



KAPAUN'S MEN OPERATIONS MANUAL

Thank you for your interest in Kapaun's Men! This manual is designed to assist you as you consider launching your own Kapaun's Men group. We hope that it will answer any questions you might have about Kapaun's Men and what you can do to facilitate a successful group, but know that we are happy to provide technical assistance and the help of a Kapaun's Men Adviser while you get your group off the ground. Contact us at KapaunsMen@gmail.com or 316-440-1735.

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WHO IS FATHER KAPAUN?

Emil Kapaun was a Catholic Priest and U.S. Army Chaplain born in the small farming community of Pilsen, Kansas. Captured while giving aid to wounded soldiers during the Korean War, he died in a Prisoner of War Camp in 1951.

On the battlefield, along a 60-mile death march, and in the hellish prisoner camp, Father Kapaun saw it as his mission to assist and encourage his men in any way possible. He rallied his 'boys' to continue fighting, both for themselves and each other. The surviving POWs testify that his selfless example was the inspiration they needed to keep each other alive during the next two and a half years of their imprisonment. One of Kapaun's fellow prisoners of war sums it up well: "Father proved himself to be the greatest example of manhood that I've ever seen in my life."

In 2013 Chaplain Kapaun was awarded the Medal of Honor, the nation's highest honor for bravery in battle, and in 2015 his cause for sainthood in the Catholic Church was presented to the Congregation for Saints in Rome, which is currently reviewing the first stages of it. We continue to pray that someday soon he will be named a saint!

WHY CALL OURSELVES KAPAUN'S MEN?

Taking as our model the life of Father Emil Joseph Kapaun, a courageous Catholic priest, Army chaplain, and leader of men, Kapaun's Men are men who are committed to fighting the great spiritual battle that rages around us. We are a band of brothers who do not fight alone. Jesus Christ is our strength and our leader. Father Kapaun is our friend and guide. A true Servant Leader, Father Kapaun epitomized Christian manhood and challenged his men to do the same. We desire to emulate his virtues and so become better husbands, fathers, leaders and friends. Recognizing that we are stronger together than we are alone, we accompany each other as Father Kapaun accompanied his men, sharing one another's successes, failures, fears and dreams. Are you ready to begin your journey? If so, Kapaun's Men has your back.

VISION AND MISSION

The **vision** of Kapaun's Men can be summarized in the following sentence:

Guided by the Holy Spirit and inspired by the witness of Servant of God Father Emil Kapaun, Kapaun's Men unites men in prayer, formation and discussion in order to courageously respond to God's universal call to holiness and become better husbands, fathers, leaders and friends.

Our **mission** seeks to achieve this vision by fostering the following elements found in Father Kapaun's life:

Fellowship – Father Kapaun knew that to survive the battlefield and the prison camp, his men would have to stick together, and his encouragement helped them to do so. Kapaun's Men seeks to provide a forum for men to grow in holiness with other men.

Conversion – The life and teachings of Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd, were the model to which Fr. Kapaun sought to conform his own life. Prayer, formation and fellowship will provide opportunities for our continued conversion and the alignment of our will with the will of God.

Faith – Fr. Kapaun dedicated his life to sharing the love and mercy of God, calling others to greatness through conversion and the deepening of their faith. Following his example, we seek to boldly and courageously live our faith and be a witness of Christ to our families and community.

Leadership – The power of Father Kapaun's leadership was found in his humble service and constant example. We seek to cultivate our leadership skills by modeling our life after his humble service to God and country.

Accompaniment – Father Kapaun made a heroic decision to stay with his men when he had a chance to escape, and so was able to minister to them in a very profound way. Our decision to accompany our brothers in a spirit of trust and open dialogue provides us with hope and inspiration on our journeys, reassuring us that we do not walk alone.

