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Take care to guard
against all greed,
for though one
may be rich,
one's life does not
consist of possessions.
Luke 12:15

EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

ALPHA COMING TO ST MICHAEL'S SEPTEMBER 9

- Fr Carl on Alpha: Who Will You Invite? — page 5
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- Frequently Asked Questions about Alpha—page 8
- Where to watch Fr Carl's video on Alpha—page 8

Unpack Today's Mass Readings



In today's first reading from Ecclesiastes, we hear that the pursuit of worldly riches is vanity because in the end we have to let them all go. We can spend our whole lives acquiring things, but at the end of our lives everything for which we have worked so hard goes to another who hasn't worked for it. This Old Testament reading sets us up for the Gospel reading from Luke, which begins when a man comes to Jesus complaining that his brother hasn't divided the inheritance equally with him.

Against this backdrop, Jesus gives us the divine perspective on wealth by telling the story of a wealthy man who has a crop so big it doesn't fit into his barns. His solution is to tear everything down and build bigger barns so he can store up this great abundance of wealth. But God comes to the rich man and tells him that he will die that very night—and not be able to enjoy this wealth that he has stored up for himself. Jesus ends the story by telling his listeners that this is how it will be for everyone who stores up treasures for himself rather than being rich in what matters to God.

The message here is an emphasis on what really lasts. Acquiring wealth is vanity if we acquire it just for ourselves since nothing we build or save up in this world will last forever. But Jesus tells us that there are things we can do in

this life that will have eternal significance. If the man in the Gospel reading had distributed his extra wealth to the needy, he would have had treasure in heaven. So Jesus is asking us whether, in our saving and our success, we are focusing on earthly success or investing in that which will have an eternal reward.

Unpack the First Reading Ecclesiastes 1:2; 2:21-23

Readers of Ecclesiastes are sometimes shocked by what they take

'You fool, this night your life will be demanded of you; and the things you have prepared, to whom will they belong?'

Luke 12:20



to be its apparent cynicism. Are all things really just vanity? (The Hebrew word means something like a puff of wind.) Is this really what we ought to believe? Is this what the Bible teaches? Aren't we to value the things of God's creation as gifts? Isn't life valuable in all its aspects, if for no other reason than because it comes from God and can lead us to him? The answer to all these questions is "yes!"

We sometimes mistakenly think that since everything in the Bible is inspired by God and true, that everything that is said or done in it is fully approved by God. The Bible is an inspired and true chronicle of the persons, words,

and events by which God discloses himself to us. But sometimes the people and the words they speak or the things they do are only partial reflections of and, in some cases, entirely opposed to his will.

Sometimes God teaches us through the partial, sometimes by way of the entirely negative lessons that our human mistakes can provide. Qoheleth (meaning one who speaks in the qahal or the public assembly) represents the true situation of the one who has not yet received the fuller revelation that we have in Christ. The world makes much more sense to us after Jesus enters time and history in a direct way to show us its value. But the basic message of Qoheleth remains sound, the true value of the things of time and history must be measured by the things of eternity, otherwise they are vain.

Unpack the Second Reading Colossians 3:1-5, 9-11

Looking at this passage from Colossians, we reflect again on the point made about the first reading from Ecclesiastes: We have to understand the shape of history in order to read it rightly. That shape is given in the Creed and turns on three seminal events—creation, redemption, and sanctification. These are all acts of God and unless we understand them we will misjudge almost everything else in human experience.

Creation is a beautiful gift, but one that from the beginning we

have often misused. Adam and Eve misused the gift of their freedom and made creation into what St. Paul calls the “world” or the “earthly” (which is creation separated from its Creator). In the Redemption we receive the grace to reconnect creation to its Creator, to “what is above.” If, while here below, we “seek what is above,” where Christ is with the Father, then we can become a part of the very work of renewal that God is working in the world through the Holy Spirit.

Through his sanctifying work we are “renewed,” taking off the “old self” and putting on the “new self.” We become reunified within, regaining the integrity (the “image of [the] creator”) our first parents lost through sin and rejecting those things “immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and the greed that is idolatry”—that would fracture us within and yield division without. In this way we are renewed, too, “for knowledge” and begin to see the true shape of history and the real values of things, where “Christ is all and in all.”

