



Cor Reference Guide

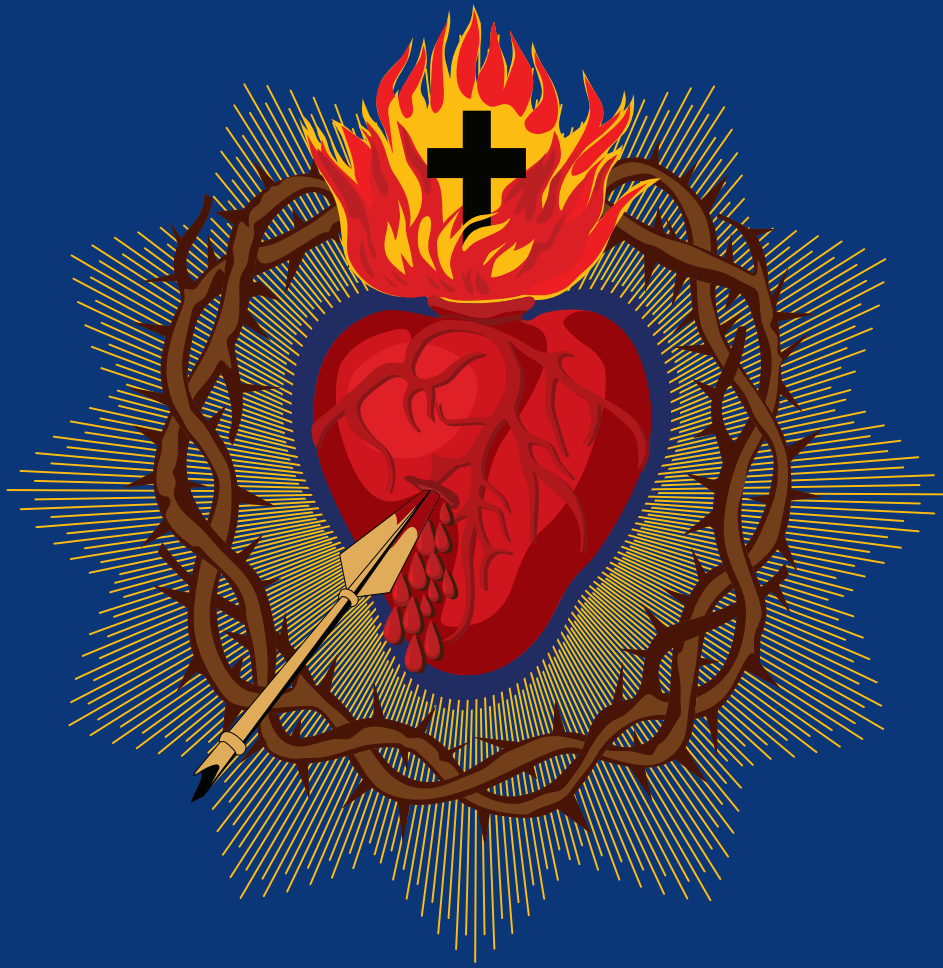


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Cor Personnel and Roles

Council Evangelization and Faith Formation Director

- Grand Knight should appoint a designated Director of Evangelization and Faith Formation (EFF).
- The Director will be supported by the State EFF Team.
- The Director will spearhead the organizational components of the *Cor* and report back to the Grand Knight and council during the council meeting.
- As the Grand Knight is responsible for the council's relationship with the pastor, he should set up the initial and subsequent gatherings with the pastor, which will request permission, implementation, and rollout. The EFF Director should be prepared to attend; any items following the gathering should be his responsibility. The Grand Knight should also create space for the director to present to the council, bring them into the strategic planning, and determine needed content. The director will coordinate council discussions, which could reasonably occur during a business meeting. This can be done in many ways, such as surveys or meeting votes.
- The director is additionally responsible for the following items, either handling them himself or delegating:
 - Space use reservation
 - Timeline organization
 - Topic/thematic planning – invitation of guest speakers and so on
 - Collaboration and coordination with other parish ministries or men's groups (alongside the GK)

Cor Team

- The Council Director of EFF should seek out and appoint two to three other men of the council who will help share responsibilities during *Cor*.
- This could include:
 - Schedule and content planning
 - Communication
 - Hospitality
 - Materials and resources
 - Timekeeper
 - Tech and AV – if using videos

Pastor and Council Chaplain

- The pastor is primarily responsible for the formation of souls within his parish. *Cor* can serve as a platform for his pastoral ministry. He must be consulted, and permission must be requested before *Cor* is announced and invitations are made.
- The pastor and chaplain should have a standing invitation to participate or speak.

- This reoccurring gathering should be presented as an opportunity and platform for the pastor’s pastoral ministry and a means of engaging and forming the men of his parish. His participation should require very little logistical planning and no formal obligation.
- See “*Working with your Pastor.*”

Planning and Preparation

Meet with your pastor

- Grand Knight to meet with the pastor – share available collateral.
- Share the purpose and function of Cor– connect to his pastoral plan as you are able.
- Ask for his permission to invite all men of the parish.
- Extend a perpetual invitation and a role he can fill if he desires.
- Work with his schedule and the schedule of the parish when planning the date and time.
- If there are other existing men’s groups, share with him how this will not cause conflict or competition.
- See “*Working with your Pastor*” Addendum X

Meet and discuss as a council

- Grand Knight to introduce the opportunity for *Cor*.
- Grand Knight to share the appointment of Director.
- Together – Determine timing & frequency (See Strategy: Timing and Frequency below for more detail).
 - Weekday or weekend, morning or evening – up to the council
 - At least monthly but open to greater frequency
- Determine content & structure (See Strategy: Content and Structure below for more detail).
 - Appropriate ratio of prayer, formation, and fraternity

Working within the parish

- Most parishes have an abundance of parish ministries that utilize parish resources and facilities. Many of them may have communication throughout different parish channels and volunteer groups. Many Knights tend to be involved in existing men’s groups. It is important to develop and maintain a good working relationship with all of them to help the council succeed and grow.
- To help avoid conflict, utilize the parish calendar. Check and reference this calendar to avoid conflict with other ministries. It should be checked regularly and discussed with the pastor.

