

EXODUS 90 INTEREST MEETING

AGENDA

- Overview
- Testimonials
- What's Next
- Questions

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EXODUS 90 INTEREST MEETING

OVERVIEW

- What is it?
- Why is it?
- How does it work?
- When do we start?

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WHAT IS EXODUS 90?

- 90-day spiritual exercise for men
- Based on three pillars: prayer, asceticism, and fraternity (more on these later)
- Its goal is to help men gain freedom to live lives of holiness, virtue, and authentic love.

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WHY EXODUS 90?

1. Need for renewal in the Church, especially among men.
2. Many men today find themselves lost or prevented from holiness, virtue, and authentic love by:
 - Isolation
 - Distraction
 - Addiction
 - Being stuck in a cycle of mediocrity or complacency

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WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY A NEED FOR RENWAL?

- Only 37% of regular Mass attendees are men.
- Of these men:
 - 33% attend Mass weekly
 - 29% believe weekly Mass attendance is “very important”
 - 33% pray daily

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WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY A NEED FOR RENWAL?

- More about the 37%:
 - 83% rarely or never participate in parish activity outside of the Mass
 - 47.5% strongly agree it is important for their children to be Catholic
- Also: 11 million men who were raised Catholic have left the Catholic faith altogether. And the departure of males today, on average, now occurs at the age of 13.

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WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY A NEED FOR RENWAL?

- A study done in Switzerland found:
 - The faithfulness of fathers to be the single-greatest predictor on whether a child would continue practicing the faith as an adult.
 - When the mother practiced the faith but the father did not, there was only a 3% chance that the children would practice the faith.
- To combat these things, the Church needs men to rise up, to take action, and to proclaim the faith with holy boldness.

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WHAT DOES “BEING LOST” LOOK LIKE?

- Bingeing on video games, video streaming, television
- Escaping into social media, internet browsing, pornography, material comforts, food, or drink
- Lacking meaningful friendships
- Being stalled in serious relationships
- Groping for purpose in the midst of a comfort-oriented world
- Experiencing prolonged spiritual dryness (God seems far away)

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ADDRESSING THE PROBLEM AREAS FOR MEN

- Exodus 90 helps men let go of the things that are holding them from being who God is calling them to be; the man their wives, their families, and the Church need them to be.
- Exodus 90 addresses the following problem areas:
 - Pornography
 - Overconsumption of food and alcohol
 - Screen addiction and media consumption
 - Overworking

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HOW DOES EXODUS 90 WORK?

- Exodus 90 encounters men as they struggle with bondage and invites them to take a different path forward.
- Jesus Christ blazed this trail through his life and passed it on to his Disciples. The Holy Spirit has animated the path through the centuries in the lives of the Saints.
- Following their lead, Exodus invites all men to walk this road out of the slavery of sin into God's freedom.

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HOW DOES EXODUS 90 WORK?

- Men commit to the fundamentals of our faith for 90 days through prayer, asceticism, and fraternity.
- These are all essential aspects of the Christian life.

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PRAYER: BUILDING UP A HABIT OF DAILY PRAYER

- Exodus men commit to praying a holy hour each day (general rule).
- If that's not possible *on a given day*, they commit to at least 20 minutes of silent prayer.
- The men will receive a passage from the Book of Exodus.
- A daily reflection will help them understand the day's Scripture verse, situate them on their spiritual journey, and lead them into that day's time of prayer with our Lord.

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ASCETICISM: EMBRACING SELF-DENIAL

- Exodus men will train themselves to say “no” to lesser things so, they can say “yes” to higher things.
- All Christians are called to practice asceticism, even outside of Lent.
- Self-denial helps us grow in freedom and self-mastery.
- Self-denial helps us practice penance and make an offering.

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ASCETICISM: EMBRACING SELF-DENIAL

- Penance for our own sins through concrete outward actions.
- Tangible offerings to God for the good of others.
- Self-denial helps us detach from the things of the world in order to cling more readily to God himself: from that which will never truly satisfy to the only One who does.
- The disciplines cover most aspects of our daily lives as a way of preventing us from turning from one temporal dependency to another.

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ASCETICISM: THE DISCIPLINES

- Take short, cold showers.
- Practice regular, intense exercise.
- Get a full night's sleep (at least seven hours is recommended).
- Abstain from alcohol.
- Abstain from desserts and sweets.
- Abstain from eating between meals.
- Abstain from soda or sweet drinks (white milk, black coffee, and black tea are permissible).

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ASCETICISM: THE DISCIPLINES

- Abstain from television, movies, and televised sports.
- Abstain from video games.
- Abstain from nonessential material purchases.
- Only listen to music that lifts the soul to God.
- Only use the computer for work, school, or essential tasks (such as paying bills).

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ASCETICISM: THE DISCIPLINES

- Only use mobile devices for essential communications; cut out nonessential texting, app, and internet use.
- Take Wednesdays and Fridays as days of fasting.
 - Abstain from meat and only eat one full meal and two smaller meals that together do not equal a full meal.

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FRATERNITY: GROWING TOGETHER

- Fraternity is an essential aspect of the Christian life.
- When we challenge each other to do what is good and hold each other accountable to doing it, good things happen, not just for us, but for our families and for the entire community.
- Conversely, when we isolate ourselves and are held accountable to no one, our lives become a self-serving chaos and our community suffers.

