



About *Symbolon: The Faith of the Church*

The Augustine Institute's foundational faith formation series *Symbolon* is new, refreshed, and more relatable than ever. Invite parishioners on a journey through salvation history and the core teachings of the Catholic faith using the Creed as a guide. Those who watch will gain a deeper understanding of truth and be inspired by beauty as *Symbolon* explores the Church in America and worldwide. Participants will walk away encouraged that the glory of the Catholic Church is closer than they think. Use *Symbolon* in OCIA, catechist training, men's and women's groups, Bible studies, and more.

Symbolon consists of 16 sessions, each roughly 30 minutes. The importance of the Church is emphasized in each session.

Session 1: Seeking the Face of God

Session 2: I Believe in God, the Father Almighty

Session 3: Creator of Heaven and Earth

Session 4: I Believe in Jesus Christ

Session 5: His Only Son, Our Lord

Session 6: Born of the Virgin Mary

Session 7: He Suffered under Pontius Pilate

Session 8: I Believe in the Holy Spirit

Session 9: Mary, The Mother of God

Session 10: The Sacraments

Session 11: The Body and Blood of Christ

Session 12: Made for Communion

Session 13: Faith, Hope, and Charity

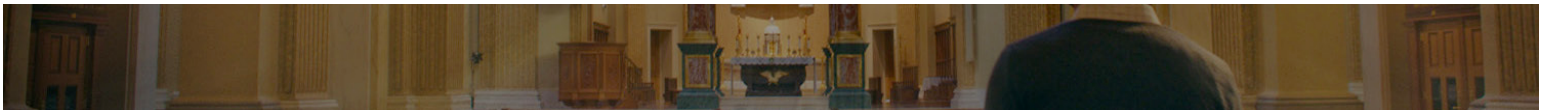
Session 14: The Truth will set You Free

Session 15: Prayer, On Earth as It Is in Heaven

Session 16: Discipleship and Mission



Watch Now! Only on FORMED®



HOW TO USE *SYMBOLON* IN YOUR PARISH:

Symbolon can be used as a Catholic resource for multiple types of communities and participants. Here are suggestions to foster community and formation for the people you serve.

- OCIA/RCIA
- Catechist training
- Bible studies
- Sacramental preparation
- Parochial school parent and teacher formation
- Advent and Lent parish-wide study
- Adult religious education
- Family faith formation
- Parish retreats, missions, and small group discussions
- Men's and women's groups

BEST PRACTICES FOR OCIA

Incorporate Scripture into each session to pray with before the next session.

- Each lesson includes a time of *lectio divina*. Explore the Lectio collection on Formed for additional practice to grow in prayer. *Lectio: Salvation, Lectio: Mary, Lectio: The Case of Jesus, Lectio: Prayer, Lectio: Eucharist, and Lectio: Hearing God's Voice.*

Give participants a copy of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* to highlight sections that connect with each *Symbolon* session.

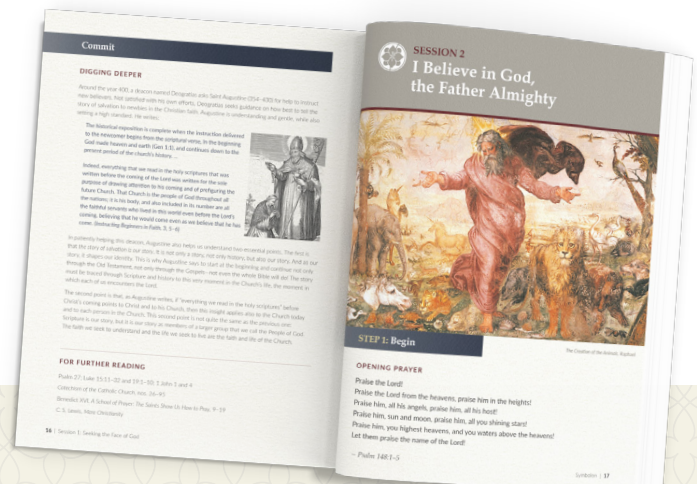
Peer Mentorship: assign each catechumen/candidate and sponsor with another pair to foster peer group mentorship and community.

