



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE ALPHA COURSE FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS AND STAFF

This Q & A is prepared to answer common questions about Alpha. Each school location needs to prepare a plan to incorporate Alpha into its school plans for 2018-2019. Each school/system will determine the best format and schedule for its needs. The Alpha-Day-Away is recommended as a retreat day. One suggestion is that DASA groups conduct the retreat days together for their schools. Using a monthly meeting Alpha schedule, the retreat day should come about February. The continuation of the monthly Alpha meetings would carry you to the end of the year.

Note that the Discipleship Seminar in August and the Alpha workshops throughout 2018-2019 fulfill the contractual catechetical course for everyone for 2018-2019.

- 1. Who is the target audience for the Alpha roll out during the school year of 2018-19?**
 - Catholic school teachers and staff
 - Catechists
 - Engaged parishioners
- 2. Will all of the teachers need to be trained in Alpha?**
 - No. If your school staff is large enough to need several Alpha groups, it is recommended that those teachers who are designated by the Catholic school principal to lead Alpha small groups attend one of the trainings.
- 3. When and where will the optional Alpha trainings be offered?**
 - Monday, November, 17 2018 (9AM-3:30PM)- Melania Hall Room 13, diocesan campus
- 4. Will all teachers have to attend discipleship seminar I in August 2018?**
 - Yes, all teachers and staff will participate in Discipleship I Seminar in August 2018. Use your discretion as to the inclusion of staff.
- 5. When and where will the discipleship seminar I for school teachers and staff be held?**

Teachers have a choice of workshop date and location:

 - Friday, August 10, 2018, 8:30-3:30, at Xavier High School, Appleton
 - Friday, August 24, 2018, 8:30-3:30, at Notre Dame Academy, Green Bay
- 6. Will all catechists need to be trained in Alpha?**
 - No. Being that the services provided by catechists are on a volunteer basis, it is recommended that they participate in the Alpha course along with engaged parishioners.
- 7. How many people normally make up a small Alpha group?**
 - Anywhere from 6-10 people.
- 8. From each Catholic school, how many Alpha small group leaders should be represented at the Alpha trainings?**
 - The number of designated small group leaders is dependent upon the size of the school and in particular, the number of teachers and staff that will be attending the Alpha course at the Catholic school they are employed at. To be fully prepared, it is recommended that the teachers who lead Alpha groups attend one of the trainings.

Keep in mind that Alpha small groups should be limited to 6-10 people. For instance, if there are a total of 30 teachers, the school may decide to form three or four Alpha small groups. With this, the school should choose three or four Alpha small group leaders to attend the Alpha trainings.

9. What kind of credentials does an Alpha small group leader need to have?

- An Alpha small group leader should be a disciple of Jesus Christ and active member of a parish who is good at facilitating discussion. Here, the responsibility is not to teach or do all of the talking. Rather, it is to elicit and guide the discussion process. Again, lecturing or answering the questions participants may have is not the goal of Alpha small group leaders. The objective is to create a safe space for people to share their views in response to the Alpha discussion questions.

10. What series of Alpha videos is recommended by the Diocese of Green Bay?

- The Alpha Film Series (available on diocesan website or diocesan school Google site)

11. How many sessions and videos are in the Alpha Film Series?

- There are a total of 11 sessions with an Alpha-Day-Away (i.e. retreat) built in between session 7 and 8.
- There are a total of 15 videos in the Alpha Film Series. The four extra videos (i.e. video sessions 8-11) are for the Alpha-Day-Away.

12. What are the titles for each Alpha session and what are the titles for the Alpha-Day-Away sessions (suggested monthly timeline in parentheses):

- Session 1 - Is There More to Life Than This? (August inservice)
- Session 2 - Who is Jesus? (August inservice)
- Session 3 - Why Did Jesus Die? (September)
- Session 4 - How Can I Have Faith? (October)
- Session 5 - Why and How Do I Pray? (November)
- Session 6 - Why and How Should I Read the Bible? (December)
- Session 7 - How Does God Guide Us? (January)
 - Alpha-Day-Away (retreat) Videos: (February retreat)
 - Alpha-Day-Away Video 1: Who is the Holy Spirit?
 - Alpha-Day-Away Video 2: What Does the Holy Spirit Do?
 - Alpha-Day-Away Video 3: How Can I Be Filled with the Holy Spirit?
 - Alpha-Day-Away Video 4: How Can I Make the Most of the Rest of My Life?
- Session 8 - How Can I Resist Evil? (March)
- Session 9 - Why and How Should I Tell Others? (April)
- Session 10 - Does God Heal Today? (April)
- Session 11 - What about the Church? (May)

The schedule is one suggestion. Create the schedule that works for your school.

