

INFORMED

THE FORMED NEWSLETTER FOR PASTORS AND PARISH LEADERS

To teach and to learn: Using SYMBOLON in RCIA programs and catechist training



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AUGUSTINE INSTITUTE



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FROM THE DESK OF THE DIRECTOR

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As we quickly approach the end of the summer, RCIA preparations are at the forefront of our minds. I encourage RCIA instructors to use our informative and engaging series *SYMBOLON*. The sessions in this series take your students and catechumens through the faith, using the Creed as a guidepost. A Participant's Guide and Leader's Guide are both available on FORMED to help aid you in your classes.

In addition to the many resources we have for catechists on FORMED, don't forget about the numerous feast days the Church celebrates in August.

To commemorate both the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary on August 15 and the Queenship of Mary on August 22, FORMED is highlighting two series by two excellent scholars: *Lectio: Mary* by Dr. Brant Pitre, and *The Bible and the Virgin Mary*, based on the work of Dr. Scott Hahn. Take some time to learn about Mary's identity and her important role in the Church through these informative series.

Lastly, on August 28, join us in celebrating our patron, St. Augustine, with the film *Restless Heart: The Confessions of St. Augustine*. This movie is an excellent way to learn more about one of the most influential saints in the Church. May God bless you in your apostolic endeavors.

Is your parish looking for a program that reveals the breadth and richness of the Catholic faith?

Subscribers to FORMED have that tool readily available in *Symbolon: The Catholic Faith Explained*.

Renowned author Dr. Edward Sri brings together some of the most trusted teachers of the Catholic faith to lead participants through the "big picture" of Catholicism, using the Creed as their guide.

While this in-depth Catholicism study is appropriate for a wide audience, it is particularly suited to RCIA catechists, candidates, and catechumens who are learning the faith.

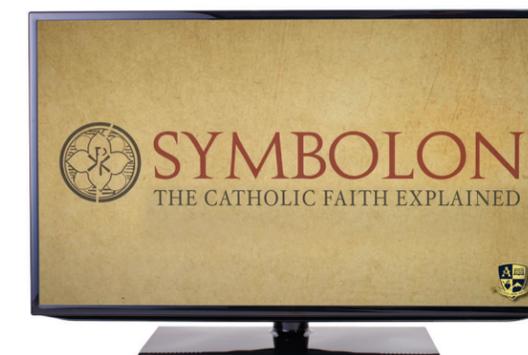
Part 1, "Knowing the Faith," *SYMBOLON*'s first 10 sessions, includes the session titles "The Bible"; "Who Is Jesus?"; "The Holy Spirit and the Life of Grace"; and "Mary and the Saints."

In Part 2, "Living the Faith," the second 10 sessions, the focus shifts to Catholic daily life. Session titles include "The

Sacraments"; "Walk through the Mass"; "A Catholic Moral Vision"; and "Catholic Social Teaching."

The series videos are on formed.org, Participant Guides, and Leader Guides are available in English, Spanish, and Portuguese.

The *SYMBOLON* series imparts and explains the Catholic faith in a comprehensive and easy-to-understand way—a blessing for those teaching the faith and for those awakening to the beauty of Catholicism.



HIGHLIGHTS ON FORMED

Two Marian feast days grace the August calendar: the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary on August 15 and the Queenship of Mary on August 22. To respond to Catholics' hunger to know Our Lord's mother better, the Augustine Institute offers these resources on formed.org.



Lectio: Mary

With the artistry found throughout the Augustine Institute's LECTIO series, Dr. Brant Pitre examines what Scripture, the life of Christ, and the early Church Fathers reveal about Mary. By closely examining the connections between the Old and New Testaments, Dr. Pitre presents clear explanations about the life and identity of Mary, the Mother of God, and her role in the Church.



The Bible and the Virgin Mary

Based on the work of popular speaker and teacher Dr. Scott Hahn, *The Bible and the Virgin Mary* devotes 12 half-hour episodes to understanding the Mother of God. Each is biblically based, explaining Mary's role in the life of Jesus and the Church. Matthew Leonard, a convert to Catholicism and former missionary to Latin America, serves as presenter.



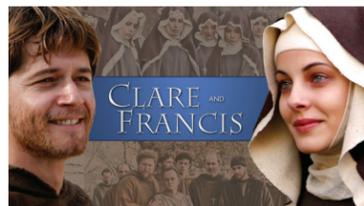
And just for children whose summer is winding down ...

The Slugs and Bugs Show

Musician Randall Goodgame, Doug the Slug, Sparky the Lightning Bug, Morty and Maggie Raccoon, and a slew of special guests impart timeless truths about life and faith. Kids of all ages are invited to sing and use their imaginations in delightful, quirky, and handcrafted fun.