Working with other men’s ministries

- Many parishes may already have an existing men’s group, and the participants, in many cases, are Knights. These two should not conflict or cause conflict for the pastor or men of the parish. *Cor* exists as a tool and means of the Council to provide prayer, formation, and fraternity for the men of the council and parish.

- Meeting with the men’s group leadership is key. Share with them the intent of *Cor* and determine if these aims are already being covered in the men’s group, if they can/should co-exist, or if the intentionality of *Cor* should be rolled into the existing men’s group. This may be an opportunity to join forces and for the council to support by ramping up the invitation among members.
- *Cor* may answer the “what’s next?” question that many men’s ministries have, particularly because *Cor* is part of the larger council experience that has a clear avenue of putting the formation and fraternity into practice.
- Keep the pastor informed of these conversations and meetings.

Cor Strategy

Strategy: Timing and frequency

- *Cor* should initially be planned and considered a weekly large group event. The council may decide to meet less frequently, but it is always easier to scale back instead of adding more in the future.
- Greater frequency and small groups can enhance the overall dynamic, familiarity, and formative environment.
- *Cor* can be held at any time and should be pre-determined.
- While it technically could be held right after the council meeting, we highly suggest that it not be done then. You do not want to sacrifice attendance for one over the other, and you do not want the ask for either event to be more than anyone can reasonably attend.
- Early weekday mornings, weeknights, or Saturday mornings – all are reasonable options.
- Specific strategy to consider for timing and frequency:
 - Survey the men of the council and even the parish – you can’t make everyone happy
 - Consider groups that already meet – avoid conflict and look for collaboration

Strategy: Structure and content selection

- The objective should determine the emphasis on a key element over the others and the content you select. Namely, is this a time to build fraternity, to invest in prayer or formation?
- Remember that while the ratio of the key elements may vary, there is still a general structure to help provide consistency and familiarity, which will help the group dynamic and the expectations of those attending. Again, these are suggestions, not doctrine.
- The Director of EFF and the team should discuss the schedule, objectives, and flow of the first three to six months and bring the pastor and/or chaplain into the conversation.
- Questions to discuss as a group to determine Structure and Content emphasis/ratio:
 - **What do the men need, and what are we hoping to achieve?**
 - Note: This is a crucial conversation to bring the pastor into. He may already be intimately aware of the formation the men need, or it may be a way of bringing these needs to his attention.

- Initially, the team may realize that the attendees do not know what they do not know but have an idea of what they want – this turns into a “give them what they need, wrapped in what they want” scenario – focus more on fraternity and bring in intentional prayer and formation. Over time the group will help self-select what they need and want.
- **To build interest** – Know your audience. The emphasis from the beginning will help set the tone. If advertised as an opportunity for men to grow as better husbands and fathers, on fraternity as a social – see “Fraternity Centered Option 1” – Social for the gathering – Ad. VII-b.
 - This may take a few attempts– its ok for *Cor* to start slow and small
- **To build rapport** – Consider Fraternity focused #2 or Introducing prayer or formation in small groups.
- **To build prayer** – Consider an extended period of prayer and formative instruction on prayer.
- **To grow in Formation** – Consider an emphasis on formation – see the “Formation Centered Option.”
- **Where are we in the fraternal year?**
 - Every year there is a natural seasonal ebb and flow. Many parishioners and council members have family activities planned during summer or around holidays. When fall rolls around, many people are in the mode of a new start. Similarly, *Cor* will have a natural ebb and flow that should be reflected in the timing and content structure. If it is the first of the fraternal year and open to all men of the parish, perhaps it should be more fraternal-focused (see below) to help invite and welcome new men.
 - Liturgical season – If *Cor* is held during Advent or Lent, perhaps they are more prayer or formation focused to help men understand and better spiritually prepare for these seasons.

Strategy: Small groups

- Small groups are valuable for helping build trust among men. It creates an environment for more men to share and discuss the topics at hand, faith, and life experience. They also create a better environment for authenticity and healthy vulnerability as trust increases. This is necessary for accountability, especially when the group begins applying their formation to council and daily life.
- These will be necessary for helping men discuss, digest, and apply any formative content, particularly if the content is a Bible study, video series, or book discussion.
- Men in the same small groups will develop stronger friendships, which is great. But consider changing the members of the small groups at different points of the year or year-end to help these bonds of friendship expand beyond the small group.
- When needed, each small group should have an identified or pre-selected facilitator to help keep the conversation and discussion moving and to uphold small group guidelines. Facilitators help keep the over-sharers at bay and to help draw valuable insight from those who tend to be quieter.

- Good small group leadership can make or break the experience for men. Keep an eye out for ways to help improve small groups through investment in leaders.
- Set guidelines and boundaries to ensure that this and Corresponding small groups do not turn into “group therapy” or spiritual direction. Men may share experiences and advice, but we want to direct our brothers to professional therapy or a priest for this level of help. The fraternity is here to support each other, but we must be careful not to cross the line, as it can cause more harm than good.
- See ‘How to lead a small group’ resource *Into the Breach* Video Series

Strategy: Marketing and Invitation

- Ask the Pastor for his endorsement and invitation at the end of Masses for a given weekend. This will be very valuable. The council should be prepared to invite men, face to face, and hand out information on *Cor* following Mass.
 - The most effective invitation is word of mouth and a personal invitation.
 - After Mass: Do not stand behind a table, waiting for men to approach you. They probably will not. Meet them with a sincere desire to get to know them and for them to come. Have informational collateral ready to hand out.
- Every council member should be a spokesman for *Cor*, able to articulate its purpose and need to anyone in the parish who asks. This will communicate unity, excitement, and buy-in. This level of unity and direction will be appealing.
- Remember, you are inviting men to participate in something that will benefit them in many ways. Ask what they are doing to grow in their faith and if they want to do so with a group of men in the parish. Speak to their hearts and the need for this time together as men. Sharing personal testimony of faith and formation is a compelling way to get people’s attention and may help connect this to the personal needs of the men of the parish.

