

# INFORMED

THE FORMED NEWSLETTER FOR PRIESTS & PARISH LEADERS

December 2020

## THIS CHRISTMAS ...



*by promoting your parish's FORMED subscription*

While your parishioners will be opening up gifts under the tree this Christmas, let them know that you have a gift for them with FORMED!

We have created digital postcards and bookmarks that you can print and distribute to your parishioners, providing them with instructions to sign up for their FORMED subscription offered through the parish.



### A Gift for You

The Best Catholic Content.  
All In One Place.

We are pleased to give you a free subscription to **formed.org**. Entertaining movies, enlightening programs, inspiring talks, and a great selection of popular ebooks—all just a click away!

It's easy to get started:

- Go to [FORMED.org/signup](https://formed.org/signup)
- Enter our parish zip code or name to select our parish
- Enter your name and email

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[formed.org](https://formed.org)

To give the gift of FORMED to your parish this Christmas, visit the [FORMED Leader Resources](#) page to access the postcard and bookmark PDFs and JPEGs for download and edit.

[View FORMED Christmas Resources](#)

## IT'S NOT TOO LATE FOR YOUR PARISHIONERS TO SIGN UP FOR *THE ROAD TO BETHLEHEM*

This Advent we are excited to announce *The Road to Bethlehem*. An opt-in digital discipleship offering from FORMED, *The Road to Bethlehem* consists of hand-picked content designed to guide and nourish your parishioners this Advent by leading them into an encounter with Christ and his love.

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# Daily Reflections and Enrichment for Advent

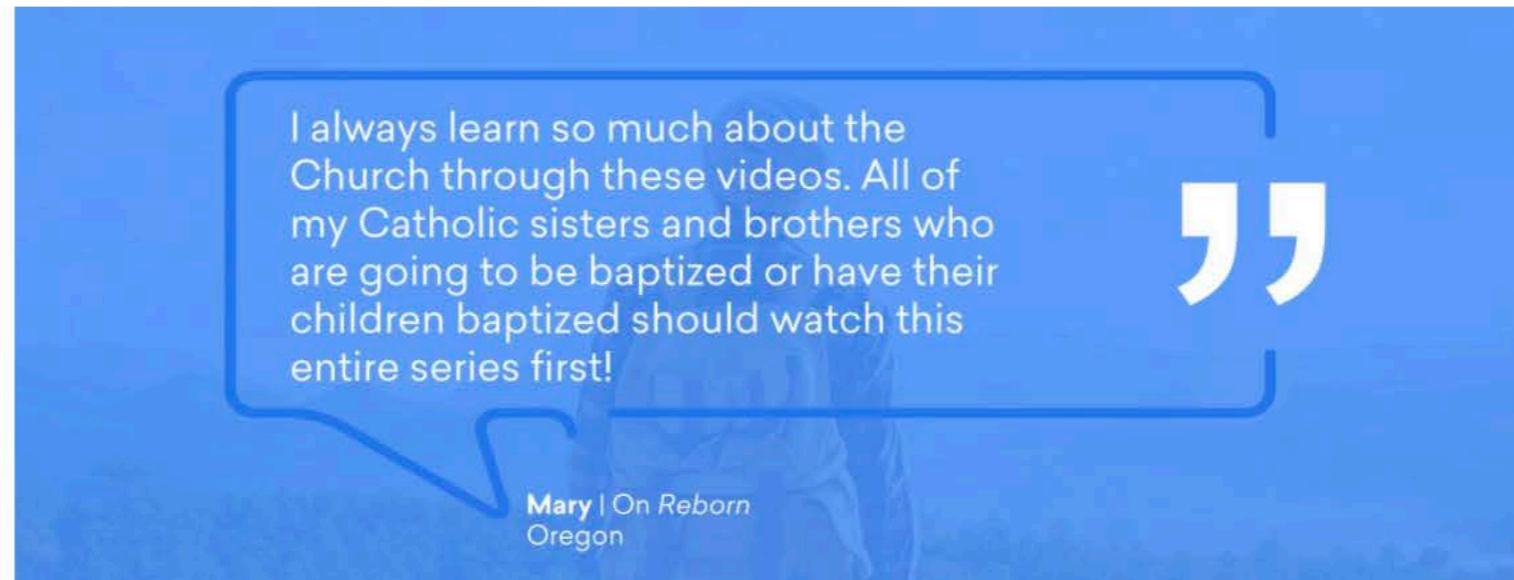
Sign up at [FORMED.org/advent](https://FORMED.org/advent)



[View \*The Road to Bethlehem\* Resources](#)

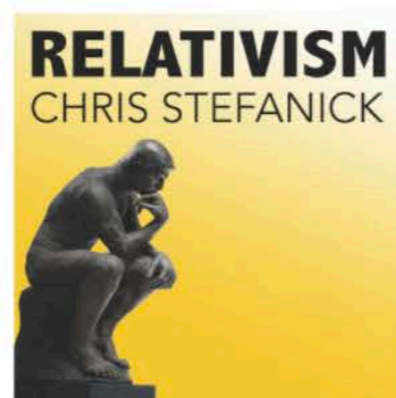
Please visit our Advent 2020 page on the FORMED Leader Resources site, where we have all the resources you need to share this exciting initiative with your parish and promote it in a variety of ways. On this site you will find

