



FORWARD!
INTO THE BREACH
7-WEEK SEMINAR
GUIDEBOOK

ST. JOHN NEUMANN CATHOLIC CHURCH
GAITHERSBURG, MARYLAND

SUMMER 2016

The *Forward!* Into the Breach 7-Week Seminar

Forward! Into the Breach is a Compendium Workbook to '*Into the Breach*', an Apostolic Exhortation to Catholic Men, written by Bishop Thomas J. Olmsted of the Diocese of Phoenix. Suitable for both personal use and group settings, the Workbook contains the entire text of Bishop Olmsted's document, 41 questions associated with each section of the Apostolic Exhortation, and 31 interspersed text boxes throughout that seek to further express the faith of the Roman Catholic church relevant to topics addressed in the Bishop's Letter. This 7-week Leadership Seminar for Men is based on the *Forward!* Into the Breach Compendium Workbook.

In this Seminar Guide the entire Workbook has been divided into equal parts for each of the 7-weeks. However, in order to accommodate a 90 minute once a week meeting schedule, it is not feasible to cover all of the Workbook material in just a short weekly presentation overview. With this in mind, each session will open with content and corresponding salient questions that will be most helpful to attendees providing as much insight into the Bishop's Apostolic Exhortation as possible. Therefore, each attendee is encouraged to review the Workbook material and complete the Suggested Discussion Questions before each week's meeting.

Discerning How God is Calling You to Step *Into the Breach*

There are many areas in the Bishop's Apostolic Exhortation for catholic men to ponder and respond to. However, a key goal for the 7-week Seminar is for each attendee to gain additional clarity of purpose as a man created in the image and likeness of God. A purpose that is discerned as his mission given to him by Jesus Christ Himself because of who he is as a man created by God. By the end of the Seminar, each attendee will have the opportunity to identify what he must do to establish and moreover, maintain a firm foundation in the perfect masculine role model for all men, Christ. From there he can more readily and actively acquire from the Holy Spirit the **boldness** and **confidence** to move forward into his calling and mission as the Bishop encourages all of us to, step *Into the Breach*.

To accommodate this goal, each session contains Action Plan Items. These are questions and statements meant to provoke and challenge our thoughts in what God's mission is for each of us as men. As a further aid on page 10 of this Seminar Guide are some areas that are common to all Christians in discerning God's will for our lives. Make no mistake about it, God has a plan for YOUR life, and part of life's joy is to continually seek His will and live it out. Because it is there that you will find no better place to be.

The Absolute Need for Brotherhood

The most effective way to live as a man of God is to live in fraternity and fellowship with other Godly men. This is more than a casual friendship, more than a social outreach, more than meeting and greeting acquaintances regardless of the frequency of such. This is a band of brothers supporting each other, listening to each other, praying with and for each other. When placed in its proper order in accordance with a man's vocation in life, this serves not to supplant, but strengthen his vocation and solidify his dedication to his wife and family if called to marriage, or his service to the church and the local Body of Christ if called to Holy Orders, or as a single man.

This is **not** optional. It has become increasingly clear that the deceiver, Satan, wants nothing more than to isolate men. Isolate them from the ones they love, from the church, and most of all from being a brother in Christ with other men. Many men know this from experience. Today men need to band together, regardless of who we like, dislike, admire, or completely dismiss. We need to see the beyond the personality of the man who God has put in our path to associate with, lead, guide, follow or do whatever our call is with the person. In these men we must see Christ. Seeing Christ in our brothers knocks down walls of division, derision, and dissolution and brings unity to the Body of Christ.

A Different Kind of Warfare

In Christ we become spiritual warriors. Warriors who lift high His cross. Warriors who follow the Lord and His church on earth into battle for our souls, the souls of those who we love and care for, and indeed the world. Participation in this battle is not altogether daunting to contemplate. Because as we will see, it is living out who we are. Men. Men fighting together on the side of righteousness and truth. This is not a militaristic campaign of destruction. No, it is a self-sacrificing service of carrying God's love and truth to those who are deceived by sin, Satan, and the world. As St. Paul tells us:

"...we do not corrupt the word of God; but make known the truth, we commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. And if our gospel is ... veiled, it is veiled only to those who are perishing. In their case, the god of this world has blinded their unbelieving minds, that they should not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For we preach not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord..." (2 Corinthians 4:3-5 Challoner-Rheims Version).

