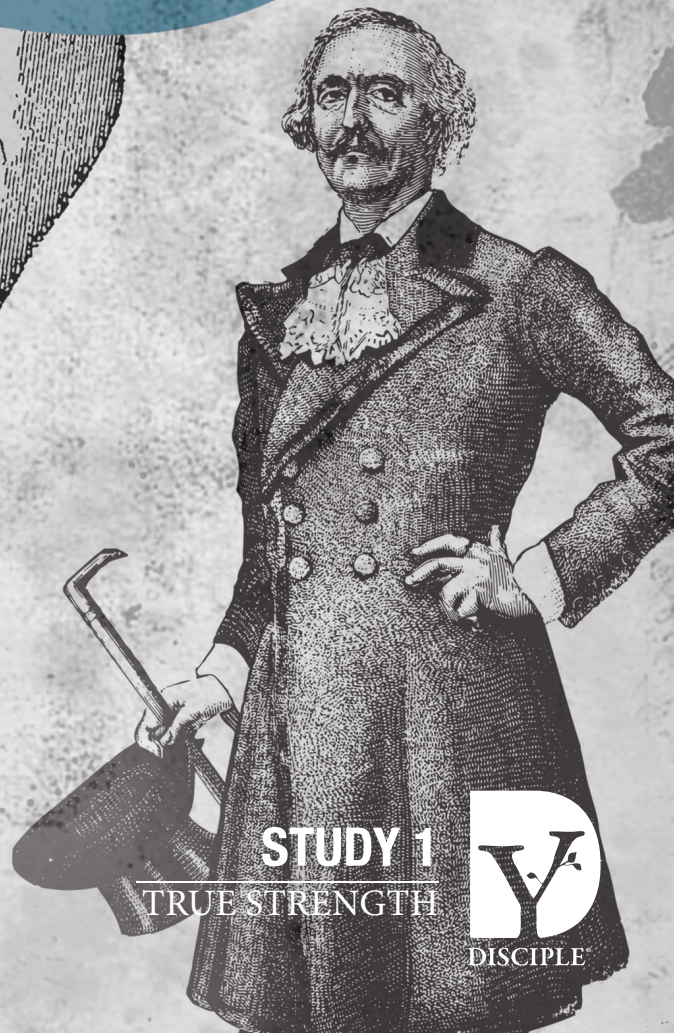
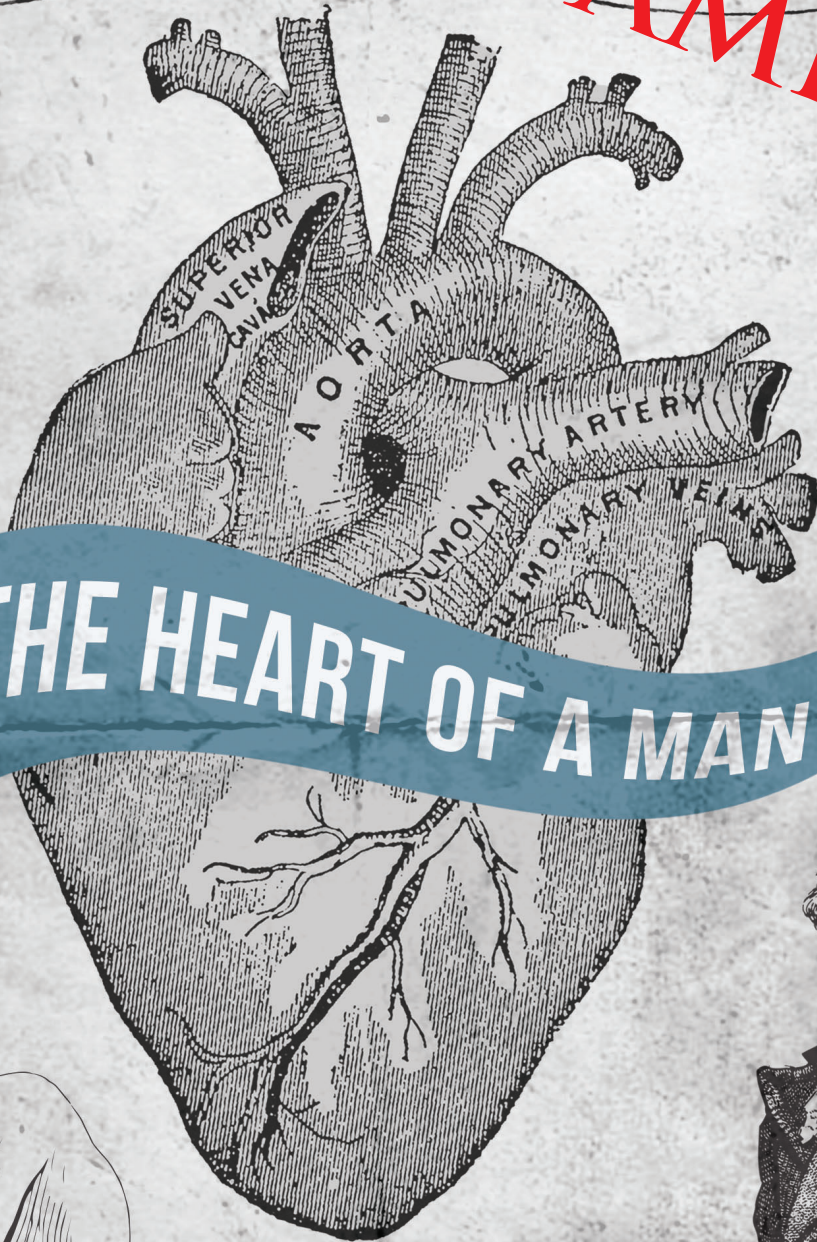