MEETING FORMAT

Meetings are designed to last an hour long and include the following elements:



1. Prayer

- Prayer is an essential part of our relationship with God and who we are called to be as men. Begin and end each session with prayer.
- Father Kapaun Prayer and Scripture: Our workbooks include the Father Kapaun prayer in the front and a scripture passage for each week that is pertinent to the particular Beatitude. Reciting these prayers together is a great way to start the session.
- Three Hail Mary's: Father Kapaun encouraged his men to say three Hail Mary's each morning and night. This is a great way to end your session, asking for the Blessed Mother's assistance in our service of her Son.
- Intentions: opening up the floor for intentions, whether at the beginning or end is a great way for us to continue to support each other. If you feel so inclined, please keep in your prayers all the other Kapaun's Men groups around the world as well!

2. Formation

- Formation is a way that we open our lives to be shaped by Christ and His teachings. Our original video series share stories of Father Kapaun and many other men and women to help teach and inspire us to better Christian living. We also recommend several formation programs from other source on our website. Some groups will supplement the Kapaun's Men material with a talk from their pastor or another local person on a topic related to our living as Christian men.
- We recommend giving a short 1-2 minute introduction to each video. You can preview the video beforehand and share your own thoughts, or read the brief written formation material included at the beginning of each session in the workbook.
- When you watch the video, we encourage men to take notes: What speaks to you? What are you learning that means something to you or your experience? The goal is to learn from and grow with Fr. Kapaun and other men in this journey. Your workbook has a section for notes that you can utilize during the video sessions and discussions. If something is powerful to you, it can be a great discussion topic for the group!

3. Discussion

- This is where the lasting impact of Kapaun's Men really starts to take hold. After the video, take a minute or two to let things sink in, and then start a discussion about the week's topic. Here are a few recommendations:
 - Discussion groups of 5-7 men work well and allow all men in the group to be a part of the conversation. For groups of 10 or more, we recommend breaking into two discussion groups. Some groups have found that keeping the discussion groups the same from week to week works well, while others have found that it is good to be able to mix things up. It may be best to leave this possibility open to the men in your group.
 - You may start the discussion by reviewing last week's material and how you have done during the week before moving onto the current week.
 - The discussion is meant to be pertinent to whatever men bring to the table. We have provided questions to spur discussion if needed, but it is important to not feel compelled to answer them all.
 - For company size groups, it can be enlightening to open the discussion up at the end to report out any profound moment to the rest of the group. This is not necessary, but can be powerful and help to bring the entire company together.
- Real discussion with other men can be challenging, as it is often easier to talk about sports, the weather, or work. However, we encourage you to be bold and to go deep, as this is what can really transform your life. Remember, each man here wants to get to heaven, and we need other men to help us get there.
- Most importantly, remember also to listen attentively to your brothers and provide them encouragement and support.



5 STEPS TO LAUNCHING A KAPAUN'S MEN GROUP

Prayer, formation and discussion are at the heart of each Kapaun's Men Group. However, keep in mind as you get ready to begin your own group that many aspects can be flexible to fit the needs of your particular group. The goal is to be flexible but to provide enough organization to help sustain the ministry as time goes on.

Step One: Estimating the Group Size

- Determine what you expect your group to look like. Here is a helpful guide for the three different sizes of groups that Kapaun's Men has encountered:

Squad 5-9 Men	Platoon 10-25 Men	Company 26+ Men
<p>Fit for: A group of friends or a leadership team.</p> <p>Leadership: 1 person to help guide</p> <p>Advantages: Easy to organize. Quick to start. Does not need to be hosted by a church or organization. Close-knit groups and good accountability. Can have a strong personal impact.</p> <p>Challenges: Can be difficult to bring in new members. Individual dedication is very important. Attendance is critical.</p>	<p>Fit for: Smaller parishes or organizations. Large parishes that are just getting started.</p> <p>Leadership: Leader plus 2-3 to help</p> <p>Advantages: More inclusive. Forms new relationships. More diverse conversation. Impacts a larger number of men. Easy to expand. Still easy to manage. Absences are not as critical.</p> <p>Challenges: Size is big enough for variety, but can become stagnant. A little more difficult to foster fellowship and accountability.</p>	<p>Fit for: Large parishes or organizations</p> <p>Leadership: Leader plus 5-10 to help</p> <p>Advantages: Most inclusive. Forms new relationships. More diverse conversation. Can impact the whole parish or organization. Can always add new members. Absences are even less critical.</p> <p>Challenges: Size may prohibit strong fellowship to form. Needs effort of a number of leaders to foster fellowship and accountability.</p>



