiences in my life.
Lesson 7  OUR INCLINATION TOWARD SIN – PUTTING ON THE ARMOR OF GOD
I will try to be more conscious on a regular basis of my own sins by:
+ performing a daily examination of conscience and asking for God’s grace to free me from my sin patterns.
+ setting a regular time to participate in the Sacrament of reconciliation.
+ Doing Good! - Resisting Evil.

Lesson 8  RECEIVING THE HOLY SPIRIT – FIRE UPON THE EARTH
I will be more open to the action of the Holy Spirit by:
+ looking for God’s actions in my own life through meditation, reflection, listening and reading God’s word.
+ looking for signs of the movement of the Holy Spirit in the lives of others.
+ praying for the Lord to send the Holy Spirit to guide my life.

Lesson 9  THE EUCHARIST – WHEN YOU EAT THIS BREAD
I will develop a better understanding of the Eucharist by:
+ reading John 6 several times and praying over it.
+ attending daily Mass at least once a week and, if possible, more frequently.
+ praying over the readings for each Mass before I attend the celebration.
+ praying that the Lord will bless me with the wisdom to experience the presence of Jesus in the Eucharist.

Eucharist = Salvation, Sacrifice, Service and Selflessness.

Lesson 10  OUR UNIQUENESS BEFORE GOD – GOD MADE WHO/
I will try to be more conscious of God’s active presence in my life by:
+ spending time before the Blessed Sacrament meditating on my experience of God.
+ creating a journal of my experience of God.
+ working at letting go of my need to be in control.

Lesson 11  DOING VERSUS BEING – BUSY, BUSY, BUSY
I will work on my ability to find myself in the presence of God and to be able to just “be” by:
+ not filling every moment of my day with productive or fun activities.
+ avoiding television, radio, internet, cell phone etc and spending that time quietly with the Lord.
+ being more present to the Lord through prayer, daily mass, Eucharistic adoration, rosary and reading scriptures and the catechism.

Lesson 12  LISTENING TO GOD – GOD CAN SPEAK TO ME!
I will try to listen to the Lord more often by:
+ seeking God’s wisdom in areas of my life where I am struggling.
+ spending time each day quieting my mind and “listening” to God in prayer.
+ asking the Lord to increase my Faith.

Lesson 13  SACRED SCRIPTURE - THE GIFT OF THE WRITTEN WORD
I will become more a man of the Word by:
+ purchasing a Catholic Bible, if I don’t already have one, that I can use in my daily prayer time.
+ reading and praying over the mass readings each day.
+ joining a Bible study or begin a book-by-book study of the Bible on my own or with a friend.
Lesson 14  SACRED TRADITION – HANDING ON THE FAITH
I will strive to understand the source of truth by:
  + beginning a systematic study of the Catechism.
  + reading the Vatican II document, Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation (Dei Verbum).
  + reading a respected Catholic Author on the subject of Tradition.

Lesson 15  THE CHURCH’S TEACHING AUTHORITY – BY WHAT AUTHORITY?
I will examine my attitude toward the authority of the Church by:
  + identifying Church teachings which I don’t understand.
  + studying Scripture, the Catechism, or other documents of the Church on those particular teachings.

PART II;  THE MEASURE OF A MAN

Lesson 16  AUTHENTIC CHRISTIAN MEN – REAL MEN DON’T EAT QUICHE
I will strive to become a real, authentic Christian man by:
  + telling my family that I love them.
  + showing generosity to someone in need.
  + putting others first at work.
  + examining when I was selfish, self-seeking , or greedy

Lesson 17  POSITIVE ATTITUDE AND FAITH – HALF EMPTY OR HALF FULL
I will work at eliminating the pessimistic attitudes in my life by:
  + consciously identifying my blessings and thanking God for them often.
  + seeking the source of any bad attitudes or thought patterns I have.
  + selecting the most negative attitude I have and giving it to Jesus every time it rises in my mind or actions.

Lesson 18  A MAN OF ACTION
I will become a man of action by:
  + praying for guidance to serve someone in my neighborhood.
  + looking for existing needs of others that I have the ability to fulfill.
  + deciding on one work of mercy this week and doing it.

