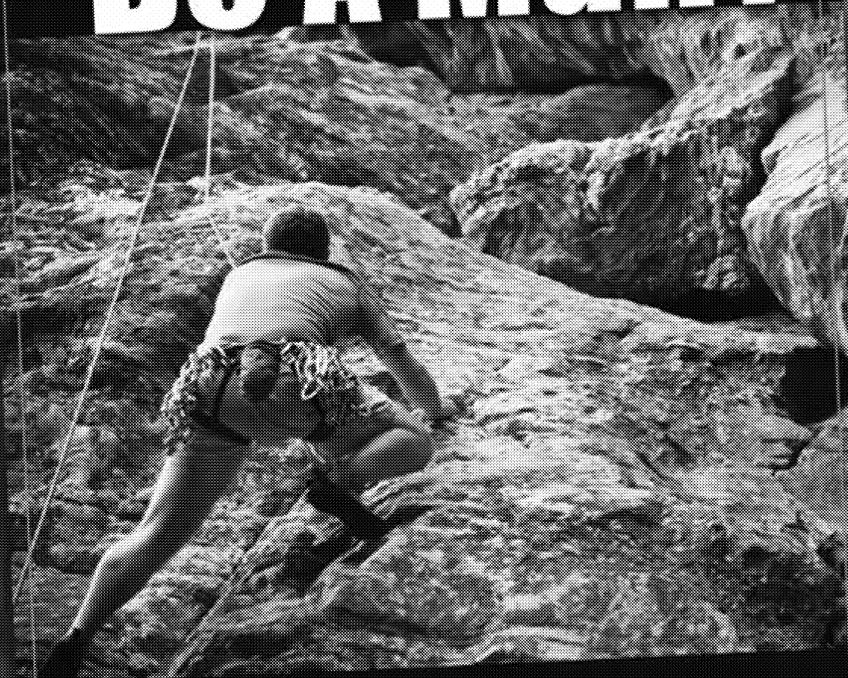


Catholic Scripture Study
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Be A Man!



BECOMING THE MAN
GOD CREATED YOU TO BE

FR. LARRY RICHARDS

IGNATIUS



With
Paul Abbe
&
Katie McDermott

THE STUDY GUIDE for
Be A Man! Becoming the Man God Created You To Be



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Contributing Content Editors
Paul Abbe and Katie McDermott

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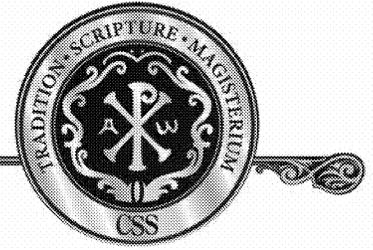
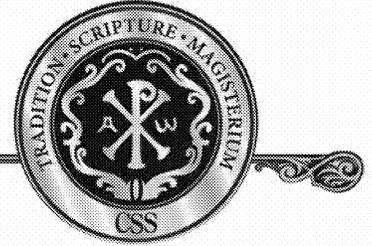


Table of Contents

Lesson One: “Be a Man Who Stays Focused on the Final Goal”	3
Lesson Two: “Be a Man Who Lives as a Beloved Son”	9
Lesson Three: “Be a Man Who Repents”	15
Lesson Four: “Be a Man Who Lives in the Holy Spirit”	21
Lesson Five: “Be a Man Who Is Strong”	27
Lesson Six: “Be a Man Who Is Loving”	33
Lesson Seven: “Be a Man Who Is Wise”	39
Lesson Eight: “Be a Man Who Lives as He Was Created”	45
Lesson Nine: “Be a Man Who Is Holy”	51
Lesson Ten: “Be a Man Who Changes the World”	57

Be A Man!



Introduction

Attention men!

You know who you are. Or do you?

How is it that more than 2,000 years after the birth of Jesus Christ, our technologically enlightened generation can invent high-speed iPhones, 4D video games, and talking cars, but it cannot articulate what it means to be a man?

As part of its 2011 season premiere, American network television launched several new shows with plots that focus on searching for “real men” in the modern world; the movie industry has followed suit. On the Internet, websites that cater to men are inundated with surveys and blogs attempting to profile the traits of “the modern man.” In the academic world, universities are developing men’s studies programs to investigate the sweeping cultural changes that are redefining male identity. In politics, male candidates are being told to “man up” in order to face the grave social and economic challenges of the day. What is happening here? And ultimately, whose definition of true manhood will stand out as the accepted standard?

In *Be a Man!* Father Larry Richards asserts that true manhood is not a mere biological anomaly or social construct in perpetual flux. As clever as it assumes itself to be, the secular world (and its cultural forces) did not, cannot, and never will be able to attribute to itself the role of creator and origin of the male gender. In truth, the male identity was created by God; “So God created man in his own image; in the image of God he created him” (Gen 1:27). To understand true manhood, therefore, Fr. Larry explains that we must rediscover the spiritual life and learn what it means to be a beloved Son of God.