- We recommend including your pastor or organization's leader in the development of a new group. This is especially important when forming a larger group like a Platoon or Company. While the pastor is certainly welcome to participate, the beauty of the program is that it is designed to require very little of the pastor's time for organization or content generation.
- One final thought: if you are having trouble getting men involved at first, another option is to begin with a small squad-sized group of men. After participating in the Virtue Series, the men might be more interested in forming a leadership team to get a larger group started. The men will be eager to share and invite others into the program and will have personal experience to assist in recruiting men. You could show the Virtue Series with the larger group before moving onto our other series.

Step Two: Develop a Leadership Team

- This group will help in planning the programming and logistics, as well as help in recruitment. A leadership team is especially important for the platoon or company-sized groups.
- Identify individuals that are resourceful, connected in the parish, and have a desire to grow as virtuous men.
- Identify a cross section of talents. Skill sets to consider include:
 - Organizers
 - Development/PR person
 - Someone (or a handful of people) who feel comfortable welcoming and kicking off each session
- Kapaun's Men Advisers
 - We are happy to put you in touch with a Kapaun's Men Adviser to assist you in getting your group off the ground. Advisers can provide technical assistance and moral support, and can act as a good soundboard for ideas and troubleshooter of issues.
 - For assistance from a Kapaun's Men Adviser, contact us at KapaunsMen@gmail.com

Step Three: Determine Programming

- Kapaun's Men offers two video series (we recommend starting with the Virtue Series and then moving onto the Stewardship Series) that are good formation and discussion aids. These can be purchased online or over the phone. We also share recommendations for formation programs on our website. Visit for the most up-to-date list.

Step Four: Plan Logistics- see below



Step Five: Recruit!

- There are several ways to recruit guys, but by far the most effective way we have found is by personal invitation- what we call hand-to-hand combat. Emails work okay, but taking a couple minutes to make a phone call sharing what Kapaun's Men is going to be about is very powerful. Men respond best to a personal invitation!
- Some other ideas:
 - Squads: Reach out to the individuals and determine a good time to meet
 - Platoons/Companies: Promote in the parish bulletin, around the complex, after masses, and if you can, ask your pastor to promote from the pulpit
 - Advertising Materials are available online.
 - Point men to the trailer videos for the Kapaun's Men Programs, and if you can, embed them on your parish website. Go to www.KapaunsMen.org to find the videos.

LOGISTICS: HOSTING A GROUP

In working out these details, there are two key points to remember:

- We happily provide some recommendations, but the best practice is often speaking with a handful of men to determine what will work best for your group.
- No options are perfect- you will always run into some challenges meeting everyone's needs- but pick what will work best and go from there.

Frequency

- Some groups meet every other week or even once a month, but we recommend meeting weekly for a fall session and a spring session.
- Sessions can vary in length depending on the material. For instance, the Virtue Series provides material for 8 weeks, and the Stewardship Series has material for 10 weeks. The other programs vary in length, and we are happy to assist you with ways we have successfully implemented them into Kapaun's Men.

Length of Sessions

- 1 hour meetings. This provides time for prayer, viewing the video, breaking into table talk, and discussion, so long as the meetings begin on time. Some groups who have wanted to leave a little more time for informal conversation or follow-up conversations on the previous week's challenge have decided to meet for an additional 15-30 minutes, but that is up to you.

Time

- A lot of this depends on what works best for your men. Some groups may have better attendance in the evening, while for others family events may preclude attendance. For instance, many groups choose to meet at 6:00 a.m. before work to reduce the reasons for men to not attend, and seems to accommodate men's daily scheduling needs.

Questions? Email us at:

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www.KapaunsMen.org



However, other groups decide to go with evenings, even meeting as late as 8:30 p.m. Once again, it will be impossible to accommodate everyone, but choose a time that seems to make sense for at least a large portion of your men.