Strategy: Ramping up and building interest

- This may build slowly. That’s ok. Building trust and developing authentic friendships and group dynamics take time. Allowing for this time and not forcing it will encourage men to take this seriously and increase their level of commitment.
- Win men over first and continue the “win” to develop trust and rapport.
- As mentioned, for the first few gatherings, consider content that will welcome and meet men where they are and not unexpectedly take them too deep too fast. They may never come back.
- Get the feedback of those who show up the first few times on what they are looking for and how they would like to grow in their faith – this will build ownership.
- Communication that this is an event for every man of the parish at every level of faith and formation.

Strategy: Sustaining the group

- Planning: Always plan ahead – share responsibilities and delegate accordingly so the quality is not compromised. If we expect men to commit to this, we need to honor and respect their time by offering something valuable and worthwhile.
- Build buy-in – Encourage individual ownership and for everyone to invite others.
- During the gathering:
 - Remind guys that formation and discipleship are for the rest of our lives.
 - Connect content and experience to daily life within the family, council, and parish. This will create a more well-rounded experience that men can share, adding value to their lives.
 - Connect to Faith in Action – Committing ourselves to prayer, formation, and fraternity is like breathing in. If we only ever breathe in, we will die. Putting our faith into action through programs that seek to share the love of Christ and evangelize is like breathing out. If we only ever breathe out, we will die. To live, we must do both. Greater faith begets greater charity.
 - But not just programs – this is where accountability to actionable faith growth in the form of reminders is key. I.e. “This week or over the next few weeks, we will pray _____ novena at 9 pm daily.”

Council Connection

Council Life and Faith in Action Programs

- *Cor* exists to enhance our bond of faith and fraternity and therefore support and integrate with the rest of the council life and activity. It should always connect and point to the Faith in Action programs, provide reminders of Council events and needs, and extend direct invitations to all of the above, even the business meeting, as appropriate.
- A best practice – *Cor* should end with an overview of the council and parish calendar for the coming weeks or months. Invitations are essential to increase participation and for men to feel directly involved and valuable.
 - I.e., The council is hosting our annual Coats for Kids program next week. You are all invited to bring your families, join us in prayer beforehand, and help us hand out coats to children and families in need. This is important for children to be involved in and for us to model charity and the corporal works of mercy for our families and children”
- Program activities and themes should be connected to the formation received, specifically in the action item. Formation and faith need to be practiced by being put into action. This is one important role of Faith in Action programs, to provide a direct outlet and application of the formation we receive.

Cor Prayer Overview

“God, infinitely perfect and blessed in himself, in a plan of sheer goodness freely created man to make him share in his own blessed life. For this reason, at every time and in every place, God draws close to man. He calls man to seek him, to know him, to love him with all his strength.” (CCC 1)

Prayer is “the lifting of our minds and hearts to God.” It is relationship with God where we seek to know Him and grow in relationship with Him. As Catholics, we have many forms of prayer and traditions of spirituality shared with us through the example and lives of the saints. They model the importance and centrality of prayer as essential to a life of faith and holiness. *Cor* places key emphasis on prayer in helping men grow in their relationship with God and the habit of prayer as a group and individually. Shared time in prayer will help men and the council focus our minds and hearts on God, strengthen our bonds of brotherhood, and keep God at the center of all we are and do.

Prayer Examples for *Cor*:

- Eucharistic Adoration
- Rosary or Scriptural Rosary
- Chaplet of Divine Mercy
- Liturgy of the Hours or Divine Office
- Lectio Divina with Sacred Scripture
- Intercessory prayer
- Stations of the Cross
- Novenas or other pious devotions

As mentioned in the “*Cor Startup Guide*,” all three key elements must be present, but one can be emphasized over another. Considering the centrality and importance of prayer, intentionally focusing on dedicated prayer times should be routine for the men attending *Cor*. To enhance this time, *Cor*, centered more heavily on prayer, should consciously integrate the formation and fraternity. For example, the formation element might be catechesis on prayer or how to pray the *rosary*, *lectio divina*, or the divine office, and the corresponding Prayer portion is praying the *rosary*, *lectio divina*, or the divine office. If the prayer element is Adoration, perhaps the Formation element is a reflection during Adoration or catechesis on the Eucharist before Adoration. There are many options and simple ways to integrate all three to enhance each other, providing formation and building a shared experience as brothers. Fraternity during *Cor* may simply be a time of conversation or a shared meal. It depends on the length and style of prayer selected for the evening.

When focusing more heavily on formation or fraternity, prayer should not simply be relegated to the opening and closing. Rather, a time of intentional prayer, either in the form of a rosary or intercessory prayer, would be appropriate to help ensure that prayer is a key element.

Key concepts to remember as we enter times of prayer:

- *Cor* recognizes the importance of the heart within prayer, formation, and fraternity. In prayer, our heart seeks God, and finding him is transformed by him. This is foundational for formation and fraternity.

- God acts first; therefore, we should seek to help create a frame of mind and posture to receive and respond.
- Every prayer time is a teachable moment. Many may not be familiar with all expressions or forms of prayers. Be prepared to instruct when introducing new forms of prayer.
- Humility is the foundation of prayer.
- Prayer is a gift from the Holy Spirit, who, along with Jesus, teaches us how to pray.
- Jesus models the “filial” prayer for us, revealing God as Father.
- “According to Scripture, it is the heart that prays. If our heart is far from God, the words of prayer are in vain.” (CCC 2562)
- Christian prayer is “the action of God and of man, springing forth from both the Holy Spirit and ourselves, ... directed to the Father.” (CCC 2564)
- “Prayer is the living relationship of the children of God with their Father ... “ (CCC 2565)
- Sacred Scripture, the liturgy of the Church, and the virtues of faith, hope, and charity are sources of prayer.

Catechesis on Prayer

The below items are catechetical and found in the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Catechesis on prayer could be utilized to satisfy the formative element of *Cor*.