Lesson 19  Moral Decision Making
I will do my best to make better moral decisions by:
  + reflecting on the Scriptures and the Church’s teachings in order to weigh the consequences of any decision before acting.
  + seeking spiritual help through prayer or from an informed person in difficult decisions.
  + not allowing selfish desires to supersede the moral teachings of the Church.
  + always asking, “What would Jesus do in this situation?”

Lesson 20  TEMPTATION
I will do my best not to yield to temptation by:
  + being aware of three ways that I fall to temptation and avoid them.
  + crying out to God in prayer when I am tempted.
  + finding one friend or brother whom I trust and can seek help from when I feel tempted.
Lesson 21   HABITS AND THE VIRTUOUS LIFE
I will work on becoming a more virtuous man by:
+ asking the Holy Spirit to show me three bad habits and seeking his grace to help me change them.
+ selecting the habit I think is most damaging to my living a godly life, and developing a concrete plan to overcome it.
+ asking my brothers in this group to pray for me to be able to overcome a specific bad habit.
+ seeking the help of a mentor or spiritual director.
+ not getting discouraged when I see a bad habit re-surface, but using it as an opportunity to tell God how much I need him and my brothers.

Lesson 22   INTEGRITY – OUR ACTIONS SPEAK SO LOUDLY!
I will address what interferes with my being a man of integrity by:
+ examining one way or time that I haven’t acted like a man of integrity, repenting of it, and trying to make amends for it.
+ choosing two or three ways that I can walk as a man of integrity, especially when no one is looking.

Lesson 23   ACCOUNTABILITY – THE BLAME GAME
I will attempt to make amends for when I refused to accept accountability by:
+ attempting to repair any damage done.
+ seeking forgiveness from a person to whom I shifted blame that was rightfully mine.
+ not blaming others, but instead looking for ways to take responsibility for my thoughts, words, and actions.

Lesson 24   THE STORING OF TREASURE – WHERE YOUR TREASURES IS...
I will try to discern where I am laying up treasures by:
+ reviewing my checkbook, in detail, to identify my financial priorities.
+ creating a budget that will make better use of my material possessions and income.
+ examining how I support my parish and asking Jesus if I should serve more or give more.

Lesson 25   EXPRESSING EMOTION – NEVER LET ON...
I will attempt to better understand the way I express my emotions by:
+ being more aware of the feelings I express and how I express them.
+ asking my wife to help me with emotions that I might consider not Masculine and therefore find difficult to express.
+ taking some time to analyze the reasons why I am uncomfortable with a particular emotion or feeling.

Lesson 26   A MAN’S ANGER – SHOWING THE SWORD
I will work on controlling inappropriate anger by:
+ praying for God's help in moments of distress when I usually get angry.
+ trying to recognize two situations that normally make me angry, and placing them at Jesus' feet.
+ developing a plan to act differently in these situations, such as walking away or taking some time before I try to speak.

Lesson 27   FORGIVENESS – I FORGIVE YOU
I will strive to be a more forgiving person by:
+ asking my brothers to pray that I might be more forgiving.
+ praying daily for someone against whom I harbor resentment or enmity.
+ seeking reconciliation with any “enemy” I might have before receiving Communion.
Lesson 28  VIGILANCE – THE DAY AND HOUR YOU DO NOT KNOW
I will try to become more vigilant by:
+ acting this week in my prayer, family, and workplace as if Jesus will come tonight.
+ trying to imagine what it must be like in heaven.
+ taking stock of the things that separate me from God and meditating on the love that the Lord has for me.

Lesson 29  RISKS AND CONSEQUENCES – GET OUT OF THE BOAT!
I will take a risk and stretch myself spiritually in the next week by:
+ sharing my faith story with someone with whom I have never discussed my faith.
+ discussing a troublesome faith issue or a doubt about my faith with my spouse or if I am not married, with a best friend.
+ acting on those issues in my life that will put me at risk for following Jesus and his teachings.

Lesson 30  LETTING GO - STRENGTH THROUGH WEAKNESS
I will examine those areas in my life where I desire power or control by:
+ making a list of those elements in my life I think I control.
+ talking with my spouse or a close friend about my propensity to control.
+ asking God to send the Holy Spirit to help me overcome the desire to be in control.

Part III – MAN AND FAMILY

Lesson 31  FAMILY VISION - MAPPING OUT A VISION
I will demonstrate more concern for the future of my family by:
+ beginning to pray for each member of my family.
+ praying daily that my children will respond to the call that God gives to them in their life.
+ discussing with my wife the possibility of developing a plan for our family’s salvation.