Location

- Accommodating the group size is the biggest factor, but if possible, choose a place that is welcoming, peaceful and prayerful. A church recreation room might be a good fit, but an alternate location might work just as well.
- Make sure you have the ability to show the video each week.
- If you have a larger group and are staying in the same room for discussion, it is easiest to sit in your small groups from the beginning. This will reduce the amount of distractions when you transition from the video to the small groups.

FACILITATION TIPS

- It is helpful to have one person at each group discussion act as a facilitator. This will be someone who has a good feel for conversation and can ensure that it is progressing and is beneficial. They may need to begin the discussion or jump-start it if it begins to fade. Here are some more tips:
 - We recommend that a facilitator review the discussion questions before each session, and the videos if possible.
 - The facilitator does not have to be a teacher or expert in the subject matter. This can actually hurt discussion. The Holy Spirit is the main guide for each group; the facilitator role exists to help assist the dialogue that flows from the Spirit, serving to kindle the discussion when needed and keep it moving in the right direction.
 - It is not necessary to get through all of the discussion questions. The questions are provided to spur conversation if needed, but oftentimes conversation may develop on its own. If things are going well, stick with it, and if the conversation starts to get stale, then bring up another question.
- Developing the right atmosphere:
 - Location can be a great help. Try to meet in a place that is comfortable and lends itself to both viewing the videos and fostering conversation.
 - Facilitation is more of an art than a science. It is important to be genuine, open and welcoming without being pushy or forceful. It may take a few weeks for men to really open up into deep discussion. Allow time for this to happen.
 - If you sense the mood is becoming too heavy or discouraging, try to lift it by reassuring everyone that God's grace is always present, that as men we will walk with each other and pray for each other, and that God can turn all things into a blessing. We are men of hope like Father Kapaun!



- Remember to be respectful and confidential. While we all seek to grow in holiness, how we live our call to sanctity will look different for each man in the group. Kapaun's Men is a tool to help us grow in holiness and learn more about ourselves through the lens of Fr. Kapaun's life and shared elements of men's lives. As adults we respect each other's opinions and do our best to support one another as we journey together.
- Other Considerations:
 - Mass: Many blessings come from scheduling the meetings around daily mass so that men can celebrate the Eucharist together
 - Flexibility: Remain flexible in how you structure the group. The most important thing about Kapaun's Men is that you are meeting and intentionally seeking to deepen your relationship with each other and the Lord. Beyond that, you are completely free to adapt to the circumstances that are presented to you

SUPPORT

- We are happy to assist you at any step of the process. If you desire, each new group can have an onboarding sponsor from another Kapaun's Men group. Please contact the Kapaun's Men Coordinator, Scott Carter, at KapaunsMen@gmail.com or 316-440-1735.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. Where did Kapaun's Men come from?

A. Kapaun's Men originated from a group of men at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Pittsburg, Kansas, who were hungry for formation and fellowship with other men. Inspired by the life of Father Emil Kapaun, an American Servant of God, the group felt compelled to share its success with other men.

Q. Is Kapaun's Men just another men's group?

A. Father Kapaun was a great example of manhood through his fidelity, his works of mercy and his down-to-earth advice. Kapaun's Men seeks to carry on his legacy with faith formation and accountability that is accessible and pertinent to all men. It has created 2 series of unique content and is currently working on more. Kapaun's Men complements any other men's group that might exist in the parish and can even be incorporated into existing groups.

Q. Why is Kapaun's Men Necessary?

A. Male participation in the life of the Church contributes to its vitality. Active male parishioners make for stronger families, parishes and society. Kapaun's Men are active and accountable members of their parish community.

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Q. This seems like a lot of work. Can I do this by myself?

A. Yes and no. The logistics part of running a Kapaun's Men group is certainly doable for one man, we encourage you to seek other men for help, at the very least for recruiting. If you find yourself starting off alone, begin by asking God's help and by sharing your vision of starting a Kapaun's Men Group with others around you. We think that you will find at least a few men who will be excited about the program. Also know that we are happy to provide technical assistance and moral support throughout the process.

Q. My pastor is very busy. How much work will this require of him?

A. The great thing about Kapaun's Men is that it requires little hands-on work for the pastor. We have found that most priests are excited to have the program in their parish, but are also happy that men can take the lead on it. We appreciate the support from our priests in whatever way they are able- whether it be active leadership, attending the program, or merely supporting the recruitment of men.