Three main expressions of Prayer:

- **Oratio – Vocal Prayer**
 - “Vocal prayer is an essential element of the Christian life. To his disciples, drawn by their Master’s silent prayer, Jesus teaches a vocal prayer, the Our Father.” (CCC 2701)
 - “Vocal prayer, founded on the union of body and soul in human nature, associates the body with the interior prayer of the heart, following Christ’s example of praying to his Father and teaching the Our Father to his disciples.” – (CCC 2722)
- **Meditation – Meditative Prayer**
 - “Meditation is above all a quest. The mind seeks to understand the why and how of the Christian life, in order to adhere and respond to what the Lord is asking.” (CCC 2705)
 - “Meditation engages thought, imagination, emotion, and desire. This mobilization of faculties is necessary in order to deepen our convictions of faith, prompt the conversion of our heart, and strengthen our will to follow Christ. Christian prayer tries above all to meditate on the mysteries of Christ, as in lectio divina or the rosary. This form of prayerful reflection is of great value, but Christian prayer should go further: to the knowledge of the love of the Lord Jesus, to union with him.” (CCC 2708)
- **Contemplation – Contemplative Prayer**
 - “Contemplative prayer is the simplest expression of the mystery of prayer” (CCC 2713). It is silence in the heart, where God speaks, and we listen. It is hearing the Word of God.
 - “Contemplative prayer is also the pre-eminently intense time of prayer. In it the Father strengthens our inner being with power through his Spirit “that Christ may dwell in (our) hearts through faith” and we may be “grounded in love.”(Eph 3:16-17) (CCC 2714)

Five forms of prayer:

- **Blessing and Adoration**
 - “The prayer of blessing is man’s response to God’s gifts” (2626)
 - “Adoration is the first attitude of man acknowledging that he is a creature before his Creator.” (2628)
- **Prayer of Petition**
 - “Forgiveness, the quest for the Kingdom, and every true need are the objects of prayers of petition.” (CCC 2646)
- **Prayer of Intercession**
 - “Intercession – asking on behalf of another has been characteristic of a heart attuned to God’s mercy” (CCC 2635)
- **Prayer of Thanksgiving**
 - “Every event and need can become an offering of thanksgiving” (CCC 2638)
- **Prayer of Praise**
 - “Praise is the form of prayer which recognizes most immediately that God is God. It lauds God for his own sake and give him glory, quite beyond what he does, but simply because HE IS.” (CCC 2639)
 - “The Eucharist contains and expresses all forms of prayer: it is “the pure offering” ... the “sacrifice of praise.”“ (CCC 2643)

Examples of Prayer for *Cor*

Holy Rosary

The Rosary should be the foundational and go to for prayer for *Cor*. Every Knight and every Catholic is encouraged to pray the Rosary and commit to this pious devotion. Many resources exist to aid in the prayerful reflection and recitation of the Rosary.

Consider the *Catholic Information Service* booklet and *Faith in Action* resource *Guide to the Rosary #4772* and the booklet *A Scriptural Rosary for the Family #319*.

Lectio Divina

Lectio Divina is a prayerful approach to reading Scripture developed in the monastic tradition. Today, the Church encourages the faithful to use Lectio Divina to listen to the Word of God and encounter God in Scripture. This is a perfect way to incorporate Scripture into your daily prayer routine. A simple way to pray Lectio Divina is outlined here.

Before starting, select the passage from Scripture that you will be praying with. It could be the daily Gospel reading, the upcoming Sunday reading, or another short passage. Begin by quieting yourself and asking the Holy Spirit to guide your prayer time. Then go through the four traditional steps of Lectio Divina:

1. **Lectio – Reading** – Slowly read the passage of Scripture you selected. Ask yourself, what does the biblical text say in itself? Read the passage a second time.

2. **Meditation – Meditation** – Remaining true to the text, ask yourself, what does the biblical text say to me? Is there a word or sentence that sticks out to you? Is God trying to say something directly to you as you are reading? Allow yourself to be moved and challenged.
3. **Oratio – Prayer** – This is your response to God’s word. What do you have to say back to God? Words of petition, intercession, thanksgiving, praise?
4. **Contemplation – Contemplation** – Here, we allow God to show us his vision, and we can ask ourselves. What conversion of mind, heart, and life is the Lord asking of us? Sit in silence and be open to how the Word of God can transform your life.

Cor: Prayer Centered Example 1

Holy Hour

1 hour and 15 minutes

Note: This example could be used by a council that a) has just started gathering regularly and is developing a habit of prayer and familiarity with Eucharistic Adoration or b) by a council that has been gathering regularly, and the men are already familiar with Adoration and are in need of time for silent prayer. Prayer has been selected as the main focus to help brother Knights grow deeper in prayer by encountering Christ through Eucharistic Adoration. The formation element for this example is a preplanned reflection given by the pastor or chaplain during Adoration. A relevant topic, such as Christ’s masculinity and leadership, could be suggested as it fits with forming the men.

Additional Note: Holy Hour and reflection could easily be replaced with a scriptural Rosary – See Catholic Information Services at kofc.org/cis for A Scriptural Rosary for the Family #319.

- **Welcome & Opening Prayer**
 - Welcome everyone and acknowledge any new attendees.
 - Open with a Prayer to St. Joseph (or other prayer). Clergy to lead the prayer, if present, or the leader.
 - *Note: This does not satisfy the “prayer” key element of Cor.*
 - Share the focus – prayer in Holy Hour
- **Introduce Theme or Content – Prayer: Holy Hour**
 - Introduce Holy Hour as the central focus and why
 - Hand out Holy Hour prayer sheets so men can follow along with the chants and prayers
 - If it begins in a parish hall, announce that the group will move to the main church or a chapel for Holy Hour/Adoration. Also, announce if the pastor/chaplain will be hearing confessions.
- **Body of Gathering– Prayer centered**
 - **Prayer Element:** Holy Hour with exposition and benediction.
 - **Formation Element:** During the Holy Hour, the pastor/chaplain delivers a reflection on Christ’s example of masculinity and leadership.
 - **Fraternity Element:** Social time following Holy Hour

- *Note: If held in the morning, perhaps the fraternal time is a shared meal before the Holy Hour. Discuss with the pastor/chaplain if there is a preference for the order of events.*

- **Concluding Remarks**

- It is important to recap any main takeaways or action items.
 - Help provide tangible connections and applications and call out any action items.
 - For this session, a recap of the pastor/chaplain’s reflection and applications to vocation and daily life.
- Share upcoming council and parish programs and events – extend invitations.
 - I.e., Date of next *Cor* gathering, council meeting, Faith in Action programs, and events

- **Closing Prayer**

- Open the prayer and ask for any prayer intentions from the group.
- Pray the Memorare or Prayer for the Canonization of Blessed Michael McGivney
 - *Note: These are just examples – see Vivat Jesus for other prayer options.*
- Always end on time. This honors everyone’s time.
- Socializing may still occur after the closing prayer, but everything has concluded.