Invite individuals ready to become Catholic and those simply curious about the Church to attend OCIA. Foster an environment that welcomes questions and exploration.

SUPPLIES:

Helpful supplies to have on hand when facilitating *Symbolon*:

- Leader's guide
- Participant's guide
- *Catechism of the Catholic Church*
- Bible
- Notebook
- Pen, paper, etc.
- Formed subscription to stream *Symbolon* or DVD/Blu-ray set



Find the Leader and Participant guides, DVDs, and other resources you need on Catholic Market.



HOW TO RECRUIT PARTICIPANTS AND CATECHISTS

To recruit participants, extend the invitation liberally! One personal invitation can dramatically change a person's life.

- Bulletins/Flocknote
- Announcements after Mass
- Personal invitations
- Social media posts (use the ready-made *Symbolon* promotional materials!)
- Teachers can invite their students' parents
- Print *Symbolon* flyers and business cards for parish staff members to distribute to their neighbors, friends, and those who attend their ministries
- Leave business cards at local coffee shops, restaurants, bakeries, recreation centers, gyms, etc.

How do you recruit catechists? This process can be intimidating, but don't be shy! Teaching is a gift for the catechist as well.

- Personal invitation is key
- Consider couples from marriage preparation or previous years' OCIA classes who may be excellent teachers
- Include catechists in stewardship sign-up weekends
- Ask for referrals from trusted ministry leaders
- Teachers can invite their students' parents
- Invite parishioners to be sponsors their first year, then return as catechists the following year

INCORPORATE *SYMBOLON* INTO YOUR EXISTING SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION FORMATION

To recruit participants, extend the invitation liberally! One personal invitation can dramatically change a person's life. Besides leading groups through the entire series, you can supplement existing sacramental preparation lessons with specific videos relevant to the topics discussed. Here are examples of *Symbolon* sessions that can serve as additional resources for sacramental preparation.

Sacrament	Relevant <i>Symbolon</i> Session
Baptism	Session 8: I Believe in the Holy Spirit Session 10: The Sacraments Session 14: The Truth will set You Free
First Holy Communion	Session 10: The Sacraments Session 11: The Body and Blood of Christ Session 12: Made for Communion
Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick	Session 10: The Sacraments Session 13: Faith, Hope, and Charity Session 14: The Truth will set You Free



Confirmation	Session 8: I Believe in the Holy Spirit
	Session 16: Discipleship and Mission
Marriage Preparation	Session 10: The Sacraments
	Session 12: Made for Communion

EVANGELIZATION AND PARISH OUTREACH:

Symbolon is a powerful tool for evangelization. Many people long for answers the Church provides but haven't encountered someone who explains the truth in a beautiful, captivating and integrated way. *Symbolon* removes these obstacles by offering catechesis from Augustine Institute professors and Catholic experts from across the country. With this step taken care of, you can focus on questions, discussion, and relationships within the community.

- Launch missionary groups: Encourage parish leaders to launch small groups to invite fallen-away Catholic family members, neighbors, friends, or colleagues to join an in-depth exploration of Catholicism.
- Invite parishioners who are attending an “Alpha” or “The Search” inquiry series attend *Symbolon* as the next step in their journey of faith exploration.
- Use *Symbolon* within adult faith formation classes to help form and evangelize parents who send their children to faith formation or the parochial school.
- Start a summer video series for college students or young adults to bolster their faith before returning to college.
- Host a Catholic faith trivia night and play clips of *Symbolon* to elaborate on the answers.
- Host a date night for married couples and play Session 10 and Session 12 for evening formation. Provide dinner and small group discussions.

SCHEDULE IDEAS:

Here are templates for how to facilitate *Symbolon* depending on the time available. See the *Symbolon* Leader's Guide for the 120-minute session overview.