Q. Is Kapaun's Men limited to a certain age group?

A. Kapaun's Men was designed to address challenges men regularly face in their Christian lives. Most of this covers virtues that anyone can learn from, but there are elements of work and family life included in the videos, so they may be better suited for college-age men and above.

Q. How do I encourage men to join?

A. The best way is if those excited about starting a group extend a personal invitation to men they know. Additionally, support from your pastor is extremely helpful. If he is willing to encourage men to join there will be even more success. You may also see if there are existing groups in your parish and see if they are interested in the programming. On our website we have provided some materials that you are free to use for advertising purposes, and feel free to direct men to watch the trailer videos!

Q. Do you have to attend every meeting?

A. We understand that there will be times when it is not possible to join your brothers at the meeting, but attendance is encouraged to make a lasting impact. That said, if you miss a week, it is usually easy enough to jump right back into the material.

Q. What will it cost?

A. The video series are \$50, and the workbooks are \$11 apiece. While it is up to each pastor to decide how to charge for this, we have seen parishes purchase the video series, while asking each individual participant to cover the cost of the workbook materials.



Q. Can we order a video series without forming a Kapaun's Men Group?

A. Absolutely. We know the video may be useful for individuals or other groups as well. Simply go to www.KapaunsMen.org to order the video series.

Q. Does Kapaun's Men host a retreat?

A. Kapaun's Men hosts a retreat in the fall of each year. See the website for up-to-date information on the retreat. We are currently working on developing a model that can be used for your own Kapaun's Men retreat.

Q. Is KM a service organization?

A. Kapaun's Men focus is primarily on forming holy men. Although this formation should lead men to living out their faith in concrete ways, we do not consider ourselves to be a "service" organization.


Q. Can non-Catholics join?

A. All men are welcome to join. The basic premise of Kapaun's Men is that all men are called to live virtuous lives, and we highly encourage any man to join. We stand to learn much from all our brothers seeking to live upright lives. Everyone should be aware that the video series are made from a Catholic perspective, but there are few things that could not be applicable to any man, and it may be a good opportunity for them to learn about the Catholic faith in an understanding and welcoming way.



VIRTUE SERIES WORKBOOK EXAMPLE

The following is an example of one of the accompanying sessions from the virtue series workbook that would be paired with the video.

 KAPAUN'S
MEN

SESSION TWO: MERCY

*"The Works of Mercy are charitable actions by which we come to the aid of our neighbor in his spiritual and bodily necessities. Instructing, advising, consoling, comforting are spiritual works of mercy, as are forgiving and bearing wrongs patiently. The corporal works of mercy consist especially in feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and imprisoned, and burying the dead. Among all these, giving alms to the poor is one of the chief witnesses to fraternal charity: it is also a work of justice pleasing to God."
- Catechism of the Catholic Church #2447*

PSALM 130

Out of the depths I call to you, LORD;
Lord, hear my cry!
May your ears be attentive
to my cry for mercy.
If you, LORD, keep account of sins,
Lord, who can stand?
But with you is forgiveness
and so you are revered.
I wait for the LORD,
my soul waits and I hope for his word.
My soul looks for the Lord
more than sentinels for daybreak.
More than sentinels for daybreak,
let Israel hope in the LORD,
For with the LORD is mercy,
with him is plenteous redemption,
And he will redeem Israel from all its sins.

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Why is forgiveness so hard for us?
2. Why is there a disconnect with the head and the heart in regards to mercy and forgiveness?
3. What do you think of the statement you heard that "mercy begets mercy". How is this so?
4. Do we really mean what we say when we pray the words in the "Our Father"?
5. Why is it hard for men to be loved or to accept love? What is the role of reconciliation in allowing God to love you?
6. If God forgives, why don't we?
7. What is pride's role as an obstacle to forgiveness?
8. For what areas in your life would you want help in asking forgiveness?



WEEKLY CHALLENGE:

*Go to the Sacrament
of Reconciliation.*

In addition there is a page for notes for each session as well.