SAMPLE

# THE HEART OF A MAN



STUDY 1  
TRUE STRENGTH





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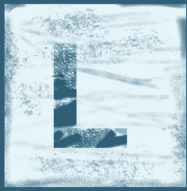
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# TRUE STRENGTH

## THE HEART OF A MAN

### OVERVIEW

What does it mean to be a real man, a man of greatness? Popular culture doesn't offer very many examples. Powerful business moguls, star athletes, and fashionable entertainers are held up as successful men to be imitated. After all, these guys are a big deal. Power, parties, fame, free-flowing cash, and the conquest of women are the ambitions many of these men represent.

All this can look very attractive. These things play on our fundamental weaknesses as men. But God calls men to something more than being a big deal. He calls us to greatness. Being a man of greatness is something completely different. A big deal is a flash in the pan; greatness lasts. That is the subject of this study.







In the videos that accompany this first session, Chris will guide young men toward understanding what real manhood is all about. He'll provide examples of how to be a man of greatness. First, your group will discover what greatness is and meet a saint who exemplifies this greatness. Young men will discover the four marks of a man of greatness and learn about the true role model of manhood. They'll learn about saints who were soldiers, the virtues of knighthood, and how to gain real spiritual freedom.

During this study, challenge your group to discover the keys to authentic manhood. The sources of inspiration found in popular culture can be powerfully attractive for men. However, our hearts really long for the deeper fulfillment that comes from being a man of greatness.



## THE HEART OF A MAN

Below is the outline for the study. Use the time allotments as a guideline, as the length of time spent on each section will vary from group to group. Also, be sure not to spend too much time on the first few scenes! The most fruitful discussion will come during later scenes.

Time	Section	Section Overview
10 minutes	Dig In 	Introduce the session with this activity: "Who Is Great?"
5 minutes	Plant Seeds 	Read <i>Philippians 4:8</i> and lead the opening prayer to set up the theme of the study.
45 minutes	Sink Roots 	In this section, you will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Scene 1—Understand what it means to be a man of greatness.</li> <li>→ Scene 2—Learn that a man of greatness loves Jesus.</li> <li>→ Scene 3—Consider how a man of greatness lives for others.</li> <li>→ Scene 4—Examine what it means to put testosterone at the service of women.</li> </ul>
15 minutes	Live It! 	→ Scene 5—Explore three virtues that will make you free to be a man of greatness at the service of others.
5 minutes	Take It to Prayer 	Review the prayer application in the Study Guide. Encourage your group to reflect on this meditation during the week.
5 minutes	Bear Fruit 	Summarize the main points from the study, and encourage your group to set resolutions for how they can live out what they have learned.



## THE HEART OF A MAN

### SUPPLIES NEEDED:

- Bible
- Catechism of the Catholic Church
- Study Guides
- Pens or pencils
- Snacks (optional)
- TV/DVD player
- True Strength DVD
- Pictures of popular stars such as actors, singers, and athletes
- Pictures of other great men from history such as Winston Churchill, Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King Jr., and Gandhi

### PREPARE IN ADVANCE

- Preview scenes from the True Strength DVD and cue the DVD to begin.
- You may choose to photocopy photos of the famous men or show them as a slide show generated from your laptop computer. Choose the method that will work best for your meeting setting.