Lesson 32  LEADING THE FAMILY – CHOOSE THIS DAY WHOM YOU WILL SERVE
I will attempt to be a better servant leader in my family by:
+ paying more attention to my wife and children and their needs.
+ spending time reflecting on the kind of servant leader I have been to my family.
+ identifying one area where I need improvement, and working on improving in that area.

Lesson 33  THE MAN AS A WARRIOR – READY FOR BATTLE
I will be more alert to potential spiritual dangers to my family by:
+ paying closer attention to the programs that our family watches on TV.
+ staying more aware of who my children's friends are and what they do together.
+ informing myself about what the children are being taught in school.
+ paying more attention to the influence I have on my family through my own life.

Lesson 34  A MAN AND HIS WIFE – BONE OF MY BONES
I will build up and strengthen my marriage by:
+ telling my wife that I love her each day and giving her a kiss.
+ finding ways to continue to court my wife as I did before we were married.
+ praying daily for my wife.
+ inviting my wife to pray with me for our marriage and family
+ I will let my wife be right.
Lesson 35  THE SEXUALITY OF MAN – GIVING ONESELF
I will attempt to better understand and express my sexuality by:
+ studying what the scriptures say about sexuality.
+ studying the documents of the Church that have to do with sexuality.
+ having a candid conversation with my wife about our sexual relationship.

Lesson 36  FIDELITY – FATAL ATTRACTION
I will be more alert to the dangers of infidelity by:
+ making a mental inventory of tempting situations to avoid.
+ considering the consequences of committing adultery, especially the effect on my wife.
+ calling to mind the non-sexual ways in which I am unfaithful.
+ praying daily to be strong in avoiding temptations.
+ spending time each day considering how much I love my family and how important they are to me.

Lesson 37  A MAN AND HIS FATHER – IN MY FATHER’S HOUSE
I will attempt to reconcile any unresolved problems with my earthly father, whether living or dead, by:
+ paying him a personal visit, calling him on the phone, or writing him a note or letter.
+ asking for forgiveness in prayer.
+ saying “I love you” to him.
+ thanking him for a specific contribution he made to my life.

Lesson 38  TEACHIN OUR CHILDREN – PERSEVERING IN LOVE
I will accept the responsibility that God has given me as a parent and provide not only for the physical needs of my children, but for their spiritual needs by:
+ examining the role model I provide for my family and addressing any areas of bad influence.
+ taking inventory of my role as a parent in light of the Catechism and Scripture references in this lesson.
+ praying with my wife about being more godly parents.

Lesson 39  THE FAMILY AS DOMESTIC CHURCH – THE MINIATURE CHURCH
I will try to assist my family in better understanding the nature of a godly family by:
+ establishing a formal time for prayer together at least once per week.
+ discussing with them what it means for us to be a domestic church.
+ helping them to understand the connection between worshipping at Mass together and home life.

PART IV – MAN AND HIS WORLD

Lesson 40  SPENDING TIME TOGETHER – GETTING TO KNOW YOU
I will pay more attention to the time I spend with my family by:
+ analyzing the time I spend at work and other non-family activities.
+ actually involving myself with them instead of just “being there.”
+ taking a walk with my wife and learning more about her interests.
+ talking to each of my children one-on-one.

Lesson 41  A MAN AND HIS JOB – A QUESTION OF BALANCE
I will try to be more faithful to my family and my job by:
+ evaluating the priorities and goals in my life.
+ discussing with my spouse how my job impacts the quality of our family life.
+ evaluating the reasons I spend as much time on the job as I do.
Lesson 42  BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS – BROTHER TO BROTHER
I will take stock of my relationships with other men by:
+ identifying the positive elements I take to the relationships.
+ identifying and working to eliminate the negative elements I take to the relationships.
+ resolving to do one thing this month that will strengthen my relationship with my best male friend.

Lesson 43  SPEAKING THE TRUTH IN LOVE – SHOOTING STRAIGHT
I will reflect on how I speak the truth in love by:
+ examining my motives when I have to speak a hard truth.
+ stopping to consider the consequences of telling a “kind” lie.