Tony Castellano

May 2016

FORWARD! INTO THE BREACH
SJN 2016 MEN'S LEADERSHIP SEMINAR

Session 1 - May 17

Eugene de Ribeaux, St. John Neumann TMIY! Core Team Leader

- Welcome and Introductions
 - Evening's Agenda
- "Into the Breach" Timeline

Fr. Joe Rogers, Pastor, St. John Neumann Catholic Church

- Why is this Seminar being hosted by St. John Neumann?
- Why this is a *critical moment* in the life of the Church?
- Today's Catholic Men's movement and the New Evangelization – *Just a Coincidence?*

Doug Sharafinski, St. John Neumann Men's Ministry

- Overview of the 7-weeks
- How can the material be integrated in our lives?
- Is there really 'homework'?

Charles Minear, St. John Neumann TMIY! Core Team Leader

- The importance of small groups
- How small groups will work during the seminar – *and Beyond!*
- Witness/Sharing

Questions & Answers

ACTION PLAN ITEMS:

- ✓ No one should leave the seminar after June 28th and not know who they will approach to engage in fellowship with. While it is true (and convenient) that the seminar offers the opportunity to find like minded men in the Lord, it is not the only avenue for someone to identify a Godly man to associate with. How will you find someone or a group of individuals?
- ✓ How much time will I spend during the week to review the past week's session and prepare for next week's session by reading ahead and answering the Questions for Thought?

FORWARD! INTO THE BREACH
SJN 2016 MEN'S LEADERSHIP SEMINAR

Session 2 - May 24	Page
<i>Into The Breach, An Apostolic Exhortation to Catholic Men, my Spiritual Sons in the Diocese of Phoenix, Thomas J. Olmsted, Bishop of Phoenix</i>	1
A Call to Battle	2
<i>Illustration – Statistics Since the Year 2000</i>	2
<i>“The world is under attack by Satan, as our Lord said it would be.”</i>	3
<i>Questions for Thought</i>	4
Purpose of this Exhortation	7
<i>Illustration – Three Questions in Three Contexts</i>	7
<i>Questions for Thought</i>	8
Number of Pages for this Session	8

Suggested Discussion Questions:	
Section Title	Questions
A Call to Battle	<i>Page 4 – question 1</i> <i>Page 5 – question 3</i> <i>Page 6 – question 6</i>
Purpose of this Exhortation	<i>Page 8 – question 7</i> <i>Page 9 – question 9</i>

ACTION PLAN ITEMS:

- ✓ What is your motivation to act in response to this calling? Has it hit the depth of your heart? Ask yourself: “Am I holding anything back? If yes, what and why?” The honest answer to this question is key for allowing the Lord to work in your life and to “step *Into the Breach*.”
- ✓ Bishop Olmsted provides us with the following: The Apostolic Exhortation is an encouragement and a challenge; A calling forward to mission for every willing man; and, the nature of a man’s mission is found in Christ. What will you do to “find your mission in Christ?”
- ✓ How do understand the “Three Questions in Three Contexts” in discerning your mission? What is a way that you may be called to participate in one of the three contexts? How will the answers to the three questions influence your decision?

FORWARD! INTO THE BREACH
SJN 2016 MEN'S LEADERSHIP SEMINAR

Session 3 - May 31	Page
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Context #1: A New Apostolic Moment – The “New Evangelization”	10
<i>The New Evangelization – Wanting to See, Hear, and Touch the Risen Lord</i>	10
<i>Illustration – Be Confident! Be Bold!</i>	11
<i>Questions for Thought</i>	12
<i>Leadership in Christ</i>	15
Context #2: A Field Hospital and a Battle College	16
<i>Learning From the Parable of the Sower</i>	17
<i>Questions for Thought</i>	18
<hr/>	
<i>Total Number of Pages</i>	8

Suggested Discussion Questions:

Section Title	Questions
Context #1: A New Apostolic Moment – The “New Evangelization”	<i>Page 13 – question 14</i> <i>Page 14 – question 16</i>
Context #2: A Field Hospital and a Battle College	<i>Page 18 – questions 17-18</i>

ACTION PLAN ITEMS:

- ✓ In a real sense all of us are called to “engage in the New Evangelization.” What steps are needed to fully comprehend how the Lord is calling you to engage in the New Evangelization. What are the ways you can engage?
- ✓ How can you best reveal the “Termites” that Bishop Olmsted discusses? How would you describe the “Termites” to someone else?