Unpack the Gospel

Luke 12:13-21

One of the characteristic signs of a deep faith is the ability to embrace the poverty of spirit that Jesus enjoins in the Beatitudes and here in Luke. St. Paul says in Philippians 4:11-13 (RSV): “I have learned, in whatever state I am, to be content. I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound; in any and all circumstances I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and want. I can do all things in him who strengthens me.”

There is nothing wrong in rejoicing in plenty. The real danger is the greed that the habit of plenty can so easily engender in us. (How, after all, can we know if we can be content without our goods, if we never actually are?) In the West, and especially in the United States, we are constantly tempted by the spirit of greed. As we saw in the second reading, greed is associated with idolatry, illegitimate worship. When anything—financial security, status, our sexual appetites, celebrity—begins to win our hearts and to become the focus of our desire and efforts,

we have begun to turn toward false worship. Orthodoxy, which can mean “right worship” (orthos = straight and doxa = glory), requires not just right thinking about the things of the world but a proper ordering of our desires. We do well to have the doxology always on our lips to protect us from the spirit of greed: “[All] Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit...” and to keep us from hearing those frightening words, “You fool,” from the mouth of Jesus.

Reflect & Discuss

Watch the short video reflection for this Sunday’s readings at StMichael.FORMED.org. The presenter, Tim Gray, mentions that in Isaiah 22:13 the exhortation to “eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die” is the slogan of the wicked. In what ways do we see this same theme in today’s world?

As Christians, how ought we respond to the lure of this world’s riches and pleasures?

Reprinted from Opening the Word Leader Guide with permission from Augustine Institute.

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“I really did not know much about this saint. It is a very moving film and I want to learn more.”

—Gail M., Worthington, OH

Pray Throughout the Week



Mass Intentions

Saturday 8/3

8:30am Robert Boyle, Jr. †
5:00pm Ricardo Coelho
7:00pm Cuc Nguyen

Sunday 8/4

6:45am Jim & Anne Corbett †
8:00am John Pruner †
9:30am Jacinto, Pabla, Narso Barina
11:00am* Helene Harrington
John J. Vericella †
John Sarboraria †
Todd Murray †
Caitlin Rosa
12:30pm Mass for Our Parish
6:00pm A.M. Zozim †

Monday 8/5

8:30am Rita & Elizabeth McVey †

Tuesday 8/6

8:30am Jack & Bernice Rooney †

Wednesday 8/7

8:30am Vincent Trocchiano †
7:00pm Jonathan Sumalpong

Thursday 8/8

8:30am Edna Videon †

Friday 8/9

8:30am John & Kate Egan †

** The 11:00 am Mass in the first Sunday of the month is a Communal Mass with multiple intentions.*

To request a Mass Intention, please visit the church office.

The customary donation of \$10 goes to the priest celebrating the Mass.



Prayer Meditation

Take a moment to think about your possessions. Which ones are most precious to you? Which ones are nice but not that important? Which ones do you feel you absolutely could not do without? Now imagine that you are the rich man in the parable in today's Gospel reading. What are your "grain" and "goods"? Are you building bigger barns to store your treasure? If God told you that this very night your life would be demanded of you, how would you view all your possessions and all your hard work to acquire them? Finally, consider Jesus' words, "Take care to guard against all greed, for though one may be rich, one's life does not consist of possessions." What feelings do his words stir in you? Is he warning you against some particular manifestation of greed in your life?

Resolution

Admit to yourself in the privacy of your journal an area where you might be tempted to either store up earthly treasure or be greedy. Choose one small action that you can do this week to combat this temptation to greed (or the habit of greed) in your life.

Weekly Prayer for Alpha

For our parishioners, that the Holy Spirit may guide and strengthen us in shifting our culture to one of radical hospitality. That God may put the name of one person in our hearts and minds that He wants us to invite to Alpha on September 9.

For all of our soon-to-be guests at Alpha, that God may continue to direct them toward our dinner events where they will encounter Jesus.

For our Alpha team, that they may empty themselves so as to only do God's will in inviting souls to Him.

Fr Carl's Message of the Week



Alpha: Who Will You Invite?

I would like you to take a moment to picture someone in your life who does not know Jesus and is not living a Christian life. Maybe a family member who grew up Catholic, but doesn't go to Mass anymore. Perhaps someone at work who learned a lot ABOUT Jesus, but never allowed Jesus into her heart and life. Or maybe you know someone who did not grow up with any kind of faith, and doesn't even know if God exists. How would you approach these people to talk about God? What event or program would you invite them to that would feel comfortable?

