

## Using THE SEARCH and Symbolon: Knowing the Faith in an RCIA Program



***“It’s about not only getting them Catholic in name, but in heart and in spirit.”***

**Craig Buschur**

RCIA Coordinator, St. Henry Cluster, Ohio

In his Ohio parish, Craig Buschur has served as a lector and an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion, as well as having led a couples’ ministry and the children’s liturgy. When he was asked to coordinate RCIA for his parish, his pastor gave him the flexibility to use the program or programs he thought would work the best. Still, Buschur did not know what resources he would tap.

In a page from the life of St. Ignatius of Loyola, a couple of days spent sick at home gave him the answers he was looking for.

The St. Henry Cluster—made up of St. Aloysius, St. Bernard, St. Francis, St. Henry, and St. Wendelin—had a subscription to the Augustine Institute’s [formed.org](http://formed.org). While Buschur was recuperating at home, he used the time to watch different programs on FORMED.

“Man, I got into that,” Buschur said. “It just stirred up the Holy Spirit within me.”

Wanting to create more community and to build a bond between catechumens and parishioners, Buschur decided to combine RCIA with an adult faith formation program. He had also heard from some of the parish’s “cradle Catholics” who were interested in RCIA as a refresher course on the Faith.

“People are hungry,” Buschur said. “They’re really looking.”

Buschur dubbed the new creation *Inspire*. Parishioners and catechumens would gather in the church basement once a week to watch videos together and then break into small groups for discussion. Buschur chose two FORMED programs, one to touch their hearts and one to instruct them in the Faith.

“It’s about not only getting them Catholic in name, but in heart and in spirit,” Buschur said.



***“I was led to some of the best stuff. I’m thankful that it’s there and making my job easier.”***



**Craig Buschur**

For the first seven weeks, participants watched *THE SEARCH*.

“*THE SEARCH* wakes people up and helps them look at the Faith in a new way; it helps them see how God is longing to be with them,” Buschur said.

The quality of the videos “is just phenomenal,” Buschur said. “The personal testimonies in *THE SEARCH* really came across. It’s very well put together, very inspirational.”

After the first seven weeks, participants watch *Symbolon: Knowing the Faith*, “to go deeper into each part of the Faith,” Buschur said.

He praised *Symbolon* for the quality of its videos, its instruction from experts, and the unpacking of each area of the Faith in detail.

Two deacons assist Buschur with leading the small groups that follow each video.

They “like that everything is so well backed up and supported,” Buschur said. “It’s not on them to defend the facts.”

*Inspire* draws twenty to twenty-five people each week, ten of whom will join the Church at the Easter Vigil Mass.

Buschur’s first sign-up was a young man who was engaged to a parishioner. Buschur described the program to him over the phone, telling him he would learn things he could “apply to his life every day,” things that would “help his marriage and family.”

“Can I bring a sister along?” the groom-to-be asked.

“Of course,” replied Buschur, who then received texts with the names and telephone numbers for three of the groom-to-be’s sisters. Buschur later learned that the family had been Catholic. The young man and an older sister had been baptized and had gotten as far as First Communion before the family stopped going to church. The sisters credited their grandmother with inspiring them to return to the Faith.

“It will be an exciting Easter this year,” Buschur said.

Two men, Buschur said, are driving two hours each way every week to attend the program.

One of the two married a woman who grew up as a member of St. Henry Parish. He decided to join *Inspire* at the urging of a brother-in-law and his mother-in-law.

“He enjoys the depth and the way we’re running the program,” Buschur said. “He’s really on fire now.”

Buschur found that the videos on [formed.org](http://formed.org) not only spoke to the people in his *Inspire* group, who range in age from sixteen to seventy, but they made his task of organization much easier.

“*Symbolon* helps you to come up with a wonderful presentation every night,” Buschur said. “You don’t have to find a speaker or presenter. The focus can be on the small groups and helping people apply the material to their lives.”

“I was led to some of the best stuff,” Buschur said of his days at home previewing the material on [formed.org](http://formed.org). “I’m thankful that it’s there and making my job easier.”



To learn more, contact **Brian Truckenbrod**  
senior director of Parish and School Channels

[brian.truckenbrod@augustineinstitute.org](mailto:brian.truckenbrod@augustineinstitute.org)

**FORMED**<sup>®</sup>



AUGUSTINE INSTITUTE<sup>®</sup>

Follow the Augustine Institute for more great content:

