Got questions? Try Alpha—start at the beginning.

The survivalist version of John the Baptist says so

When I was a kid, my brother and I loved watching “Man vs. Wild” on the Discovery Channel. It was a survival show hosted by Bear Grylls (yes, his real name!) where he’d “strand” himself in crazy places with just his basic tools and his trusty cameraman, and show you useful things to help you survive on the way back to civilization. I once jokingly compared him to John the Baptist in a Confirmation class because of his and John’s shared penchant for eating insects and using animal fur.

Apparently, he’s more like John than I knew back then—Bear is an avid supporter of Alpha, and even appears in some of the films, pointing the way to Jesus as the answer to our hungers.

I want to encourage you once again to step out of your comfort zone and try Alpha this Lent and Easter. The kickoff is March 4 from 6:30-8:00pm. Bring a friend if you’re nervous—they don’t need to be a churchgoer or even believe in God. At the very least, you’ll both get a free meal out of it. At the most, you’ll have an encounter with the One who created you and Who provides the answer to all your hungers, and come to know that Answer.

Admittedly, Bear Grylls has given me some questionable advice in the past (I’ll probably never eat a cow’s eyeball, for example)— but this advice is solid. Try Alpha. Sign up on the Parish Website today. ~Megan Arteaga
On Holy Communion

During this flu season, Father George thinks it wise that we suspend distribution of Holy Communion from the chalice for the duration of the season.

Editor’s fun fact: did you know that both the Precious Body and the Precious Blood are fully present under both species (the appearances of bread AND wine)? It’s true—the ‘bread’ isn’t “only” the Body of Christ and the ‘wine’ isn’t “only” the Blood of Christ.

Lenten Regulations

Lent is a time of prayer and penance. Our Church has a few ways of practicing these things during Lent:

Fasting

Catholics aged 18-59 are bound to fast on both Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. This means consuming at most one full meal that day, while taking other smaller quantities of food at the other customary mealtimes is permitted. Food and drink between meals (excepting water and medicine) is not permitted on fast days.

Abstinence from Meat

Catholics aged 14 and up are to abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday, all Fridays of Lent, and Good Friday. This means refraining from eating meat products, although eggs, milk, and fish and shellfish are permitted.

Lenten Practices

All the faithful are encouraged to receive Holy Communion, participate in penance services, take part in public and private exercises of piety, give generously to works of religion and charity, perform acts of kindness toward the sick, aged, and poor, and to pray more fervently. All of these practices will help you have a more fruitful and holy Lent!

LENT

Ash Wednesday comes from the ancient Jewish tradition of penance and fasting. The ashes symbolize the dust from which God made us. They also symbolize grief—in this case, our grief that we have sinned and caused division between us and God. Everyone is allowed to accept the ashes—so bring a friend to our Ash Wednesday Masses and introduce them to this age-old practice!

“Sign us with ashes” - join us for the beginning of Lent this Wednesday

Sign-ups for the March 4 first session of Alpha are available now on the Parish Website! Sign up now!
Imagine what can be done in the name of God if every parishioner were inspired to “Rebuild my Church” and participate!

Spread a culture of life at the 40 Days for Life Prayer Vigil

Join other Catholics in our Diocese in the 40 Days for Life Prayer Vigil—40 days of prayer for an end to abortion, from Wednesday, January 26 through Sunday, April 5, where we will peacefully witness for the dignity and sanctity of life.

We will be standing and peacefully praying in the public right-of-way outside of two local abortion facilities in Walnut Creek and Concord. Vigil hours are from 7am to 7pm, and you are encouraged to join for even just one hour! Your prayerful presence makes a difference in witnessing for life and in helping to present options for women other than abortion. This is a powerful way to make a sacrifice of time and prayer during this Lenten season.

This Sunday evening, Feb 23, from 7-8:30pm is a kick-off event at St. Mary’s Church gymnasium to hear a powerful testimony for life!
We encourage you to register in the parish so that you can receive regular communication via both email and regular mail. Registration information is essential for responding to requests to be sponsors/godparents and other ministries.

Please register at www.santamariaorinda.com/registration

**February 16, 2020**

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**For the Sick**

Liduvina Acosta, Sonny Acosta, Mary Beth Alban, Joan Artmann, Shoaib Aryan, Kristy Blackey-Taylor, Kathie Brady, Cara Bradbury, Maria Carmen, Rosemary Catton, Fred Chavaria, Delores Codde, Grace Parent DeBoodt, Rich Delany, Lorna Elliott, Anne Emery, Nora Enriquez, Emidio Fonseca, Liam Foley, Patricia Fox, Bridget Gallagher, Noreen Gillham, Doris Hale, Florentino Ibabao, Brian Kelly, Mason Kelly, Aileen Kelly, Jim Kennedy, Jerry Kirk, Lawrence Knapp, Carol Koupus, Judy Lazarus, Jim Marchetti, Rose Mary McPhee, Robert Nick, Arsí Orihuella, Deacon Jim Pearce, Kathleen Pelz, Ann Powell, Mark Ricci, Ben Richey, Patrick Sheehy, Jean Wells, Faye Young

**Would you like to add yourself or someone else to the prayer list?**

Please contact Mirna in the Parish Office at 925-254-2426 or at mirnawong@smparish.org.

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**Welcome, New Members!**

We encourage you to register in the parish so that you can receive regular communication via both email and regular mail. Registration information is essential for responding to requests to be sponsors/godparents and other ministries.

Please register at www.santamariaorinda.com/registration
24 Hours for the Lord
February 28 – 29, 2020

All members of the Faithful are invited to this 24-Hour opportunity to spend time with our Lord in Adoration and Confession throughout the Diocese of Oakland.

Please visit one of these participating parishes near you.
For exact confession times, please check parish websites or contact the parishes directly.

St. Bonaventure, Concord
Friday 9:00 am – 9:00 am Saturday

St. Joan of Arc, San Ramon
5:00 pm Friday – 5:00 pm Saturday

St. Elizabeth, Oakland
Friday 5:00 pm – 5:00 pm Saturday

St. Mark, Richmond
12:00 noon Friday – 12:00 noon Saturday

Holy Spirit, Fremont
Friday 9:00 am – 5:00 pm
(break for Stations of the Cross and Mass)
Saturday 9:00 pm – 1:30 pm

Most Holy Rosary, Antioch
5:00 pm Friday – 5:00 pm Saturday

Please join Bishop Michael J. Barber, SJ for our bilingual (English-Spanish)

Closing Mass
at
Most Holy Rosary Parish
February 29, 2020, 5:30 PM
1313 A Street • Antioch, CA 94509

oakdiocese.org