

# Involving Parents in Catechesis:

*Have you considered Alpha for parents during faith formation?*



## Four things to always do at sacramental meetings by Tom Quinlan

1. Require attendance
2. Provide a warm, hospitable experience
3. Make connection between life and Catholic faith
4. Stress the importance of their bringing the faith home for their family



**How can Alpha help with non-churchgoing parents during sacramental-prep or faith formation night? Consider Alpha for the 2017-18 school year!**

## WHERE PEOPLE ARE AT

### Communication and Media:

- Yesterday: reading book, reading newspaper, listening to the radio and watching television was a one-way street. The consumer was a passive recipient of a message. He or she had limited input about what was being received.
- Today: I-phones, I-pads, and computers allow for an immediate and interactive media on specific needs and desires.

### Faith and Church:

- Yesterday: people came to faith by listening
- Today: they are coming to faith by talking; most notably, about themselves, their lives and their views on God. They want to be heard!
- And parish leaders have to earn that right to be heard in return.

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## THE DEPARTMENT OF NEW EVANGELIZATION, GBD

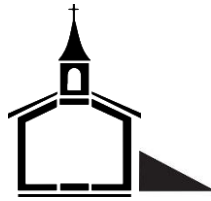
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# ALPHA



## Purpose of Alpha for Catholic Parishes:

- It is an *on-ramp* to parish life by introducing seekers, newcomers, and non-churchgoers to the person of Jesus Christ and to those who follow him. The Alpha recipe consist of the following:
  - Hospitality
  - Meals
  - Videos/talks
  - Discussion
  - Prayer ministry



## Deep End of the Pool:

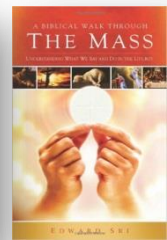
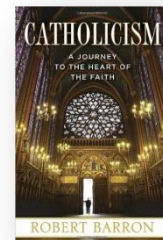
Most non-churchgoing parents have not developed an appetite for:

The Mass or spiritual devotions

Lectures on faith and morals

DVD Presentations:

- Catholicism by Bishop Robert Barron
- The Great Adventure Catholic Bible Study
- A Biblical Walk Through the Mass
- Epic



*This is not where non-churchgoers are at!*

## The Four R's of Alpha:

- Relational
- Real
- Reliant
- Reproducible

### Question:

How Do These Four R's Play Out in the Alpha Recipe?

# THE FOUR R's IN THE ALPHA RECIPE



## Hospitality and Meals

- Hosting invariably consist of getting to know the guests by taking an interest in them as persons while, at the same time, serving their needs.
- A non-negotiable with Alpha is to provide a free meal. And during that meal the Alpha team or small group facilitators are purposely avoiding “churchy” topics. Why? Because good customer service is all about the customer.
- Keep in mind we live in a “selfie” media culture in which the world and the market place can accommodate the specific needs and preferences of individuals. Churches must accommodate!

*It's relational!*

## Videos:

- Alpha has produced three tracks of videos for each session: 1. The Alpha Film Series 2. Nicky Gumbel Talks 3. Alpha for Youth
- Videos for each session possess the following strengths:
  - a) The production value is excellent
  - b) Highly kerygmatic: clearly proclaims the Gospel of Jesus Christ
  - c) Makes reference to the world we live in by quoting celebrities and interviewing people on the streets
  - d) Employs testimony and stories
  - e) Real and transparent: It acknowledges people's difficulties with faith

*It's reproducible!*

## Discussions:

- After the Good News has been presented via the videos or talks, Alpha allows for people to talk about themselves and their own views about religion.
- People bring into the Alpha sessions many beliefs and lifestyle choices that are wholly inconsistent with Christian doctrine and morals.
- Yet, it is important that participants encounter the unconditional love of God through the Alpha hosts and small group facilitators by not prematurely correcting them. Fraternal correction presupposes that fraternal love already exists.

*Keeping it real!*

# THE MOST IMPORTANT “R” OF ALPHA



## RELIANT ON THE HOLY SPIRIT

### Prayer Ministry:

- The best way to avoid what is often an impersonal assimilation into a big organization like the Church is to introduce newcomers and seekers to Jesus Christ; the *One* who knows each person by name and who loves each person before they were even born.
- But such an introduction can only be successful if it is carried out by disciples who know and love Jesus Christ.
- After all, joining a parish without a personal relationship with Jesus Christ often turns into an impersonal process. Moreover, the habit of people attending Mass anonymously and returning home without any contact with parishioners who know and love Jesus is an obstacle in building relationships.
- Alpha introduces the topic of prayer thoughtfully and strategically. The team/host/small group facilitators are challenged to not only pray for the participants but to pray with them as well.
- Throughout the whole Alpha process, the Holy Spirit is called upon to touch hearts with the love of Jesus Christ; especially during the retreat and session 10.

### Alpha Sessions:

- Session 1 Is There More to Life Than This?
- Session 2 Who is Jesus?
- Session 3 Why Did Jesus Die?
- Session 4 How Can I Have Faith?
- Session 5 Why and How Do I Pray?
- Session 6 Why and How Should I Read the Bible?
- Session 7 How Does God Guide Us?
  - After session 7:
    - Weekend/Day Away
- Session 8 How Can I Resist Evil?
- Session 9 Why and How Should I Tell Others?
- Session 10 Does God Heal Today?
- Session 11 What about the Church?

### Weekend or Day Away:

- Session W1 Who is the Holy Spirit?
- Session W2 What Does the Holy Spirit Do?
- Session W3 How Can I Be Filled with the Holy Spirit?
- Session W4 How Can I Make the Most of the Rest of My Life?

### Alpha Links:

- [How to Run Alpha](#)
- [Alpha Film Series](#)

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### *The Book of Jeremiah*

“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I dedicated you... For I know well the plans I have in mind for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare, not for woe! plans to give you a future full of hope.”