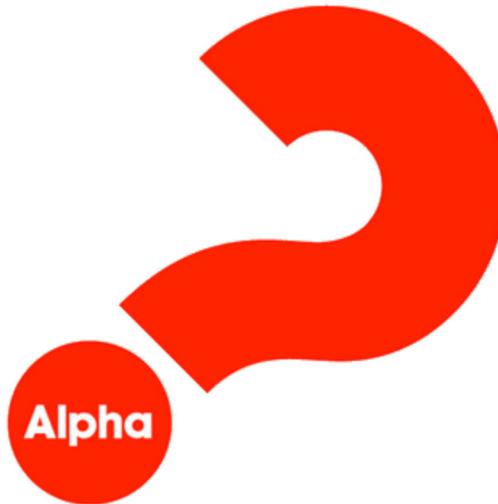
Of course, as Catholics, we know that the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is the highest form of prayer, and the Eucharist is the source and summit of our very lives. But for someone who doesn't know if God exists, or someone who has never approached anything Christian before, the Mass may seem very foreign and confusing. It could be a little like pushing a non-swimmer in to the deep end of the pool!

At St Michael's we do not have a program or a series of events for brand new beginners. We have no system in place that is a fun, non-threatening place for people to just get their feet wet with the basic foundations of the Gospel message. We have no ministry at all for people outside of our community to make new friends and ask questions. We have no easy gathering place to invite those

people that you pictured in your mind.

UNTIL NOW. I am happy to announce that Alpha is coming to St Michael's this September.

Alpha is a series of fun and welcoming dinners where guests get to know happy, loving people around a dinner table. They get to know each other, have some laughs. Then together they



watch a video on a topic of the very basics of Christianity. After the video, there's time for guests to have a conversation about the video. But here is where Alpha is different: guests can share anything that they believe, any reaction, any idea and no one will correct. That's right. No preaching or coercing. No "bible thumping" or teaching. Just a safe space for them to be heard.

This may sound shocking to some. However, what has happened in hundreds of thousands of Alpha groups all over the

world is that once people are allowed the dignity of being heard, they are more likely to listen to what Christians have to say. During Alpha, we TOTALLY TRUST the Holy Spirit will do the job of conversion. Our job is just to invite and provide a fun, delicious meal. And love them exactly where they are.

Now after the Alpha series, after they have encountered Jesus for maybe the first time and after they have bonded with their table-mates, there will be opportunities for their "next steps" to learn more about the specifics of the Catholic faith. Alpha is just the beginning.

The first Alpha dinner will be on Monday, September 8 at 6:30 pm in the Large Hall. If Mondays are difficult, St Charles will be running Alpha at the same time, but on Sunday's at 5:00 pm.

Who will you invite?

Share this link with a friend:
StMichaelLivermore.com/Alpha

Pick up an invitation postcard in the church office, or after Mass on the weekends of August 18 and 25.

Fr Carl
Pastor

Living and Growing as Disciples



*Solemnity of the Assumption of the
Blessed Virgin Mary*

**Holy Day of Obligation
Mass Times**

Wednesday, August 14

6:00 pm English and 7:30 pm Spanish

Thursday, August 15

7:00 am, 8:30 am, 12:15 pm and 6:00 pm in English
and 7:30 pm in Spanish



**REFER PEOPLE
WHO ASK FOR
MONEY TO:**

The St Vincent de Paul Food Locker, located behind St Michael's, is open Monday through Thursday 7-8 pm.

The St Vincent de Paul Help Desk, located at 1817 Second Street, assists people in crisis with utilities, rent and more.



Programs for Kids & Teens

Registration for fall Faith Formation programs for children and teens closes on August 31. Download registration packets for all programs for kids age 3 through 12th grade at StMichaelLivermore.com/FaithFormation

Teen Confirmation registration is *by appointment only*. Contact Joseph at Youth@StMichaelLivermore.com or 925-667-4093 to schedule an appointment ASAP!

JOIN THE ALPHA TEAM!

Alpha

Seeking people who are

Joyful and friendly
The life of the party
Quietly nurturing
Attentive and kind
An excellent host/hostess

Alpha@StMichaelLivermore.com or
925-667-4051

CONVENT BACKYARD PROJECT

Thank you for your generous donations to the Convent Backyard beautification project. It is still a work in progress, but we are slowly making headway.

We need HELPERS to work in the backyard garden! Please contact Jacqueline in the Church Office at 925-447-1585 for work party dates.