### DIG IN

Use this opening activity as a fun way to draw your group into the subject matter of the study. It should help create an atmosphere for fun, learning, and participation. It will aid in setting the tone for the session—so enjoy it!



### Who Is Great?

*For this activity, you'll need the photos of famous men, past and present.*

**SAY:** *There are a lot of successful men today that the world considers “great.” I’m going to show you photos of some famous faces, both from the past and the present. As each photo is displayed, share who these men are and why they are famous.*

*Flash the pictures for your group to identify and comment on why each man is considered great. Mix up the pictures so popular superstars are mixed in with the classic great men of history. Take note of their reactions and comments about who they consider great and why.*

*It’s interesting to look at the faces of these men and consider what things we believe make a man “great.” In today’s study we’re going to talk about what truly makes a man great. But before we begin, turn to a partner and take a couple minutes to share with each other what you believe makes a person great.*

*Give your group two minutes to share with each other. Indicate when one minute has passed and ask participants to switch, so each partner will have a chance to share his definition of greatness.*



*In the first video clip, the presenter will make the distinction between men who are a “big deal” and men who are truly great. As your group shares, walk around and jot down notes on what you hear they are saying about what makes a man great. As you wrap up the first scene, remind them how they described greatness at the beginning, and then ask them how their definition has changed after watching the video.*





### PLANT SEEDS

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**SAY:** Listen to this Scripture passage found in Philippians 4:8: “Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.”



### Opening Prayer

Before we start digging into our study for today, let’s pray:

**PRAY:** Father in heaven, we pray to You with open hearts and minds. We ask You to guide us in this study. Help us to understand how to become men of true greatness. Help us to filter through all the confusing messages of what it means to be a man. Fill our hearts with the desire to imitate the ultimate man, the perfect man, Jesus. Focus our eyes on Him and lead us to place our lives at the service of others. We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.





## SINK ROOTS

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### SCENE 1

*This clip will last approximately 4½ minutes.*



*The following is a summary of the video segment:*

- This study talks about how to be a man of true greatness...not about being a big deal.
- You're called to something more important—greatness. Pope Benedict XVI said, "The world offers you comfort. But you were not made for comfort; you were made for greatness."
- Greatness isn't just success in what you accomplish; it's success at who you are.
- St. Maximilian Kolbe was truly great. He was a priest who spoke out against the Nazis and went to Auschwitz.
- Use your gifts and talents in service of God and others.



## THE HEART OF A MAN



When the video pauses, have your group take a moment to discuss:

→ What do you think are the four marks of a truly great man?

*Point out to your group that selflessness is valued in secular society as well as in the Church. The greatest men in history championed causes beyond their own interests or led lives in the service of others, and they are remembered for it.*

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### LEADER TIPS

*William Wilberforce, a British politician, spent much of his life campaigning to abolish slavery in Great Britain even though it cost him popularity and made him the object of criticism. There is a powerful motion picture that was made to tell his story, *Amazing Grace*. Your group might enjoy watching this movie together as a social activity.*

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*Franciszek Gajowniczek was the man saved by St. Maximilian Kolbe at Auschwitz. He was a Polish Army sergeant imprisoned for aiding the Jewish resistance in Poland. He lived another 53 years after his life was spared and was a guest of St. Pope John Paul II at the canonization of Fr. Kolbe. He considered it his “duty to tell people about the heroic act of love by Maximilian Kolbe.”*

*After the discussion, start the video to begin the next scene.*



## THE HEART OF A MAN

### SCENE 2

*This clip will last approximately 5½ minutes.*



*The following is a summary of the video segment:*

- The first mark of a great man is a man who loves Jesus. There aren't many examples of this in pop culture.
- Men are afraid to either make or keep their commitments. Too many are on a "mission" primarily to serve themselves.
- Committed men form the basis of society. Your vision of manhood should come from fixing your eyes on Jesus.
- We tend to forget that Jesus was manly because we've seen too many feminized images of Him.
- Christ was a true man because He committed His life to others. He was a man of virtue, truly free to give Himself in love.
- We see Jesus' full manliness when He hung on the cross—He didn't hang there defeated, but as a King. Jesus was a victor over death.
- If you want to be a real man, look to Jesus. Jesus reminds us of what a real man is and what we are called to be.