Lesson 44  CHRISTIANS AND CIVIL AUTHORITY – RENDER UNTO CAESAR
I will examine my attitude toward civil authority by:
+ repenting of any ungodly attitudes about authority that are not justified.
+ identifying any areas where I might disagree with civil laws, such as the death penalty or abortion.
+ praying about what God is calling me to do to fight unjust laws.

Lesson 45  SOCIAL ACTION – AS YOU DO UNTO THE LEAST OF THESES
I will try to stand in solidarity with the poor as the Church teaches by:
+ making myself more aware of the social teachings of the Church
+ paying more attention to the plight of the invisible poor and oppressed in my environment.
+ praying about giving of my time and money to those who serve the downtrodden.

Lesson 46  PREJUDICE – SOME OF MY BEST FRIENDS ARE...
I will work at being more aware of prejudice in my world by:
+ looking for any form of prejudice in my life toward others.
+ identifying a form of prejudice in my environment that is generally accepted, and doing something about it.
+ getting to know someone from a different racial, religious, or social group.
+ praying daily to be strong in avoiding temptations.

Lesson 47  CARING FOR THE NEEDS OF OTHERS – AM I MY BROTHER’S KEEPER?
Out of love for my brothers, I will:
+ try to make a friend, be a friend, and bring a friend to Christ.
+ be more open to the needs of my brothers.
+ resist the tendency to not get involved.

Lesson 48  HEROES/ROLE MODELS – WHERE HAVE ALL THE HEROES GONE?
I will try to be a better role model for others by:
+ praying for guidance in my life.
+ being more aware of the consequences of my behavior on others.
+ seeking a positive role model for myself.

Lesson 49  BUILDING UP THE BODY OF CHRIST – THE HOUSEHOLD OF GOD
I will try to be more aware of my responsibility to build up the Body of Christ by:
+ examining my gifts and how I am using them.
+ seeking unity if I am involved in a faction in my parish.
Lesson 50  PROTESTANT BROTHERS – THAT THEY BE ONE
In response to Jesus’ prayer for unity, I will:
   + study my faith to better understand what is meant by Christian unity.
   + share my faith story with a Protestant friend and listen to his.
   + pray for unity.

Lesson 51  EVANGELIZATION – GO AND MAKE DISCIPLES
I will seek to become a better evangelizer by:
   + reading “On Evangelization in the Modern World” or the U.S. Bishops’ “Go and Make Disciples.”
   + becoming involved in one of the evangelizing ministries of my parish.
   + speaking to my pastor about establishing an evangelization committee, if one does not exist in my parish.
   + befriending one of my unchurched neighbors, praying for him and asking God for opportunities to share my faith story with him.

Lesson 52  LOOKING BACK, LOOKING FORWARD – SETTING GOALS
I will try to improve myself and my environment by:
   + praying for the Lord to guide me in the coming year
   + developing meaningful and specific resolutions for the new year
   + developing a workable plan to implement my resolutions
   + stopping periodically to reflect on how well my plan is working
   + frequently questioning if my plans are in accordance with God’s plans

RESOURCES FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

+ START EACH DAY WITH PRAYER
+ SPEND TIME IN PRAYER THROUGHOUT EACH DAY.
+ END EACH DAY IN PRAYER
+ READ THE DAILY SCRIPTURE READINGS LISTED IN THE BULLETIN.
+ ATTEND MASS AND GO TO CONFESSION AS OFTEN AS POSSIBLE.

St. Joseph:
   Daily Mass: M-W 7:00 AM; TH-F 8:10 AM
   Communion Service M & Th. at 7:00 PM
   Confession:  Saturday 3-4:00PM

St. John Neumann:
   Daily Mass: M-F 9:00 AM; M&W 7:00 PM
   Communion Service: Tues & Thurs 7:00 PM
   Confession:  Saturday 4-4:30 PM

SPEND TIME IN EUCHARISTIC ADORATION

St. Joseph Eucharistic Adoration- 24/7 in Chapel.
St. John Neumann  Weekdays 9:30 AM to 12:00 midnight – in Chapel
St. Albert the Great 24/7
St. John Bosco 24/7

Humility - Be Humble – Conform your will to God’s will
Obedience - Be Obedient to Christ and His Church.
Love – God first and your neighbor more than yourself.
Yes - to making Jesus first and answering his call.