

# Bourbon & Books

The Leader Guide



## Welcome to Bourbon & Books

So, you're interested in gathering some guys together for edifying conversation over some bourbon?

Excellent. We like you already. This guide will walk you through how to get Bourbon & Books started.

### Out of the Gate

1. Grab some bourbon and start pouring over names. Who do you know who might be interested in something like this? A group of existing friends you are looking to meet up with more? Or that guy in church you sit next to all the time but don't know his name? See if you can come up with between 3-7 other guys.
2. Invite the guys on your list to be part of the group. Direct them to the Bourbon & Books webpage ([stellamarisfamily.org/bourbon-and-books](http://stellamarisfamily.org/bourbon-and-books)). See if there is interest.
3. If guys are interested, you, the group leader, should complete the interest form on the webpage for your parish and one of our coordinators will be in touch with you.
4. Then, set up your first meeting date/time/location and start reading.



"Many of us in later years wish that, when we were younger, someone would have told us about certain things, often certain books that, as we look back on them, would have greatly helped us in the project of our lives, in particular would have helped us know the truth of things."

– James V. Schall, S.J.

# The Bourbon & Books Commitments

## *Basic Commitments*

As a group gets off the ground, the commitment level is intentionally quite basic. Members commit to the following elements:

- Fraternity – The group gathers monthly at a time that is suitable for all of the members. Unless the meeting is taking place within a penitential season (or a group decides otherwise), bourbon flows—as does the discussion. Meetings begin with a brief time of fellowship before the leader opens with a simple prayer. Once the discussion dwindles and business matters are addressed, the leader closes by leading the Glory Be.
- Study – Commit to completing the assigned reading for the sake of one's personal edification, full engagement in the meeting, and contribution to the discussion. While this is the expectation, we know that life happens and that getting (back) into reading can be tough. Not reading or being unable to finish the reading should never be an excuse for not attending a monthly meeting.

We also encourage an intentional effort for the men to bring their families together monthly or bi-monthly for a meal, recreation, and the rosary, simply because it is good.

## *Advanced Commitments*

Once a group has been at it for a year, we recommend adding in a few more commitments to propel personal and communal growth. They are as follows:

- Accountability – One group member is partnered with another for the year. The accountability partners commit to a weekly check-in (e.g. phone or Zoom call, chat over coffee) wherein they engage in the following exercise: opening prayer, spill your guts about your week/commitments, closing prayer/intercessory prayer.
- Penance— A personal commitment to a life of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. The group should establish some sort of "standards" to which each member of the community can commit himself. For example:
  - At least 30 minutes of silent daily prayer.
  - Fasting on Fridays – one full meal as well as two smaller meals/snacks that together are not equal to a full meal; abstain from meat.
  - Foster an intentional family activity on Sundays and carve out personalized time with each child (if applicable).
- Sonship— a firm commitment on the part of each man to grow as a son by placing himself under the spiritual fatherhood of a regular confessor.