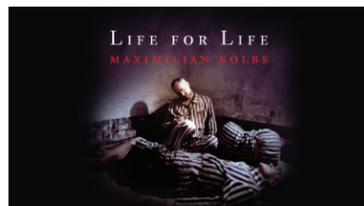
LITURGICAL CALENDAR

To enrich your parishioners' knowledge of and devotion to saints who have August feast days, check out these resources on formed.org:



August 11 St. Clare of Assisi

Shot in Italy, the epic movie *Clare and Francis* grants equal attention to the lives of St. Clare of Assisi and St. Francis of Assisi. Clare and Francis go on to found religious orders, changing the world as they follow the radical call to live the Gospel.



August 14 St. Maximilian Kolbe

Life for Life: Maximilian Kolbe tells the story of Jan, an escapee from Auschwitz in 1941. Jan learns that 10 random prisoners have been sentenced to death by starvation in the notorious concentration camp as punishment for his escape. One of the 10 is Fr. Maximilian Kolbe, who has volunteered to take the place of one of the condemned prisoners.



August 28 St. Augustine

Set against an historic backdrop, *Restless Heart: The Confessions of Augustine* tells the story of one of the Church's most well-known and beloved saints. Gifted with wealth and intellect, Augustine nevertheless lives without a moral compass. Various events in his life challenge him to repent, and he is helped by the prayers of his mother, St. Monica, and his mentor, St. Ambrose.

PARISH SPOTLIGHT



For his first year as coordinator of the RCIA program in the St. Henry Cluster of parishes in Ohio, Craig Buschur wanted to create more community between catechumens and parishioners. He combined RCIA with an adult faith formation program and dubbed it "Inspire." Buschur chose two FORMED programs—THE SEARCH and SYMBOLON—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.

"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.

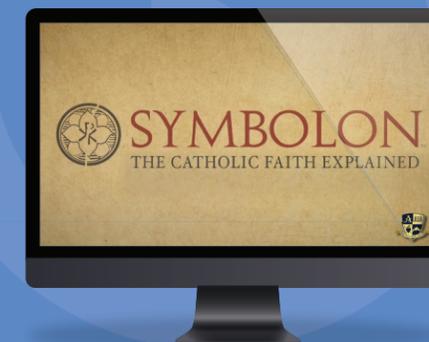
SYMBOLON helped them "to go deeper into each part of the faith," Buschur said.

The two deacons who assist Buschur "appreciate that everything is so well backed up and supported," Buschur said. "It's not on them to defend the facts."

"Inspire" drew 25 people each week, 10 of whom were received into the Church at Easter!

Buschur found that the videos on formed.org spoke to the people in his Inspire group, who range in age from 16 to 70, and made his task of organization much easier.

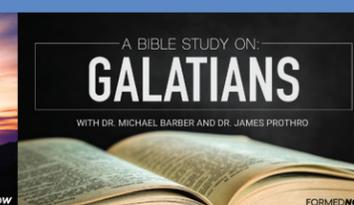
"SYMBOLON helps you to come up with a wonderful presentation every night," Buschur said. "You don't have to find a speaker or presenter. The focus can be on the small groups and helping people apply the material to their lives."



FORMEDNOW



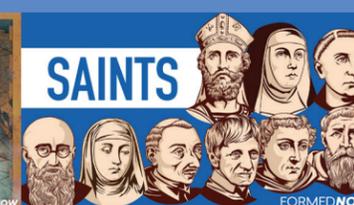
A Bible Study on the Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary
Have you ever wanted to grow in your understanding and devotion to the Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary? Join Dr. Ben Akers, Taylor Kemp, and Augustine Institute professors as they walk through these biblical mysteries, seeking to grow in understanding and love of Christ through them.



Bible Study: Galatians
Join Dr. Michael Barber and Dr. James Prothro, professors of Sacred Scripture at the Augustine Institute Graduate School, as they study St. Paul's pivotal Letter to the Galatians. This in-depth Bible study will walk through the entire letter, providing context and commentary.



FORMED for Mission: What Is the Church?
The Catholic Church is one, holy, catholic, and apostolic. Dr. Ben Akers and Taylor Kemp spend five sessions (Episodes 13–17) on what the Catholic Church is, focusing on her four marks listed in the Creed.



Saints
We are excited to now have all the saints highlighted through FORMED Now in one place! In the FORMED Now Saints collection, you can find interviews on the lives of over thirty saints. Learn about Sts. Monica, Augustine, Stephen, Philip Neri, Catherine of Siena, and more!