

How to Get Started

This document can be used as a guide for starting a Men's Ministry in your parish. The details around how each parish starts the ministry may not be the same, and each parish will likely develop differently.

Below are five points that you may find helpful with starting a Men's Ministry in your parish.

1. The first thing to do is to **establish a passionate, respectful, diverse, and responsible committee**. Before reaching out to individuals directly, be sure the priest(s) of your parish is/are aligned and that you have his/ their blessing. From there, identify a strong, capable, and dedicated leader to help coordinate the tasks.
2. Now that you have a team with the support of the priest(s), the next step is to **establish the focus of the ministry** and record all the ideas of how the team sees the ministry being successful. Also, define what success means specifically. Be sure in the way you define success, that Christ is the focus. For example: it is easy to equate the success of a ministry to the numbers of attendants alone. Rather than having the focus of the ministry to increase in numbers, define success by establishing a ministry that further develops the members' relationship with Christ. You may find strength in the foundation and longevity of the ministry when starting with that mindset, then working on an increase in numbers from there. You may also find the BRAVE mission statement in the references page useful as your mission statement or as a starting point for your own.
3. Now that you have a passionate committee, dedicated leader, and a broad vision for the ministry, it's time to **draft a plan** (mission statement, vision, demographic, potential services (see service reference document), dates to meet, funding, list of a few topics, etc...) to review with your priest(s). Undoubtedly, your priest(s) has/have a burden and vision for the men of the church to become disciples of Christ. Engage the clergy and receive a blessing from them each step of the way.
4. With the now unified committee, **start developing a curriculum** that is aligned with your vision. Use the BRAVE established curriculum found in the reference page and polish it to align with your goals. One challenge you may find is scheduling speakers. Try to have the speakers scheduled several meetings in advance.
5. **Start the launch process**. It takes a tremendous amount of energy to overcome spiritual inertia among the men in your church. Be sure to start strong rather than fast. Meaningful rather than expedient. Intentional rather than haphazard. Be sure to also communicate planned volunteer services and social activities. Men are more "doers" than "talkers" and engaging them physically through volunteering and social activities will be key to the success of the ministry.