Save These Dates!



Mass in Tagalog Sunday, August 18 at 3:30 pm

Join our Filipino community in celebrating Mass in Tagalog, followed by a potluck at the hall.

ON FIRE NorCal Jam Register Before August 22 Event on September 14

Enjoy this Catholic gathering of high school youth through 30-something age young adults at Six Flags Discovery Kingdom.
Youth@StMichaelLivermore.com

Portuguese Celebration of Our Lady of Help Sunday, August 25 11 am Mass

Following Mass, join the procession with Portuguese Marching Band (Recreio do Emigrante Portugues). Enjoy lunch in the Hall and a concert, auction and a "white elephant" bazaar.

Adult Confirmation Prep Classes Begin Thursday, September 5

Now is the time to prepare to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation to complete your initiation and be filled with the Holy Spirit! This class is for you if you are at least 18 years old, are a baptized, practicing Catholic, have received First Holy Communion and have never been confirmed Contact Marjorie at 925-447-2925 or RCIA@StMichaelLivermore.com

Alpha Dinner Mon, September 9 at 6:30 pm Large Hall

This is your opportunity to invite someone who doesn't identify themselves as Christian to a fun no-pressure dinner event. We will get to know each other, watch a video on the basics of the gospel message and then have an engaging conversation without judgement. Who will you invite?
StMichaelLivermore.com/Alpha

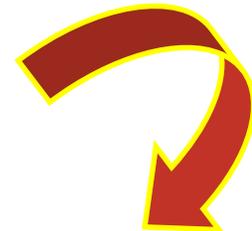
Feast of St Michael the Archangel September 20-28

Save the dates as we celebrate our patron saint with a novena of Masses, dinner auction, parish raffle and ministry fair. All proceeds benefit the repair of the parking lots at our church and school. See next page for details.

Stop by the Church Office Foyer and pick a "leaf" off the Gift Card Tree! All donated gift cards will be used as prizes at the Feast of St Michael the Archangel.

Pick Up Bishop Barron's Book: Letter to a Suffering Church In the Church Office

\$2.00 suggested donation. Details below.



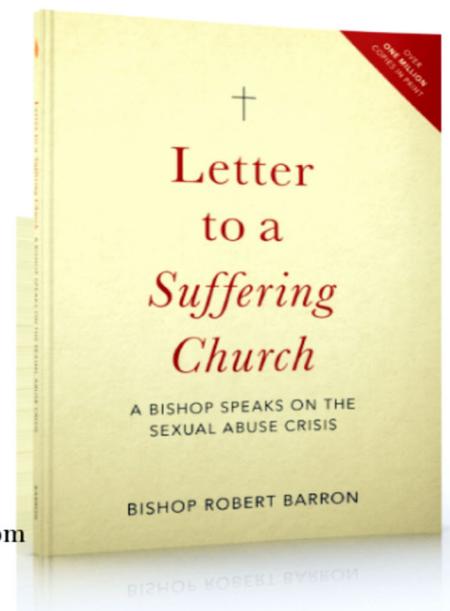
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I'm a practicing Catholic. Can I come to Alpha?

Yes, but bring a friend who does not have a relationship with Jesus or does not identify themselves as Christian.

How long is an Alpha session?

About two hours, including dinner, video and great conversations.

Does Alpha teach the Catholic faith?

Alpha introduces guests to the Trinity and the basic Gospel message. Alpha is just the beginning, a first opportunity to encounter Jesus and begin a relationship with Him. After Alpha, guests will be encouraged to enter catechesis groups to dig deeper into the Catholic tradition. Jesus always leads us to more. Alpha is evangelization first.

Who will you invite?

Mondays at 6:30 pm
Starting September 9
at 6:30 pm in the Hall

Register you and your friend at
StMichaelLivermore.com/Alpha



Feast of St Michael the Archangel

September 20 - 29, 2019



Novena of Masses

September 20 - 28

- 9/20 8:30 am (English)
- 9/21 5 pm (English) 7 pm (Spanish)
- 9/22 All Sunday Masses
- 9/23 7 pm (English)
- 9/24 7 pm (English)
- 9/25 7 pm (Spanish)
- 9/26 7 pm (Spanish)
- 9/27 7 pm (English)
- 9/28 8:30 am (English)

Parish Raffle

Tickets will be on sale soon, and great prizes will be announced. Raffle drawing to be held at the Dinner & Auction. Proceeds go toward repairing the School and Parish parking lots