Cor: Prayer Centered Example 2

Lectio Divina

1 hour and 15 minutes

Note: This example is for a council that has been gathering regularly, and there is a good level of trust and familiarity among those attending. Prayer has been selected as the main focus to help the brothers grow deeper in prayer and friendship, creating the opportunity to encounter Christ through Scripture and discussion. The formation element for this example is learning a new form of prayer. The fraternal element will occur through sharing and discussing in small groups. Additional socializing afterward will add to fraternity, but *Cor* will officially end prior to any additional social time. Because this example requires a Bible, attendees should have received communication before bringing their own Bible. Having some on hand is a good form of hospitality in case someone does not have a Bible or forgot theirs.

- **Welcome & Opening Prayer**

- Welcome everyone and acknowledge any new attendees.
- Open with a Prayer to St. Joseph (or other prayer). Clergy to lead the prayer, if present, or the leader.
 - *Note: This does not satisfy the “prayer” key element of Cor.*
- Share the focus – prayer in Holy Hour

- **Introduce Theme or Content – Prayer: Lectio Divina**

- Introduce Lectio Divina as the central focus and why
- Direct attention to the handout on Lectio Divina and Bible on each table (These should be printed and set out before everyone arrives).

- Set parameters – Individuals may be invited to share their reflections, but you are not required to. What is shared here, stays here
- **Body of Gathering – Prayer: Lectio Divina (*Scriptural Rosary*)**
 - **Formation Element:** Pastor/Chaplain or leader to provide instruction on Lectio Divina
 - **Prayer Element:** Lectio Divina on the story of the prodigal son
 - **Fraternity Element:** Discussion in small groups
- **Concluding Remarks**
 - Invite men to share key takeaways or insights from the evening.
 - It is important to recap any main takeaways or action items.
 - Help provide tangible connections and applications and call out any action items.
 - Share upcoming council and parish programs and events – extend invitations
 - I.e., Date of next *Cor* gathering, council meeting, Faith in Action programs, & events
- **Closing Prayer**
 - Open the prayer and ask for any prayer intentions from the group.
 - Pray the Memorare or Prayer for the Canonization of Blessed Michael McGivney
 - *Note: These are just examples – see Vivat Jesus for other prayer options.*
 - Always end on time. This honors everyone’s time.
 - Socializing may still occur after the closing prayer, but everything has concluded.

Cor Formation Overview

The aim of Catholic formation, as disciples of Christ, is to bring our faith to ever greater maturity. As Knights committed to our Lord and His Church, we must intentionally seek to form our heart, mind, and soul in imitation of Christ. We can break formation into four categories:

- **Human Formation:**
 - Taking on the character and virtue of Christ. This forms the foundation of how we form our conscience and will and adhere to a life of virtue and grace.
- **Spiritual Formation:**
 - Growing in holiness and relationship with God through prayer and sacraments. Here we fortify our relationship with God and our capacity to rely upon God’s divine grace.
- **Intellectual Formation:**
 - Taking on the mind of Christ and the Church. Here we form the intellect that pursues and perceives truth and then rightly directs the will. Additionally, through study, we seek to better know God and truth, not for our gain, but to better live in imitation of God, loving as he loves, to increase charity.
- **Apostolic Formation:**
 - Apostolic formation makes visible the other areas of formation. It is the lived human formation, strengthened by the spiritual life and grace, directed by the intellect that perceives truth, that then evangelizes and makes disciples of Jesus Christ. In Apostolic formation, we train for mission and HOW to share our faith, proclaim the Gospel, and lead others to Christ.

While some areas of formation are more foundational than others, it does not mean that they must happen in their entirety before moving on. Formation is an integrated process that might focus more heavily on one area over the others, depending on what is needed. This delineation is meant to provide an increased awareness of intentionality and creativity. Also, our formation never ends and must always be invested in. Formation occurs in many ways, through prayer, friendship, and experience. What we read, watch, and listen to. Truly, everything is formative toward virtue or vice. As a fraternity, how we speak, what we do, and how we do it forms the very nature of the fraternity and our relationships as fellow disciples of Christ. We must be intentional and discerning in the content we utilize for our positive Catholic formation and aware of the content we should avoid.

Formation, specifically Apostolic Formation, is also growing in our skills and capacity to evangelize, forming disciples of Christ, and participating in their ongoing formation. The capacity to do this work of evangelization finds its strength and ability in virtue and prayer. We cannot give what we do not have. For consideration, skills and tools for evangelization and discipleship include:

- The art of conversation and active listening
- How to share/proclaim the Gospel
- How to share the gospel through personal testimony
- How to disciple another (help them grow in relationship with Christ)
- How to lead a small group or Bible Study
- How to speak to the truths of the faith – apologetics
- How to teach the faith – catechesis

Cor centered on formation can also be a time to grow and develop in these areas.

Cor: Formation Centered Example 1
Into the Breach Video Series – “Masculinity” Episode
1 hour and 15 minutes

Note: This example is for a council that has been gathering regularly, and a healthy level of trust and familiarity is developing among those attending. This example could be used to introduce formation content and begin to take the conversations and fraternity deeper. Formation has been selected as the main focus, specifically through the *Into the Breach* video series. The fraternal element will occur through small group discussion and enhance the formation. The prayer element is suggested to be a group rosary following the small group discussion. This example seeks to create opportunities to encounter Christ through content and small group discussions on matters of faith and truth.