*"When you wonder about the mystery of yourself, look to Christ who gives you the meaning of life. When you wonder what it means to be a mature person, look to Christ who is the fullness of humanity. And when you wonder about your role in the future of the world...look to Christ." —St. Pope John Paul II, New York City, 1979*



**READ:** *Philippians 2:5-11*



## THE HEART OF A MAN



When the video pauses, have a member of your group read Philippians 2:5-11 out loud. Then take a moment to discuss the following question:

→ **How does this passage reveal Jesus' true manhood?**

### LEADER TIPS

*The Catechism of the Catholic Church says one of the reasons Christ came into the world was “to be our model of holiness” (CCC 459). Joan Osborne’s song asks the question, “What if God was one of us?” But we don’t have to wonder. Christ shows us exactly how God would live as a human. Christ is the perfect man. That’s why if we want to know how a real man should think and act, all we have to do is look to Jesus.*

*“Christ...by the revelation of the mystery of the Father and His love, fully reveals man to himself and makes his supreme calling clear.”*

*—Gaudium et Spes 22*

*This quote from Vatican II greatly influenced St. Pope John Paul II. The “supreme calling” of man is to make a “sincere gift of himself” in love. This is what Christ’s life of service to others shows us.*

*After the discussion, start the video to begin the next scene.*



## THE HEART OF A MAN

### SCENE 3

*This clip will last approximately 5½ minutes.*



*The following is a summary of the video segment:*

- The second mark of a man of greatness is one who lives for others.
- Jesus calls you to be childlike, but not childish.
- It's easy to think you'll be happy if everyone notices you and everything is centered around you.
- God wants you to be a light to others. Who can you be a blessing to; who can you serve?
- A great man who gave light to others was Fr. Vincent Capodanno, a Marine chaplain during the Vietnam War. He died using his body as a shield to save another man.
- The world doesn't need another pop star; the world needs more saints, people who imitate Christ.



*When the video pauses, have your group read CCC 823 from their Study Guides; then take a minute to discuss these questions:*

- **Can you think of any other examples in your own life of people who “live their life for others”—people who get their focus off of themselves and strive to serve others around them?**
- **Take time to share ways you’ve heard of God moving through His Church by sharing your favorite miracle story.**

*After the discussion, start the video to begin the next scene.*



## THE HEART OF A MAN

### LEADER TIP

*We are trying to impress upon young men that adolescence isn't a time for laziness and comfort. But this can be challenging to do without them feeling like we are lecturing or talking down to them. The best way to do this is to ask questions and "lead" them to this conclusion, without us actually telling them, about how they should look on this time in their lives as preparation for their mission in life. Life can't be all about playing video games, watching TV, and doing as little as possible. It needs to be more about learning, growing, becoming closer to God, and developing skills for the future. Here are some questions you can ask that will get them moving to some of these conclusions: What kind of person do you want to become when you are an adult. What personality traits do you desire to have? What things can you be doing in your life right now to help grow those traits for the future?*

### SCENE 4

*This clip will last approximately 7 minutes.*



*The following is a summary of the video segment:*

- The third mark of a man of greatness is that he puts his testosterone at the service of women.
- In ancient times, the chivalrous code encouraged men to put their muscle and testosterone at the service of others.
- Our culture encourages guys to put their testosterone at the service of pleasure.
- The culture says a real man uses girls and takes from them. Some people say that's how you express love.
- Real love is doing what's good for someone else, even if that's laying down all of your desires to show respect for women.
- God is calling you to defend the dignity of women and be a knight.
- Do something to stop the cultural trend of trashing girls. Be that man!
- Purity makes you a real man because it frees you up to love.



## THE HEART OF A MAN



*When the video pauses, have your group discuss these questions:*

- **What does it mean to put your testosterone at the service of women?**
- **What did the chivalrous code do for ancient society, and how could it be put into action in your own life?**
- **What can you do to change the cultural trend we have today of trashing girls?**

*After the discussion, start the video to begin the next scene.*



*It's hard for young men not to be influenced by the way Hollywood stars and professional athletes treat women. It appears "cool" and that's attractive. Help young men realize this way of treating women is not healthy for their future relationships. Respect and the willingness to give yourself in love is the foundation for a lasting relationship with a woman.*

*The Church civilized the marauding warlords of Medieval Europe through the virtues of chivalry. Redirecting testosterone toward heroism works! Instill in your young men the spirit of holy knights who fight to defend the honor of women. Convince them they are heroes not made for conformity but for greatness.*

*Researchers at Princeton found that viewing images of women in bikinis produced dehumanizing effects in men. Imagine what happens when they watch pornography. Explain to them that if they want to have the hope of treating women with dignity, they cannot be viewers of pornography. It distorts their view of women and makes them more likely to dominate and use them.*