Dinner & Auction

September 28 at 6 pm

Outdoor seating at St Michael School grounds

Ministry Fair

September 29

9 am - 6 pm in the Church parking lot. Food, Music, Ministry Booths, Entertainment



Watch Fr Carl's Video - Alpha: Who Will You Invite?
on Facebook, YouTube or StMichaelLivermore.com



“Episodio 11: La asunción”

Serie La Biblia y la Virgen María

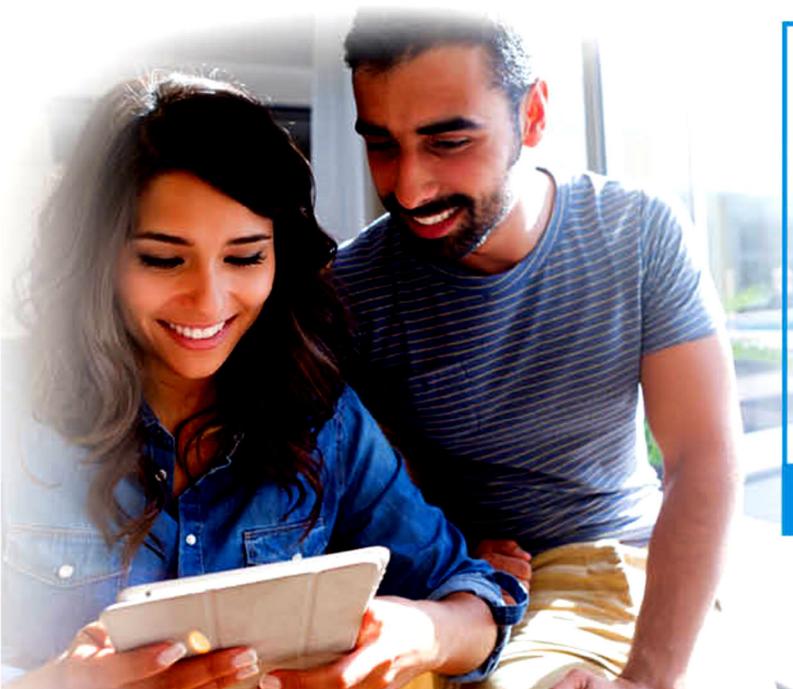
La Biblia y la Virgen María es una serie dinámica de videos en doce partes que bellamente explican las verdades católicas sobre Nuestra Señora, que muestra cómo ella ha sido una parte del plan de Dios para traer la salvación al mundo desde el comienzo del tiempo.

RECOMENDACIONES ADICIONALES

- Un camino hacia Dios (Read)
- Hermano Zeferino: Los Santos (Watch)

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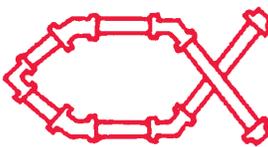
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Mass | Misa

Mon-Sat | Lu-Sa 8:30 am

Wed | Mi 7:00 pm (español)

First Friday | Primer viernes
12:00 pm

Sat Vigil | Vigilia del Sábado

5:00 pm (English), 7:00 pm (español)

Sunday | Domingo

6:45 am, 8:00 am, 9:30 am, 11:00 am,
12:30 pm (español), 6:00 pm

**Sign Language | Lenguaje por
Señas**

1st Sun, 11:00 am

Primer domingo a las 11:00 am

Traditional Latin Mass

2nd Sun, 8:00 am

Tagalog

3rd Sun, 3:30 pm

Vietnamese | Vietnamita

4th Sun, 3:30 pm

Cuarto domingo a las 3:30 pm

Confession | Confesión

Saturday, in the Church |

Sábado en la iglesia

9:00 am & 3:45 pm in English

6:15 pm en español

Monday & Friday in the church |

Lunes y viernes en la iglesia

7:30 am in English & español

Wednesdays in the Convent Chapel

2:30 pm

Anointing of the Sick |

Unción de los Enfermos

1st Saturday after 8:30 am Mass or
by appointment: 925-447-1585 |

1er sábado después de las 8:30 am

Misa o con cita previa: 925-447-
1585

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Rev. Stanislaus Poon, Retired

Rev. Bento Tamang, in residence

Rev. Deacon Bill Archer

Rev. Deacon Rob Federle

Rev. Deacon Dave Rezendes

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Finance Council Chair:

Edna McComb

Fr Carl Arcosa, Eric Hom, Edna

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