- **Welcome & Opening Prayer**
 - Welcome everyone and acknowledge any new attendees.
 - Open with a Prayer to St. Joseph (or other prayer). Clergy to lead the prayer, if present, or the leader.
 - *Note: This does not satisfy the “prayer” key element of Cor.*
 - Share focus – Formation through *Into the Breach*

- **Introduce Theme or Content – Formation: Into the Breach – Masculinity**
 - Introduce formation and Into the Breach as the central focus
 - Ensure that everyone has the *Into the Breach Video Series Study Guide* and announce which page we are on.
 - *Note: Videos and booklets are available online or by order through kofc.org/intothebreach*
 - Announce that everyone will be broken into small groups.
 - Set parameters – Individuals may be invited to share their reflections, but you are not required to. What is shared here, stays here. Do not dominate the conversation.
- **Body of the Gathering – Key Elements**
 - **Formation Element:** Watch *Into the Breach Video Series* – “Masculinity” Episode
 - **Fraternity Element:** Small group discussion
 - **Prayer Element:** Encourage each group to conclude with a prayer. When large groups are back together—pray the Rosary together.
- **Concluding Remarks**
 - Invite men to share key takeaways or insights from the evening.
 - It is important to recap any main takeaways or action items.
 - Help provide tangible connections and applications and call out any action items.
 - Share upcoming council and parish programs and events – extend invitations
 - I.e., Date of next *Cor* gathering, council meeting, Faith in Action programs, and events
 - For this example, the concluding remarks serve as a transition to a more substantial “closing” prayer in the Rosary.
- **Closing Prayer**
 - Before beginning the Rosary ask for any prayer intentions from the group.
 - Identify a few men to help lead the Rosary by taking a decade each.
 - You may still conclude with a Memorare or Prayer for the Canonization of Blessed Michael McGivney, but not necessary since the Rosary was the closing prayer.
 - *Note: These are just examples – see *Vivat Jesus* for other prayer options.*
 - Always end on time. This honors everyone’s time.
 - Socializing may still occur after the closing prayer, but everything has concluded.

Cor: Formation Centered Example 2

***Cor Ecclesiae: Patris Corde* – booklet session 1**

1 hour and 15 minutes

Note This formation example is for a council that has committed to gathering regularly and beginning to develop trust and familiarity among those attending. This example could be used to introduce deeper conversations and fraternity. The fraternal element will occur through shared food and small group discussion, enhancing the formation. The prayer element is suggested to be a group rosary following the small group discussion. This example is seeks to create opportunities to consider St. Joseph as a model of masculinity and encounter Christ through reflecting on St. Joseph’s example of faith and virtue for the child Jesus.

- **Welcome & Opening Prayer**
 - Welcome everyone and acknowledge any new attendees.
 - Open with a Prayer to St. Joseph found in the book. Clergy to lead the prayer, if present, or the leader.
 - *Note: This does not satisfy the “prayer” key element of Cor.*
 - Share focus – Formation through *Patris Corde*
- **Introduce Theme or Content – Formation: Into the Breach – Masculinity**
 - Introduce formation and Into the Breach as the central focus
 - Ensure that everyone has the *Cor Ecclesiae: Patris Corde* booklet and announce which page we are on.
 - Announce that everyone will be broken into small groups.
 - If the first time in small groups, set parameters – Individuals may be invited to share their reflections, but you are not required to, and not to dominate the conversation. What is shared here, stays here.
- **Body of the Gathering– Key Elements**
 - **Formation Element:** Read and discuss the selected session.
 - **Fraternity Element:** Small group discussion
 - **Prayer Element:** Encourage each group to conclude with a prayer. When large groups are back together–pray the Rosary together.
- **Concluding Remarks**
 - Invite men to share key takeaways or insights from the evening.
 - It is important to recap any main takeaways or action items.
 - Help provide tangible connections and applications and call out any action items.
 - Share upcoming council and parish programs and events – extend invitations
 - I.e., Date of next *Cor* gathering, council meeting, Faith in Action programs, and events
 - For this example, the concluding remarks serve as a transition to a more substantial “closing” prayer in the Rosary.
- **Closing Prayer**
 - Before beginning the Rosary ask for any prayer intentions from the group.
 - Identify a few men to help lead the Rosary by taking a decade each.
 - You may still conclude with a Memorare or Prayer for the Canonization of Blessed Michael McGivney, but not necessary since the Rosary was the closing prayer.
 - *Note: These are just examples – see Vivat Jesus for other prayer options.*
 - Always end on time. This honors everyone’s time.
 - Socializing may still occur after the closing prayer, but the official gathering has concluded.

Cor Fraternity Overview

Fraternity can be defined as a group of people gathered around a common interest. As Knights of Columbus, our common interest is faithfulness to our Lord Jesus Christ and living the fullness of life within the family of God, the Catholic Church. The intent of our fraternity, in the context of Christ's mission of evangelization and discipleship, is the building of authentic friendships centered on Christ. These friendships are unified in the common purpose of growing in holiness and virtue and sharing in a life of mission. Fraternity is shared discipleship.

Our model and standard of holiness and virtue is Jesus Christ. He also models how to help others grow in virtue through his time with the apostles and their time together in the Acts of the Apostles. Formation in virtue requires an intentional and frequent fraternity that creates familiarity and trust. This is crucial for men to “break the silence” and actually talk about God and share their faith. This allows men to develop a healthy vulnerability and be willing to share and invite others into their lives. These men can truly grow in humility, charity, holiness, and virtue. Above all, growth in virtue requires a relationship with Jesus Christ that is open to receiving and responding to divine grace. Growth will become nearly impossible without the consistency of drawing close to our Lord in prayer and sacrament.

Within authentic friendship is the shared pursuit of Christ and the goal of salvation. When men know they are on “the same team,” they can quickly build trust. Even still, investment and familiarity over time build a deeper trust, and men earn the right to be heard. “Earning the right to be heard” simply means that one has earned the right, or been given the freedom from their brother, to speak into his character and virtue. This is fraternal correction and necessary for growing in virtue. Iron does not sharpen itself. Fraternity must enable friendships that sharpen each other in virtue. Fraternity is truly where “iron sharpening iron” is formative. This can come in the form of affirmation, fraternal correction, edification, and healthy vulnerability. To grow in virtue, we must know the virtues and how to be formed in them. While formation in virtue could easily be put under the “formation section,” we discuss virtue in the fraternity section because virtue is formed through fraternal brotherhood, through Christ centered authentic friendships.