- An email template to send your parishioners inviting them to sign up for *The Road to Bethlehem*
- A downloadable PDF for bulletins and poster prints
- Downloadable images for emails and social media promotion

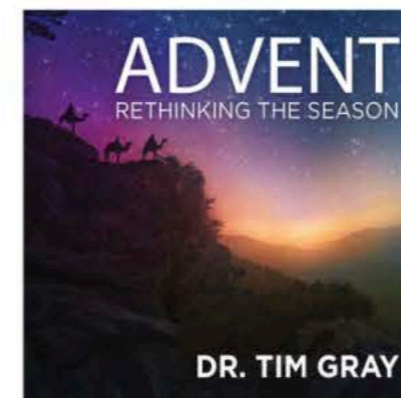


## CONSIDER PROMOTING A TALK THIS CHRISTMAS ON FORMED

Whether it is in the car, on a run, walking the dog, or simply in the home, audio has become one of the leading ways in which people consume content. In order to provide your parishioners with something edifying for their commute or errands, consider promoting one of these two talks throughout Advent and Christmas.

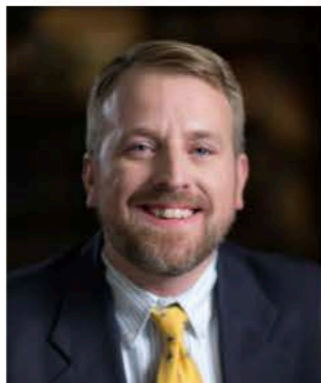


[Listen to \*Relativism\* on FORMED](#)



[Listen to \*Advent\* on FORMED](#)

FROM THE DESK OF THE DIRECTOR  
DR. BEN AKERS



Advent is one of my favorite times. The new liturgical year always offers an invitation for a fresh start in the spiritual life. We also get to joyfully anticipate the coming of the Christ Child at Christmas. As we know, it is all too easy to become distracted with the secular preparations for Christmas and let our spiritual preparation lag. In order to serve you and your parishioners this Advent, we designed The Road to Bethlehem, a daily spiritual journey of digital resources specially curated by the FORMED Team to help you prepare for Jesus's humble birth.

The program consists of content all found on [FORMED.org](https://formed.org). There are daily reflections from Dr. Tim Gray along with a video, talk, or text related to the different weekly themes of Advent. For the young ones, there is even a daily reflection from the popular Brother Francis. If you haven't signed up, it's not too late to join the journey and prepare your heart to adore the Christ Child in the manger at Bethlehem.

Sign up here and invite your parishioners, friends, and family to as well:  
<https://advent.augustineinstitute.org>.

Another way to prepare ourselves this Advent is to regularly pray the almost 1000-year-old hymn *Alma Redemptoris Mater*. This ancient text invites us to pause from the hectic pace of life and to reflect, along with Mary, the Immaculate Conception, on the great mystery we contemplate at Christmas—the Word became flesh and dwelt among us! St. John Henry Newman beautifully translated this prayer from the original Latin.

*Mother of the Redeemer, who art ever of heaven  
The open gate, and the star of the sea, aid a fallen people,  
Which is trying to rise again; thou who didst give birth,  
While Nature marveled how, to thy Holy Creator,  
Virgin both before and after, from Gabriel's mouth  
Accepting the All hail, be merciful towards sinners.*

## LITURGICAL SPOTLIGHT

Enjoy our [December stripe](#) featuring content for Advent, the Virgin Mary, and Christmas in both English and Spanish!

- [Forgiven: The Transforming Power of Confession \(Video Series\)](#)
- [Perdonado: El Poder Transformador de la Confesión \(Spanish Video Series\)](#)
- [Mary of Nazareth \(Video\)](#)
- [María de Nazaret \(Spanish Video\)](#)
- [La Biblia y la Virgen María: recorriendo las Sagradas Escrituras \(Spanish Video\)](#)
- [Advent: Rethinking the Season by Dr. Tim Gray \(Audio\)](#)
- [Prepare the Way of the King by Dr. Scott Hahn \(Audio\)](#)
- [Kristoph & the First Christmas Tree: A Legend of St. Boniface \(Kids Video\)](#)

The best video production I have ever seen!  
It is very high quality . . . but more importantly,  
the insights shared by the speakers have  
made me reach deep inside, and have made  
my prayer life more solid!

”

**Butch**  
*On The Search*

## DID YOU KNOW?

*We have a daily show called FORMED Now!*



*Back in March 2020 when the world was surprised by the COVID-19 pandemic, we asked the question, how can we respond to the current crisis with a message of hope for our audience during these trying times?*

What emerged was our daily show. We are thrilled with the positive response to the daily show hosted by Dr. Tim Gray and Dr. Ben Akers. FORMED Now! ranges from eighteen to thirty minutes and addresses a vast array of topics from the saints, to Scripture, to current topics, to conversion stories, to other apologetics, and many other spiritual topics along the way. This dynamic show brings the wisdom of thought leaders into living rooms across the country and allows us to engage the faithful in a more regular and ongoing way.

[Click to see FORMED Now! episodes](#)

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