In this study, you will explore and discuss the Scriptural and Church teachings that support the 10 directives given by Fr. Richards to help you become the man that God created you to be. The study lessons follow the chapter divisions of the book:

Lesson 1: Be a Man Who Stays Focused on the Final Goal

Lesson 2: Be a Man Who Lives as a Beloved Son

Lesson 3: Be a Man Who Repents

Lesson 4: Be a Man Who Lives in the Holy Spirit

Lesson 5: Be a Man Who Is Strong

Lesson 6: Be a Man Who Is Loving

Lesson 7: Be a Man Who Is Wise

Lesson 8: Be a Man Who Lives as He Was Created

Lesson 9: Be a Man Who Is Holy

Lesson 10: Be a Man Who Changes the World

These lessons offer deeper reflection on how to imitate the greatest role model of true manhood,

Jesus Christ, the beloved first-born Son of God with whom God tells us he is well pleased (Mt 3:17).

By the time you complete this study, it should become clear that the world has been attempting to seduce the men of this generation into exchanging God's truth about manhood for a lie. The consequences are stunningly evident.

The priesthood is under attack and priestly vocations are struggling. While vocations are on the rise in Africa, Asia, and Oceania, they are falling in Europe and remain stagnant in the United States. The Church has always placed particular emphasis on the importance of the family toward providing favorable conditions for the birth of vocations. As the family goes, so goes civilized society, teaches the Church.

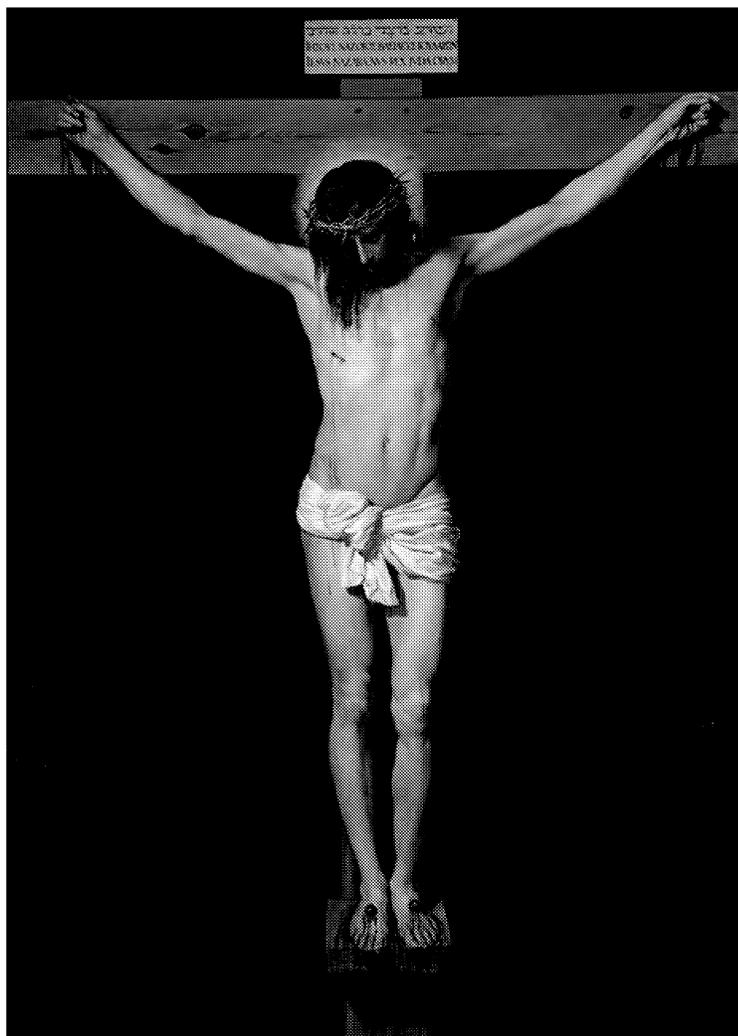
Society now consists of increasing rates of husbandless, fatherless homes, and Western civilization is declining as a result. Marriage rates have steadily fallen over the past decade and the most recent U.S. Census Data show that 33 percent of American children live apart from their biological father—the highest figure in the Western world. The increasing illegitimacy rates in this country (nearly 37 percent of all births in 2005) correspond directly with increasing rates of drug use, violent crime and incarceration.

Furthermore, laws and social policies are consistently stripping away the rights of men as fathers and husbands. In the United States men have no rights to stop the abortion of their own children; rather,

they are being told their key responsibility is to “man up” and pay for the abortion. In Canada and some U.S. states, women are no longer required to include the name of the father on a child's birth certificate, and in some cases, the term “Father” is being replaced altogether on the form with a line for “Other Parent.”

This should be alarming. Now more than ever, men need to be clear about what it means to “be a man.” It is no exaggeration whatsoever to say that the fate of the world depends upon it. As Fr. Larry says, “Don't be afraid—take courage and be a man!” Do this, and you will change the world.

May God bless you and keep you as you embark on this critically important faith journey.



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6. In Isaiah 6:1-8, Isaiah is first “confronted” by God’s holiness and “convicted” of his own sin, then driven to “confession,” and provided “cleansing.” Only then can he hear God’s “call” and respond by accepting the “commission.”
 7. Fr. Larry suggests that we can help others know Christ by doing three things: (1) make a list of the people in your life who do not know Jesus Christ and pray for them by name every day, (2) love the people on your list, especially the ones you do not like, and seek out ways to be kind to them, and (3) tell the people about Christ (do not preach) by sharing what Christ has done for you and inviting them to a relationship with Him.