FORWARD! INTO THE BREACH
SJN 2016 MEN'S LEADERSHIP SEMINAR

Session 4 - June 7	Page
Context #3: Man and Woman are Complementary, not Competitors	20
<i>Created in the Image and Likeness of God</i>	21
<i>“We must never underestimate the power of sin.”</i>	21
<i>Question for Thought</i>	22
Question 1: What does it mean to be a Catholic Man?	23
Ecce Homo – Behold <u>the</u> Man	23
<i>The Three Lies of Satan</i>	24
<i>Questions for Thought</i>	25
<i>Total Number of Pages</i>	
5	

Suggested Discussion Questions:

Section Title	Questions
Context #3: Man and Woman are Complementary, not Competitors	<i>Page 22 – questions 21, 22</i>
Question 1: What doe sit mean to be a Catholic Man?	<i>Page 25 – question 23 Page 26 – question 25</i>

ACTION PLAN ITEMS:

- ✓ Knowing your mission as a man called by God requires an understanding of the complementarity of masculinity and femininity. Once understood, we can allow the truth and meaning of human sexuality to correct the distortions and outright lies of the world about who a man is and what it means to be a man. What are the ways I need to learn and discuss/proclaim the truths?
- ✓ How will I challenge others about the world's view of human sexuality?

FORWARD! INTO THE BREACH
SJN 2016 MEN'S LEADERSHIP SEMINAR

Session 5 – June 14	Page
Saints, our Heroes of Faith	27
<i>Virtue is Strength</i>	28
<i>From One Dad to Another</i>	29
<i>Questions for Thought</i>	30
The Catholic Man's Identity	32
<i>Questions for Thought</i>	33
Beloved and Free Sons, Called to the Battle Within	34
<i>Through Temptations We Can Atone for Past Sins</i>	35
<i>The Armor of God</i>	36
<i>Freedom, License, and Conscience</i>	37
<i>Questions for Thought</i>	38
<i>Your Prayer Time – Something Worth Fighting For</i>	39
The Practices of a Committed Catholic Man	40
<i>Strength through Repentance</i>	41
<i>Building Fraternity with Other Catholic Men</i>	42
<i>Total Number of Pages</i>	
15	

Suggested Discussion Questions:

Section Title	Questions
Saints, our Heroes of Faith	<i>Page 31 – question 29</i>
The Catholic Man's Identity	<i>Page 33 – questions 30, 31</i>
Beloved and Free Sons, Called to the Battle Within	<i>Page 38 – question 33</i>

ACTION PLAN ITEMS:

- ✓ What is my commitment to daily to prayer? Frequent confession? Reasonably seeking to attend Mass on days other than Sunday?
- ✓ How will I be accountable to this commitment?
- ✓ How will I act on protecting myself with the Armor of God against the wickedness and snares of the devil?

FORWARD! INTO THE BREACH
SJN 2016 MEN'S LEADERSHIP SEMINAR

Session 6 – June 21	Page
Question 2: How does a Catholic Man Love?	44
<i>In the Name of Jesus</i>	45
Three Masculine Loves: Friend, Husband, Father	46
1. A Friend in Christ – Bands of Brothers	46
<i>As Iron Sharpens Iron, One Man Supports Another - a Bond of Brotherhood</i>	48
<i>Questions for Thought</i>	49
2. Man as Husband – The Purpose of Masculine Erotic Love	50
<i>Sexuality and the Divine Work of Creation</i>	51
<i>“Male and female he created them.”</i>	52
<i>The Focus of Satan</i>	54
<i>The Severing of Unholy Bonds</i>	55
<i>Root Causes of Pornography Use</i>	56
<i>What Happens to Users of Pornography?</i>	57
<i>Questions for Thought</i>	58
<i>The Body Reflects the Mystery of God’s Love for Human Beings</i>	59
<i>Men and Women Bear the Divine Image</i>	60
<div style="text-align: right; margin-right: 50px;"><i>Total Number of Pages</i></div> <div style="text-align: right;">16</div>	

Suggested Discussion Questions:	
Section Title	Questions
A Friend in Christ – Bands of Brothers	<i>Page 49 – questions 34, 35</i>
Man as Husband – The Purpose of Masculine Erotic Love	<i>Page 58 – question 36 Page 59 – question 38</i>

ACTION PLAN ITEMS:

- ✓ What is your “anti-isolation” plan? (Page 49, question 35)
- ✓ What are the ways that I seek to further understand the nature of the spiritual battle against human sexuality?