Growing as a virtuous and holy disciple of Jesus Christ is also a call to leadership. All disciples of Christ are called to lead others to Christ. This leadership can only be done with virtue which models the Christian life for those we are leading. Men must hold each other accountable to virtuous Christian living.

Developing a fraternity of Christ centered friendships takes time. Many men may already have these friendships, but not everyone does. Take the time to structure your times of fraternity intentionally. It will “just happen” in many ways, but we must be intentional with our conversations and interactions. If we are not, fraternity will remain superficial, discussions will be shallow, and not much will change in the lives of these men. One might say, “Well, I’ve known these men for years; what do you mean I have to get to know them better?” We must first recognize that friendship, or any relationship is ever-growing and changing and can continually get richer. We could respond with, “Yes, but do you have the freedom to share the struggles of life and faith? Do you trust each other? Do these friendships add value and depth to your life?” If the answer is not “yes” to each of these, we have work to do.

Below is an overview of the virtues and their role in our life of faith and relationship with God and man.

Formation and Fraternity Catechesis and Resource – The Virtues

“A habitual and firm disposition to do the good. The moral virtues are acquired through human effort aided by God’s grace; the theological virtues are gifts of God.” (CCC 1803)

Seeking to imitate Christ and to take on his virtue is a process of formation and a fruit of fraternity. Brothers sharpening each other do so in the pursuit of honing ourselves in Christ’s virtue. This brotherly activity is true fraternity and comes from intentional time in conversation, prayer, and friendship.

Theological Virtues

- The theological virtues “dispose Christians to live in a relationship with the Holy Trinity.” (CCC 1812). “(They) are the foundation of the Christian moral activity ... They inform and give life to all the moral virtues.” (CCC 1813)
- **Faith**
 - “The virtue by which we believe in God and believe all that he has said and revealed to us, and the Holy Church proposes for our belief, because he is truth itself.” (CCC 1814)
- **Hope**
 - “The virtue by which we desire the kingdom of heaven and eternal life as our happiness, placing our trust in Christ’s promises and relying not on our own strength, but on the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit.” (CCC 1817)
- **Charity**
 - “The virtue by which we love God above all things for his own sake, and our neighbor as ourselves for the love of God.” (CCC 1822)
 - “Superior to all the virtues. It is the first of the theological virtues.” (CCC 1826)
 - Eros (Passion) & Agape (Compassion)
 - Charity, love, wills the good of the other as other (Aquinas). The greatest good is salvation.

Cardinal Virtues

- The cardinal virtues are human virtues, around which all other human virtues are grouped. They are also spoken of as the “moral virtues”.
- “Human virtues (rooted in the theological virtues) are firm attitudes, stable dispositions, habitual perfections of intellect and will that govern our acts, order our passions, and guide our conduct according to reason and faith.” (CCC 1804)
- **Prudence (practical wisdom)**
 - “The virtue that disposes practical reason to discern our true good in every circumstance and to choose the right means of achieving it.” “Prudence is right reason in action.” (CCC 1806)

- **Justice**
 - “The moral virtue that consists in the constant and firm will to give their due to God and neighbor.” “Justice toward God is called the “virtue of religion”. “The just man ... is distinguished by habitual right thinking and the uprightness of his conduct toward his neighbor.” (CCC 1807)
- **Fortitude**
 - “The moral virtue that ensures firmness in difficulties and constancy in the pursuit of the good. It strengthens the resolve to resist temptations and to overcome obstacles in the moral life.” (CCC 1808)
- **Temperance**
 - “The moral virtue that moderates the attraction of pleasures and provides balance in the use of created goods. It ensures the will’s mastery over instincts and keeps desires within the limits of what is honorable.”(CCC 1809)
- **Additional Virtues as Gifts and Fruits of the Holy Spirit or extensions of the Cardinal Virtues:**
 - Joy, Peace, Mercy, Prayer, Courage (Endurance of suffering), Humility, Magnanimity (greatness of soul), Wisdom, Integrity, Chastity, Sobriety, Gratitude, Compassion, Patience, Emotional Intelligence

Cor: Fraternity Centered Example 1

Social Event

1 hour and 15 minutes

Note: A council gathering could use this *Cor* example for the first time, or that is just starting up again following a break period. The attendees may still need to develop a strong level of familiarity and trust and are still getting to know each other, or it is a startup, and new men from the parish have been invited. This example of a fraternity centered gathering has been selected to help the men get to know each other and build familiarity. The formation element is in the form of an inspirational talk, no longer than 5 minutes, to be delivered by either the pastor or chaplain or a brother Knight. The prayer element is suggested to be a time of intercessory prayer at the closing of the social. Intercessory prayer is a simple but effective way for men to share real needs in their life, which will begin to break down barriers.

- **Welcome & Opening Prayer**
 - Welcome everyone and acknowledge any new attendees.
 - Open with a Prayer to St. Joseph (or other prayer). Clergy to lead the prayer, if present, or the leader.
 - *Note: This does not satisfy the “prayer” key element of Cor.*
- **Introduce Theme or Content – Fraternity**
 - A fraternity centered gathering like this does not need an introduction to the content or context. If anything, it is to be delivered in the welcome.
- **Body of the Gathering– Social**
 - **Fraternity Element:** The planned social. Hospitality and intentionality are key for achieving more than just a social time together.