## THE HEART OF A MAN



### LIVE IT!

*This clip will last approximately 7½ minutes.*



*The following is a summary of the video segment:*

- The fourth mark of a man of greatness is that he forms his heart in virtue.
- Freedom isn't about doing whatever you want; it's the power to do what's good.
- Virtues unlock your potential to live life to the fullest. (*John 10:10*)
- To get rid of vice, you need to work on the opposite virtue.
- You can become a virtuous man by 1) examining your conscience; 2) having accountability; 3) using the Sacrament of Confession.
- Nothing will satisfy your heart like taking God's path and being a real man of greatness.
- God is behind us every step of our journey and He is calling us to be the best we can be.



*Direct your group to their Study Guides. Give them a minute to answer the questions, and then encourage them to share and discuss their responses.*

- **Can you think of a bad behavior that you wanted to quit but couldn't? Did you ever beat it?**
- **What are some ways you can build virtue into your life?**



## THE HEART OF A MAN

*“A virtue is a habitual and firm disposition to do the good. It allows the person not only to perform good acts, but to give the best of himself.” —CCC 1803*

### LEADER TIPS

*Because of our fallen human nature, we tend toward vice. Virtues are habits—behaviors that are engrained through deliberately repeated, morally excellent acts. Virtues are part of who you are. Virtue leads to freedom. Virtues don’t come automatically; you have to work at them. But once you acquire them, it becomes easier to avoid sin and you have real joy in doing things that will lead you to greatness.*



## TAKE IT TO PRAYER

*Direct your group to their Study Guides and review the Take It to Prayer activity, which incorporates all that they have discussed in this session into an experience of independent prayer. Encourage everyone to take time during the next week to do this prayer experience.*

### LEADER TIP

*Be sure to take time before this study to try the exercise yourself. Your personal reflection will inspire your group to experience this prayer on their own.*

**SAY:** *This week, read 1 Samuel 11:1–12:17, the story of David’s infidelity with Bathsheba. David was truly a man of greatness, a man after God’s own heart. But even David grew complacent and got off track. He didn’t examine himself to recognize his weakness to lust, he didn’t stay accountable, and then he sinned greatly. However, David repented greatly as well. God forgave him, and David became one of the greatest men in history.*

*Allow the everyone to relate this point to the following meditation in their Study Guides.*

Take some time this week to work on the three steps to become virtuous that Chris outlined in the last video segment.



## THE HEART OF A MAN

- Examine your conscience to root out your weaknesses. Where are you struggling to be a man of greatness?
- Find an accountability partner. It may be a best friend or a priest that you trust, but it should be someone you can confide in.
- Go to Confession. This could take care of step #2 and strengthen you in grace at the same time.

David wrote Psalm 51 in repentance after his transgression with Bathsheba. Every night this week, ask God to make you a man of greatness and pray this verse found in Psalm 51:10: *“Create in me a pure heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.”* In your own words, thank God for the beautiful gift of prayer and for helping us to see Him in such a special way.



### BEAR FRUIT

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*After this discussion, remind your group about the Bear Fruit ideas on their Study Guide. Encourage them to try some of the suggested activities during the upcoming week*

**SAY:** *The following is a checklist of biblical values for real manhood. It's based on the "Marks of a Man of Greatness" Chris outlined in the videos. Do a self-evaluation this week to determine how you measure up. Do you fall short in some categories? What can you do to change the areas in which you struggle?*

Read the Bible verses as a prayer during your time with God this week. Ask God to strengthen you and help you become the man God intended you to be.



## THE HEART OF A MAN

### Loves Jesus:

1. Lives according to God and not the culture (Romans 12:1-2)
2. Appreciates and correctly handles the Bible (2 Timothy 2:15)
3. Doesn't love the world but seeks what is holy (1 John 2:15-16; Philippians 4:8)
4. Isn't embarrassed to show his faith in public (Mark 8:38)
5. Shows openness to God and humility (Proverbs 2:1-10; 1 Peter 5:5; Romans 12:16)

### Lives for Others:

1. Self-sacrificing (Ephesians 5:25-28)
2. Secure, confident, and respects God (Proverbs 14:26-27)
3. Doesn't use harsh language to put others down; affirms and builds others up (Proverbs 15:4; Ephesians 4:29)