FORWARD! INTO THE BREACH
SJN 2016 MEN'S LEADERSHIP SEMINAR

Session 7 – June 28	Page
3. Fatherhood is Essential	62
<i>“How can you get closer to God during your day?”</i>	63
<i>Questions for Thought</i>	63
Grandfathers, You are of Great Importance	65
Hope in the Shadows of Lost Fatherhood	65
<i>Forgiveness and Repentance</i>	66
Conclusion: Sent Forth by Christ	67
<i>Questions for Thought</i>	69
<div style="text-align: right;"><i>Total Number of Pages</i> 7</div>	

Suggested Discussion Questions:

Section Title	Questions
Fatherhood is Essential	<i>Page 63 – question 40</i> <i>Page 64 – question 41</i>
Conclusion: Sent Forth by Christ	<i>Page 69 – question 43</i>

ACTION PLAN ITEMS:

- ✓ Discernment is a key aspect in the spiritual battle for men. Discernment in seeing how Satan distorts masculinity. Meditating on this quote from Bishop Olmsted is an important way to comprehend the truth of what it means to be a man. *“Satan’s primary strategy is to damage and abolish human fatherhood, in the man is a relationship where each of us first glimpses what God’s fatherhood might be like.”* (p.61)
- ✓ How will I live out my call to Fatherhood within my vocation?

FORWARD! INTO THE BREACH
SJN 2016 MEN'S LEADERSHIP SEMINAR

Discerning God's Will

In discerning God's will for our lives, there are multiple aspects to take into consideration. First, don't go it alone. Seek the guidance of someone you trust and respect in spiritual matters. As you progress in your discernment, check in with them so you have the benefit of an objective third-party viewpoint.

Second is prayer. We must pray regularly asking God what it is He wishes from us, and then listen. Listen a lot. Be in His presence in Eucharistic adoration if possible, or in front of the tabernacle at church and listen in our heart. Listen to His word in scripture. Read through the life of Jesus in the Gospels, the early church in the Acts of the Apostles, the epistles, and listen. Listen to others who God has placed in your life.

Once you have a sense of your discernment, ask yourself some questions. Is it appropriate to my state in life? Does what you are discerning align with church teaching? Does it feel right? Does it bring conflict or peace? Are you seeing signs of God's providence? Sometimes the Lord will bring us some remarkable signs. For example, have doors just opened for you to move forward with the idea? Have people come up to you and mentioned the same thing? All of these are factors for consideration. As you begin to step *Into the Breach* look for a sure sign of doing God's will, fruit. Does it bring fruit to the lives of those you encounter? Does it bring fruit to you, your family, the church? Keep in mind that sometimes the fruit isn't automatically evident, but does indeed appear. Doing something new is sometimes not so easy and doesn't always go the right way at first. But does it bring love, joy, and peace? If it doesn't bring peace and/or fruit, care should be taken to reassess your discernment. This is where frequent contact with a third-party can be especially helpful.

ACTION PLAN NOTES

SESSION 1

FORWARD! INTO THE BREACH
SJN 2016 MEN'S LEADERSHIP SEMINAR

ACTION PLAN NOTES

SESSION 2

SESSION 3

FORWARD! INTO THE BREACH
SJN 2016 MEN'S LEADERSHIP SEMINAR

ACTION PLAN NOTES

SESSION 4

SESSION 5

FORWARD! INTO THE BREACH
SJN 2016 MEN'S LEADERSHIP SEMINAR

ACTION PLAN NOTES

SESSION 6

SESSION 7

Thank you for attending the first *Forward! Into the Breach* Seminar offered here at St. John Neumann. We are very interested in your opinions. Please take a few minutes to fill out the questions on this card. Cards will be collected at the conclusion of the Seminar on June 28th. Can't attend on June 28th? Please drop the card in the US Mail.

1) What was your reason for attending the Seminar? Were your expectations met? _____

2) Did you think the Seminar was too short? Too long? _____

3) Was the week night time slot convenient for you? If not, what would be a better day/time? _____

4) What did you like the most about the Seminar? What did you like the least about the Seminar?

5) Do you have any suggestions on how to improve the Seminar? _____

6) How much time a week did you spend on the Seminar (reading the Workbook, answering questions, etc.)?

7) Please comment on our speakers: Fr. Joe Rogers (Session 1), Doug Sharafinski (Session 1), Charles Minear (Session 1), Tony Castellano (Sessions 2-7): _____

We wanted to ask how you were able to carry forward the material you encounter at the *Forward! Into the Breach* Seminar you attended May 17- June 28 at St. John Neumann Church. Please mail this card 45 days after the end of the Seminar (August 15, 2016).

What part of the Seminar was most helpful in the weeks following its conclusion? _____

Have you been able to meet with other men as was discussed in the Seminar? If not, why not? _____

How often do you meet? How many men are present at a meeting? What do you do at the meetings?

Based on your experiences in your post-Seminar meetings, how well did the Seminar prepare you for the meetings, and provide you with ideas and motivation to actually dedicate the time and effort to meet? _____

Have you been able to undertake any of the 7 Practices of a Committed Catholic Man as described in the Seminar? If so, which ones? If not, please share why. _____

What would you recommend be included in the Seminar to enhance the post-Seminar experience?

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Please mail after last Session June 28, 2016

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