13. How long does each session last, and for scheduling purposes, what is the recommended interval between sessions?

- If you are using a professional development day, a possible schedule is: 30 minutes- meal, 30 minutes- video, 30 minutes- discussion. What time of day? Ideally, sharing a meal during the lunch break with the consequent video and discussion works best. However, this is not absolutely necessary.
- If you are using a faculty/staff meeting time, 45 minutes – hour with a snack would work.
- The suggested schedule above spreads Alpha over a year. Alternatively, you may choose to do a weekly Alpha meeting schedule with a retreat day in one semester; or you might do a bi-weekly Alpha meeting schedule and retreat spread over the year

omitting some busy months. Each Alpha session should be separated by some days to allow reflection.

14. Do all teachers need to meet together (in one location) to experience each Alpha session?

- No. Each Alpha small group can meet on different days throughout the week. It is recommended, however, that the Alpha small groups within the school experience each of the eleven sessions roughly around the same time.
- For instance, if there are seven Alpha small groups at a given school (groups comprised of 6-10 teachers), and if these Alpha small groups have the option of beginning their Alpha course during the last week of September, all Alpha small group should begin the first Alpha session that week or the week after; this, so that the first seven Alpha sessions could be completed within a week or two of each other.
- This is important because with the Alpha-Day-Away (i.e. retreat) should be experienced by all of the teachers and staff of the school between sessions 7 and 8.

15. What is expected for an Alpha-Day-Away?

- There is no rigid formula for the Alpha day or weekend away. The agenda can be structured in any number of ways. The location can be off of school property or it can be hosted at the school itself. With that said, the Alpha day or weekend away should include the main Alpha ingredients that participants have come to experience: at least one meal, videos or live talks and a discussion that follows.
- However, if desired, some or all of the videos can be replaced by a live speaker. What is more, there is a time when an opportunity is presented to participants to experience the Holy Spirit through a shared prayer activity. Here, Alpha participants partner-up and pray with each other. Quite often, this is a transformative turning point for many people who were once resistant to Alpha.

16. Can Catholic schools within a given region team-up and do an Alpha-Day-Away together in order to combine resources?

- Yes. In fact, this might be a great idea for DASA groups. Or systems may want to partner with feeder schools for the retreat day. Just keep in mind that staff from different Catholic schools should have completed the first seven session of the Alpha course prior to their Alpha-Day-Away. As such, the confluence or the timing of Alpha courses in each of the schools would have to be coordinated by the principals or the president of the Catholic school system so that the teachers from the various schools will be equally prepared to enter into the Alpha-Day-Away.

17. Can you provide an example of what an Alpha-Day-Away looks like?

- Sure. But first keep in mind that all of the teachers and staff would attend this special event. It is also recommended that they sit with their regular Alpha small groups.
- The day can be crafted to accommodate the needs of the group. This is one example of what an Alpha-Day-Away with Catholic school staff might look like:

| | |
|---------------|--|
| 10:00-10:30AM | Arrival and refreshments |
| 10:30-10:45AM | Opening remarks by emcee, prayer, song (live or automated) |
| 10:45-11:30AM | Live speaker or videos <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Session 8: Who is the Holy Spirit?▪ Session 9: What does the Holy Spirit do?▪ (May be combined into one talk) |
| 11:30-12:00PM | Discussion: First talk in Alpha small groups |

| | |
|--------------|--|
| 12:15-1:00PM | Lunch with the option of continuing discussion |
| 1:00-1:15PM | Prayer and song (Live or automated) |
| 1:15-1:45PM | Live speaker (testimonial) or video <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Session 10: How can I be filled with the Holy Spirit? |
| 1:45-2:00PM | Break |
| 2:00-2:45PM | Share Prayer Hour <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Explain the purpose of share pray and give instructions on how to do it (See handout on <i>Share Prayer</i>) ▪ <i>Group Activity and Discussion</i> (remainder of time) ▪ Group Discussion |
| 2:45-3:00PM | Break |
| 3:15-3:15PM | Session 11: Video showing: How Can I Make the Most of the Rest of My Life? |
| 3:15- 3:30PM | Concluding thoughts, prayer and dismissal by emcee |

18. What kind of resources and information on Alpha at the Diocese of Green Bay website?

- Registration Link for Diocesan Alpha Trainings
- Alpha Training Schedule for Teachers
- Alpha Tool Box
- All 15 Alpha Film Series Videos
- Alpha Training Videos
- Alpha Training Slides
- Alpha in a Catholic Context
- Alpha USA Store and more

Don't forget to visit the Diocese of Green Bay website. Here is the link to all of the abovementioned (and more) Alpha resources:

- <http://www.gbdioc.org/newevangelization/offices-a-programs/adult-faith-formation/alpha.html>
- Resources are also found on the diocesan school Google site: <http://site.ed-gbd.org> under Alpha