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FRATERNITY: THE SPECIFICS

- Exodus men practice fraternity with four to six other men.
- This is meant to be an authentic fraternity where men step out of their comfort zones and into the light – a fraternity where accountability brings forth authentic masculinity.
- The men meet every week for a fraternity meeting.
 - 30 to 60 minutes
 - Guide included in the Introduction to Exodus 90

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FRATERNITY: YOUR ANCHOR

- Each man in the fraternity pairs up with one other man, who is called his Anchor. Anchors check in with each other daily, whether it be a text, a call or in person. Like an anchor in mountaineering, the men should be strong and reliable for their brothers. If one starts to fall, the other needs to be ready to hold his weight, lest they both hit the ground.

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WHY 90 DAYS?

- Research on the neuroplasticity of the brain has shown that breaking old habits and building new ones is possible.
- But the research also makes it clear that creating good habits and gaining the ability to retain them takes time.
- A month is not enough. Forty days are not enough.
- Ninety days serves as an industry benchmark.

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CHANGING HABITS IN 90 DAYS

- For the Christian, those good new habits are founded on a life of prayer, asceticism, and fraternity.
- The 90 days of Exodus are a starting line, not a finish line. Those who enter them well are helped to begin a new life of freedom in Christ.

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DOES IT WORK?

- It sure can! Exodus men report continual freedom from sin, growth in discipleship, and a deepening experience of the Holy Spirit.
- In virtually all areas measured, Exodus has had a tremendous impact its participants. They have found transformative change in prayer, in the quality of their spiritual lives, in their relationships, in deeper measures of peace and joy, and in better habits concerning media use and of time use in general.

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DOES IT WORK?

- During Exodus 90, men pray more.
 - The mean number of days per week that they prayed increased from 4.2 to 6.4.
 - The average amount of time praying each day increased from 39 minutes to 1 hour, 8 minutes.

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DOES IT WORK?

- The three highest quality improvements, measured by the number of 6-7 point scores (considered extremely high-quality ratings):
 - “Prayer Life” increased from 12% to 55%
 - “Peace” increased from 31% to 43%
 - “How much I get out of the Mass” increased from 33% to 59%
- One month before Exodus, 25% of men reported high “Faith Life Satisfaction.” After Exodus, that number jumped to 60%.

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AVERAGE WEEKLY STRUGGLES: BEFORE AND AFTER

- Wasting Time: 4.7 to 2.2
- Screen Time: 4.7 to 1.7
- Anger: 2.8 to 1.8
- Eating: 3.3 to 1.1
- Over-working: 3.2 to 1.8
- Masturbating: 2.4 to 0.9
- Pornography: 2.5 to 0.7
- Drinking: 2.4 to 0.5

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AVERAGE WEEKLY STRUGGLES: BEFORE AND AFTER

- Exodus 90 participants are more likely to financially support their parish and to volunteer their time afterward.
 - 64% have either already donated (up from 41%) or are moderately or extremely likely to donate (up from 21%).
 - 59% of respondents have either already volunteered (up from 33%) or are moderately or extremely likely to volunteer (up from 26%) at their parish because of their participation.

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TESTIMONIAL: AARON

- “Exodus 90 was as intense as I expected it to be. I have been stronger in my faith and for my family than I ever would have been without God leading me through Exodus. I’m still no spiritual triathlete, but I’m getting stronger every day. I’m reading the Bible, looking for and listening to the Holy Spirit every day. I’m praying daily. I’m making sacrifices and thinking of others more. I’m relying on God to lead me.”

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TESTIMONIAL: ANDREW

- “God gave me a challenge to be more than what I was and gave me the tools to take me there. He has given me the freedom from an unjust relationship, drinking, swearing, and feeling that I am not good enough to be a Catholic because of my past.”

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WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Contact Father Marquard to let him know you are interested.
 - Individual (will place in a Fraternity) or as a Fraternity
- Visit exodus90.com to register for Exodus 90. After registering, you can download the Exodus 90 app from the App Store or Google Play Store. The app has everything you will need to get started.
- If you do not have a smartphone, you can buy the Exodus 90 book at shop.exodus90.com.

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WHAT WILL IT SET ME BACK?

- It is free for men to begin Exodus 90. After the first week, you will be asked to join Exodus Membership for \$10 per month.
- Because Exodus is a non-profit 501(c)(3), membership is fully tax-deductible.
- As nonessential spending is one of the disciplines of Exodus 90, men on average have saved more than \$300 by the end of Exodus, which more than covers the cost of their monthly membership.

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COVID ADAPTATIONS

- Use of computers, smart phones to communicate with others, as this is a primary means of social life.
 - Here, Zoom and Facetime seem reasonable;
 - Tiktok and Facebook much less so.
- Fraternity meetings – might be best to do these via electronic means so as to maintain social distancing and reduce close contact. Here, the fraternity itself can decide what is most prudent. (My dad is in a “hybrid fraternity”)

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OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Husbands – please talk this through with your wives. Some of the disciplines will touch on home life, and it is better to address these things in advance.
- If you have health concerns about any of the disciplines, please consult your primary care physician.

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QUESTIONS?

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