Sample 90-minute session:

Time	Steps	Overview
5 minutes	Step 1: Opening Prayer	Situate the session in the context of prayer.
4 minutes	Step 2: Introduction	Provide a brief outline of the session's key points.



10 minutes	Step 3: Learn, Part I	Play the video.
10 minutes	Step 4: Setting the Stage	Summarize the doctrine that is the focus of the session.
20 minutes	Step 5: Learn, Part II	Play the video.
10 minutes	Step 6: Break	End with the Closing Prayer and ask for a specific saint's intercession.
15 minutes	Step 7: Engage	Facilitate discussion in large or small groups.
5 minutes	Step 8: Conclude	Summarize the main points from the study, and encourage participants to surrender their lives more fully to Jesus through what they have learned.
1 minute	Step 9: Closing Prayer	Close with a prayer.
10 minutes	Step 10: Commit	Allow participants time to respond to the session in reading and reflecting upon the Call to Conversion and Digging Deeper sections.

How to facilitate one 60-minute *Symbolon* session:

Time	Steps	Overview
5 minutes	Opening Prayer & Testimony	Pray and include a personal story about the session at hand.
45 minutes	Play Session	Play session. Discuss as a large group.
5 minutes	Saint Story	Share about the life of an American saint.
5 minutes	Closing Prayer	End with the Closing Prayer and ask for a specific saint's intercession.

A YEAR-LONG SMALL GROUP:

To complete *Symbolon* in one year:

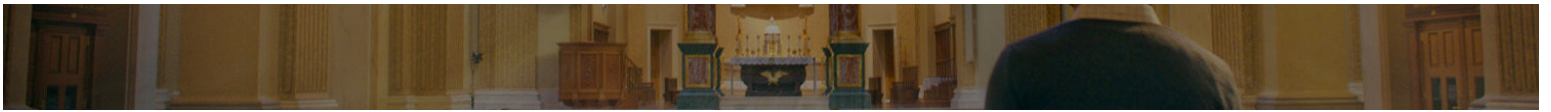
Block out four sessions to be incorporated into different months of the year.

4 sessions – September and October

4 sessions – Advent

4 sessions – Lent

4 sessions – Before Pentecost



A SATURDAY RETREAT:

Plan a one-day Saturday retreat with *Symbolon!* Depending on the liturgical calendar, choose three sessions and organize a mini-retreat on a Saturday at your parish or school. Invite parishioners to watch the rest of the series at home or with their small group, which can launch after this retreat.

8:00 AM – Mass

9:00 AM – Breakfast

9:30 AM – Introductions

9:40 AM – Pick a *Symbolon* session of your choice

10:20 AM – Small group discussions

10:50 AM – Break

11:15 AM – Play second session

11:30 AM – Small group discussions

12:00 PM – Lunch break, Rosary walk

1:00 PM – Play third session

1:30 PM – Small group discussions

2:00 PM – Closing Prayer: Litany of the Saints

CADENCE:

Here is a “cheat sheet” about when to begin and end the series depending on the frequency you plan to offer the program.

Weekly for 16 weeks (Every Tuesday evening, Saturday morning, etc.)

- Start the first week of September
- End the second week of December

Biweekly: You can meet twice a month:

- First eight sessions:
 - Start the first week of September
 - End the third week of December
- Second eight sessions:
 - Start the first week of January
 - End the first week of April

OCIA/RCIA calendar

- Check out the specific OCIA/RCIA calendar for how to incorporate *Symbolon* with the liturgical rites.

LITURGICAL CALENDAR SUGGESTIONS

Advent

Lent

Fall or spring OCIA groups

Summer parish study

St. Augustine’s Feast Day

(August 28)



Check out [leaders.formed.org](https://www.leaders.formed.org) for more ready-made promotional materials!

VISIT US AT:

WATCH.FORMED.ORG/SYMBOLON-THE-FAITH-OF-THE-CHURCH