- **Formation Element:** Pastor/chaplain or brother Knight to share a brief (no more than 5 minutes) reflection or inspirational talk on a relevant topic that will engage the men. A suitable topic could be a testimony of virtuous friendships to highlight the direction and purpose of gathering as men.
- **Prayer Element:** Conclude with a whole Rosary or a decade – feel out the group.
 - *Note: Set a specific time for the social to end so that it does not continue on too late – honor everyone’s time.*
- **Concluding Remarks**
 - Thank everyone for coming.
 - It is important to recap any main takeaways or action items.
 - Help provide tangible connections and applications and call out any action items.
 - For this example and type of gathering a recap of the pastor, chaplain, or brother Knight’s reflection would be appropriate. Also, a way to apply it to one’s vocation and daily life.
 - Share upcoming council and parish programs and events – extend invitations
 - I.e., Date of next *Cor gathering*, council meeting, Faith in Action programs, and events
- **Closing Prayer**
 - Following the concluding remarks, invite everyone to come together for a closing prayer.
 - Open the prayer and ask for any prayer intentions from the group.
 - Pray the Memorare or Prayer for the Canonization of Blessed Michael McGivney
 - *Note: These are just examples – see Vivat Jesus for other prayer options.*
 - Always end on time. This honors everyone’s time.
 - Socializing may still occur after the closing prayer, but the official gathering has concluded.

Cor: Fraternity Centered Example 2
Structured Brotherhood
1 hour and 15 minutes

Note: A council could use this example for the first structured gathering following a fraternal centered one, such as Fraternal Centered Option Example 1. This style of fraternity has been selected to help the men grow in friendship and to take the conversation to a deeper level. This example also allows the council to introduce the structure and small groups. Additionally, this is an opportunity to share *Cor’s* purpose and what it intends to provide for each man. The example formation element is a reflection on authentic friendship and growing in virtue as brothers. Fraternity will be specifically the conversations in small groups with previously discussed questions to help the men get to know each other more intentionally and weave in a component of faith sharing. The prayer element will be to conclude with a Rosary.

- **Welcome & Opening Prayer**
 - Welcome everyone and acknowledge any new attendees
 - Open with a Prayer to St. Joseph (or other prayer). Clergy to lead the prayer, if present, or the leader.

- *Note: This does not satisfy the “prayer” key element of Cor.*
 - Share focus – Fraternal time, getting to know one another.
- **Introduce Theme or Content – Fraternity**
 - We are introducing the structure that we will be using for the next few months of *Cor*
 - We will continue to have a social from time to time
 - Introduce the purpose of *Cor* – key elements and what we are focusing on – developing Christ centered friendship and fraternity
- **Body of the Gathering– Key Elements**
 - **Formation Element:** “What is: fraternity, authentic friendship, and growing virtue?”
 - **Fraternity Element:** Getting to know each other in small groups – intentional questions
 - Handout with questions like: Tell us about yourself: are you married, do you have any kids, what is your occupation? How long have you been a parishioner? Have you been involved in any other men’s ministries or formation programs? What did you get out of them? What are you hoping to get out of *Cor*?
 - **Prayer Element:** Conclude with the Rosary
 - *Note: You may choose to end with another form of prayer; however, the Rosary is central and sets a standard initially.*
- **Concluding Remarks**
 - Thank everyone for coming.
 - It is important to recap any main takeaways or action items.
 - Help provide tangible connections and applications and call out any action items.
 - Share upcoming council and parish programs and events – extend invitations
 - I.e., Date of next *Cor* gathering, council meeting, Faith in Action programs, and events
- **Closing prayer**
 - For this example, the Rosary has been selected to close.
 - Ask for volunteers to help lead the Rosary by taking a decade each.
 - Before starting the Rosary, ask for any prayer intentions from the group.
 - Always end on time. This honors everyone’s time.
 - Socializing may still occur after the closing prayer, but the official gathering has concluded.

Glossary of Terms

Proclaiming the Good News of the Gospel – The Kerygma: In a plan of sheer goodness, God created man in his image and likeness to live in a perpetual relationship with Him. In his freedom, man chose to fall to sin, resulting in suffering, death, and separation from God. To restore this relationship, in the fullness of time, God the Father sent his only beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to take upon himself the punishment of our sin. He suffered death on the cross and rose from the dead, restoring our relationship with God as an everlasting covenant. In faith and freedom, we are invited to repent of our sins, accept, follow, and profess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and abide in him and his holy Church. Compelled by Christ's love and in gratitude for his saving work, we accept and follow his command to proclaim the Gospel and make disciples of all nations.

Evangelization: "The proclamation of Christ and his Gospel by word and the testimony of life, in fulfillment of Christ's command" (CCC 905; cf. 861). This proclamation provides the recipient with a choice of conversion, to leave behind their old life, take up their cross, and follow Christ as his disciple. This begins the journey of discipleship and continued faith formation. We must always be prepared to share our faith and the Gospel through witness (how we act and speak) and personal testimony of faith. Evangelization is an introduction to the person of Jesus Christ and, therefore, can and should happen more than once in an individual's life. Evangelization, begets a continued relationship with Jesus that finds its fullness within the family of God, the Church.

Disciples and discipleship: Disciples are baptized followers of Jesus Christ who, through reception and acceptance of the Gospel, have accepted Christ's invitation to follow him and enter into communion with him through word and sacrament, in the life of the Church. "Jesus associated his disciples with his own life, revealed the mystery of the Kingdom to the disciples and gave them a share in his mission, his joy, and his sufferings" (CCC 787)

Formation: The ongoing process of growing and maturing in faith, virtue, and relationship with Jesus Christ as his disciples. Becoming like Christ to better serve the world. Developing a strong moral conscience and the virtue to adhere to the commands of Christ and his Holy Church. Proper formation occurs through many means and requires humility, time, and trust.

Personal Testimony: To bear witness to the truth of the Gospel and life in Christ through your personal and unique story and example of faith, conversion, growth, and disciple relationship with Jesus Christ and his Church. Testimony serves as a powerful point of evangelization and introduction to Jesus Christ.

Missionary Disciples: Disciples of Jesus Christ who have accepted his command in the Great Commission (Matt 28:18-20) to make disciples of all nations. These disciples are dedicated to the mission of proclaiming the Gospel and accompanying those souls who receive the Gospel in authentic friendship, prayer and, sacrament as they grow in faith and relationship with Jesus and his Church and prepare them for the work of shoulder-to-shoulder evangelization. By virtue of their baptism, all the baptized are called to be holy and missionary disciples of Jesus Christ.

