

What is to be done?

Intro

- Just met with my father earlier this week. Spoke for a while about his fathers

Review of year

- What is major crisis? Lack of confidence in authority.
- Answer?
 - We need heroes men after God's own heart
 - Theoden
 - What were heroes?
 - God-men.
 - David was a hero in this fashion. A man after God's own heart
 - He took down Goliath. In a way, all of us must do the same. Difference between him and more classical heroes like Hercules is the fact that he recognized his strength came from God.
 - Does not mean that we are perfect after a human reckoning, which would mean we never make any mistakes. Indeed, we may make serious ones, either personally in the form of sin or in the government of our family, which leads sometimes to suffering for others.
 - We must be ready to be humble and learn from our mistakes. They are not as such obstacles to God's work, provided we turn to God for forgiveness and work with His grace to overcome the fault.
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What then?

- Heroism comes ultimately from Faith.
 - Deep conviction in who God is and what that means in our life.

- The world is dwindling away, for lack of men; the nations are perishing for scarcity of men, for the rareness of men....I do believe: there are no men where there is no character; there is no character where there are no principles, doctrines, stands taken; there are no stands taken, no doctrines, no principles, where there is no religious faith and consequently no religion of society. Do what you will: only from God will you get men
 - Thus, we must nourish it
 - Prayer, spiritual reading, meditation
 - We must lead it for family, but I mean principally here for ourselves.
- Cultivate spirit of sacrifice
 - Sacrifice of time
 - Sacrifice of interests
 - Sacrifice of material comfort
- Invest yourself
 - Give time to reflect on who you are and what you are called to do in your home.
 - Who are you meant to be as a husband?
 - As a father?
 - You must cultivate a confidence and willingness to be involved, even if you may make mistakes.
 - Invest in your family
 - Invest in your male friends
 - Help each other be better

Conclusion: Ready to run to the fight proposed to us

- And when the Philistine arose and was coming, and drew nigh to meet David, David made haste, and ran to the fight to meet the Philistine.
- St Paul calls us to the same. In his letter to the Hebrews, he gives a lengthy list of the heroes of the Old Testament who have lived their lives according to the Faith, and he concludes as follows:
 - And therefore we also having so great a cloud of witnesses over our head, laying aside every weight and sin which surrounds us, let us run by patience to the fight proposed to us: 2 Looking on Jesus, the author and

finisher of faith, who having joy set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and now sitteth on the right hand of the throne of God.

Concrete Challenges

- Moving forward, these conferences will only have been worthwhile to the extent that they lead you to take serious resolutions.
 - These are some suggestions, but you can think of many more things that you can do to improve yourself with God's grace.
- Personal
 - 10 minutes daily spiritual reading
 - Read at least 5 pages daily of some book (history, literature, self-improvement, crisis in the Church)
 - Exercise – recommend Crossfit, mainly because it develops camaraderie and sustainability
 - Do not use screens privately at home
 - No personal entertainment
 - No news. Print off anything worth reading.
 - Abstain from alcohol at least once / week. Better, twice per week
 - Confession regularly. At least once/month
 - Develop healthy hobbies
 - That are refreshing to you and which you can transmit to your children.
 - Dress more according to your dignity
 - Hold yourself to a higher standard than you ask of your wife and your children.
 - Have standards for them, not merely so as to avoid sin but so as to reflect status as children of God
- Family
 - Lead the family rosary daily
 - Get your family to Church 10 minutes before Sunday Mass
 - Help them develop routines to prepare to assist at Mass
 - Invest in your wife

- Cultivate her confidence in being able to give you her opinion. Make clear you hear her, but also have confidence to make decisions even when she would prefer something else.
 - Make a point to show her you treasure her
 - Give her unexpected gifts and notes.
 - Be alive to how she is doing and get her help in the home if needed.
- Invest time in your children
 - Be available every evening
 - Plan individual time with each child each week (or even each day if you don't have many yet or remaining)
 - Be alive to their education
 - Regularly discuss with them what they are learning in school. Look at their homework.
 - Demand they give their best efforts. Praise more for effort than accomplishment, since the former is in their power more than the latter.
 - Read to them every night, if possible. If absolutely impossible, at least 2-3 times / week
 - Show them you are happy they are around and when they do well. Show them you are happy to give them time when they make mistakes and need help
- Invest in your own parents, especially your father
 - Practice gratitude
 - Support and show patience
- Friends
 - Coordinate with your friends to pursue higher things
 - Choose books to read together. Talk about them.
 - Hold each other accountable
 - Use of technology
 - Support each other
 - In struggles at work
 - In challenges in homelife
 - Look to support each other in promoting the common good.