### Puts Himself at the Service of Women:

1. Treats his sisters and mother with respect, as he would a future wife (Matthew 25:21)
2. Respects the purity and innocence in young ladies (2 Corinthians 11:2-3)
3. Values purity, in himself and a prospective girlfriend, and is willing to live and act differently than the world says in order to guard himself in his purity (1 Thessalonians 4:1-8; Ecclesiastes 7:26)
4. Can look at a girl without lust or impure thoughts (Proverbs 20:11)
5. Isn't ashamed to be identified with his family (Ephesians 6:2-3)
6. Is a gentleman—polite, respectful, and honors women by opening doors, etc. (1 Peter 3:7)
7. Isn't crass—doesn't burp in public, swear, or tell disgusting stories (Proverbs 13:5; Ephesians 5:4)
8. Loves his children (Matthew 19:13-14)

### Forms His Heart in Virtue:

1. Is industrious and not lazy (Proverbs 12:27)
2. Admits when he's wrong and is not stubborn (Proverbs 12:1; Proverbs 29:1)
3. Is patient and not quick-tempered (Proverbs 14:29)
4. Deals with difficulties logically and with wisdom, not with unstable emotional responses (Proverbs 17:27; Proverbs 12:18)
5. Works hard and is responsible with money (Colossians 3:23-24; 2 Thessalonians 3:10-12; Luke 16:10-11)
6. Has self-control (Titus 2:6-8)
7. Expresses himself intelligently and not in crude "street talk" (Proverbs 17:20; 1 Peter 4:11; Ephesians 4:29)





### Closing Prayer

*Take a few minutes to ask if your group needs any prayers for this week. As you close the study with a time of prayer, lift up their personal needs and intentions.*

**PRAY:** *We praise You, Father in heaven, for the gift of Your Son to be our example and guide to authentic manhood. We ask that You give us the strength to become men of greatness. Allow us to center our lives on Jesus, imitating Him in self-sacrifice, in service to others, and in the virtues of real manhood. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

### ADDITIONAL BEAR FRUIT IDEAS

#### Virtue Over Vice

- **Reflect.** Prayerfully reflect on and own up to your vices by writing them on paper. Next to each vice, name the virtue that you can act on instead this week. Be specific about when and where you can practice your virtuous actions.

#### The Rebelution

- **Go online and visit [www.therebelution.com](http://www.therebelution.com).** The Rebelution is “a teenage rebellion against low expectations.” It was started by two teen brothers, Alex and Brett Harris, who were tired of seeing their peers check out in a media-saturated youth culture that reinforced lower and lower standards and expectations on young men. They believe the teen years should serve as a “launching pad for life” rather than a “vacation from responsibility.” The brothers wrote the book *Do Hard Things* and started a counter-cultural youth movement of young people from around the world who reject the youth culture that is zapping their energy and instead choose to strive for greatness.

At the site you'll find articles about how to build character and competence to overcome the complacency inherent in today's youth culture. You'll also find case studies and testimonials of young men who are doing great things seemingly well beyond the capacity of their years. There's also an online community where you can network with like-minded young men preparing to change the world.



NOTE: This is a Christian site but it's Protestant, so not all of the theology and biblical interpretations match up with Catholic doctrine. But it's very valuable for developing a mindset and attitude of greatness.

### A Call to Manhood

- **Read the inspirational article**, "A Call to Manhood" at <http://livelikemen.com/2011/12/a-call-to-manhood/>. It embodies much of what this study is about. Starting with a video, "This Is War," it calls men to real manhood. It doesn't talk about the kind of guy who knows how to get a girl into bed, or the kind of guy who spends all of his time in the gym and is so built that he looks funny when he walks, or even the guy who thinks that providing financially for his family is the only support that is required of him. These are guys, boys even. They are certainly not men.

### Fr. Vincent Capodanno

- **Learn more about Fr. Vincent Capodanno** at: <http://www.vincentcapodanno.org/testimony/witnesses/>. On the site you'll find articles, resources, and testimonies from people who knew him and witnessed his heroism. While you're there, say the prayer for his canonization found under "Cause" in the dropdown menu.

### Chastity.com

- **Read this article on Chastity.com** (<http://chastity.com/chastity-qa/how-far-too-far/modesty/it-wrong-wear-bikini/it->) about how a man's brain is affected by seeing women in bikinis. Studies show when these images were viewed, the "region of the brain associated with analyzing a person's thoughts, intentions, and feelings" was deactivated. The women were dehumanized in the minds of the men viewing. The article also discusses the implications these findings have on the ability of men to practice chastity and chivalry when confronted with scantily clad women. Great food for thought for both women and men.