

After Alpha - What's Next?



Alpha is a 'narthex'; a gateway to faith, calling for on-going formation within the Catholic Christian community. The course works best as part of an overall parish program of evangelization and formation, that is run, ideally one to three times a year, with participants deriving great benefits from follow up: they have been evangelized, they can now begin their formation as a disciple of Jesus. We find that on-going small group engagement following conversion is the best disciple-making method. Small groups of intentional disciples can be the yeast that leavens the entire batch, as it only takes a few of these groups to begin transforming an entire faith community. Solid Catholic catechetical content will of course be a significant portion of their formation but the real benefit is derived from people sharing the journey of following Jesus together. (Prov. 27:17 and Eccl. 4:12.)

When folks complete Alpha, they will probably fall into one of two groups, and it is important to engage them at the proper level:

- Newly and deeply converted or re-verted:
Keeping these folks engaged in small groups with other newly converted disciples is vital. Discipleship happens at the speed of relationships, so helping people see their lives through the lens of the gospel is the key.
In other words, what does being a follower of Jesus mean when it comes to my life, the everyday stuff: my money, body, relationships, my work, etc.; and trusting each other enough to discuss these types of issues in the life of an intentional missionary disciple. (see NewLeaven.org, below.)

On-going small relational groups is the key and most important aspect of building a community of communities and fortunately we have a ton of great catechetical content to provide for people on their journey.
- Those who have moved along on the journey but haven't fully committed to following Jesus:
For this second group, inviting folks to come back and help on the next Alpha is a very good way to build your future Alpha team while providing space for yet deeper conversion.

We encourage the use of the Divine Renovation Model based on Fr. James Mallon's [book of the same title](#) (and the associated [Divine Renovation Handbook](#)).

Those who engage in the difficult demands of becoming missionary disciples will be a small group, but they are the catalyst, the small amount of yeast that will leaven the whole batch. Jesus preached to the masses, he sent a large group to go help others and he disciplined only 12. This is a good model to keep in mind as pastoral leaders. This is a much smaller and more intentional group and can cause a rub against our typical Catholic mind set. We tend to think in very large numbers and forming intentional disciples is an intensely personalized and relationally driven process. We must have the courage for the vision of the Great Commission and yet follow Jesus' model of making disciples. Working with small groups of intentional and committed people who have decided to drop their nets and follow Him.

After Alpha (continued)

As Catholics today, we have a plethora of resources at our disposal for catechesis. Follow-up materials and courses help participants to grow in their faith and at the same time derive the knowledge of Catholicism necessary to grow as a disciple. Consider introducing any of these by following the same small group format as Alpha with food, talk and discussion. These are just a few resources that parishes have used with positive results.

ADULTS:

[Ascension Presents](#) – Short video topics on faith and culture (Fr. Mike Schmitz), also great for youth.

[Catholicism video series](#) by Bishop Robert Barron

[Crossing the Goal](#) - Study group for men

[Evangelization.com](#) - A variety of parish-based Bible studies from Ascension Press

[Formed.org](#) - A variety of studies/resources from Augustine Institute (including Symbolon)

[Great Adventure Catholic Bible Study](#) – The ‘big picture’ of Sacred Scripture

[id916.com](#) - Forming millennial missionary disciples (Renewal Ministries)

[Lighthouse Catholic Media](#) - A variety of CD/streaming talks on Catholic topics

[NewLeaven.org](#) – integrated Catholic formation

[That Man is You](#) Study group for men

[Walking with Purpose](#) - Study group for women

[The Wild Goose is Loose](#) - Resources for deepening life in the Holy Spirit (older teens as well)

YOUTH:

[Chosen](#) – Confirmation program and journey through Catholicism

[Decision Point](#) – Confirmation program, ‘the genius of Catholicism’

[Discipleship Focused Youth Ministry](#) – Blog, book, discipleship resources

[FOCUS](#) – Discipleship resources for college-age

[YDisciple](#) - Discipleship program for youth