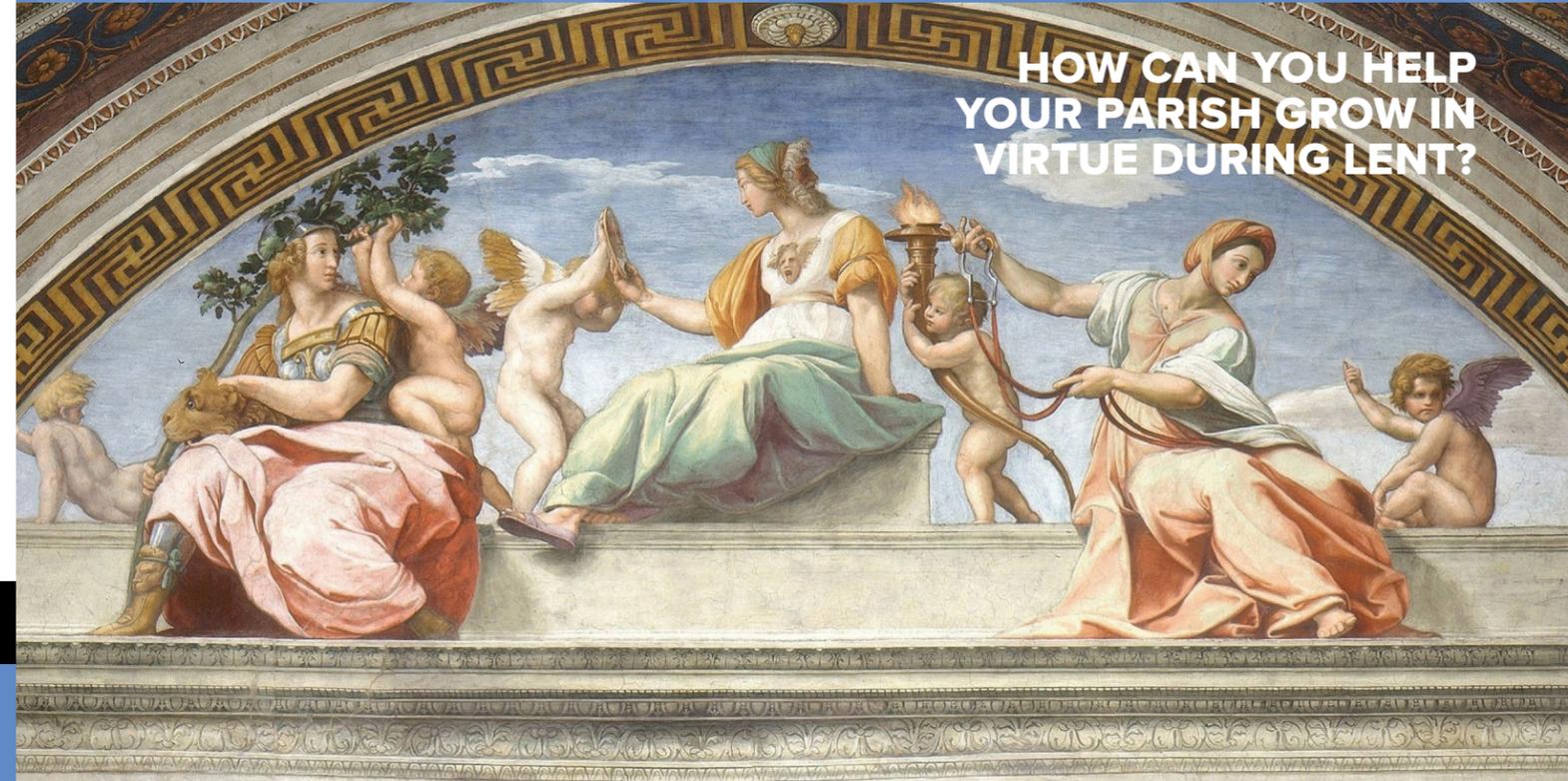


HOW CAN YOU HELP YOUR PARISH GROW IN VIRTUE DURING LENT?



An offering from the  AUGUSTINE INSTITUTE and  ignatius press



FROM THE DESK OF THE DIRECTOR

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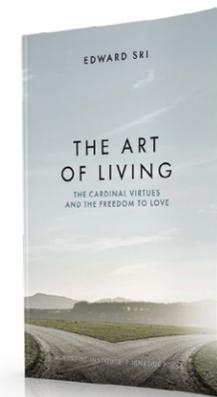
Lent is fast approaching and the team at FORMED is here for any resources you and your parishioners may need to have a fruitful penitential season. This edition recounts a success story of a parish which used one of our most popular series *Forgiven: The Transforming Power of Confession* as part of their Lenten parish mission. They had a truly incredible response of parishioners seeking the Sacrament of Mercy after watching the videos. It is an inspiring example of creative and fruitful ministry. Lent is not only a great time to give up something for our Lord but it also is an opportunity to more faithfully live out the Christian life of discipleship. Dr. Edward Sri's new series *The Art of Living: The Cardinal Virtues and Freedom to Love* provides us with the tools we need to learn how to grow in these key virtues. Lastly, to accompany you this Lent, you do not want to miss the audio meditations *Tears of Christ* which are beautiful reflections on Christ's sufferings by St. John Henry Newman. I encourage you to direct the attention of your parish staff and volunteers to a free virtual conference for Lay Leaders hosted by the Augustine Institute Graduate School on February 12. This might be just the thing they need to refresh themselves in their apostolic work. And as always, check out FORMED for content on some of the great feasts we celebrate this month like the Presentation of the Lord in the Temple and Our Lady of Lourdes. Let us pray for one another.

The Lenten practices of fasting, prayer, and almsgiving are intended to convert our hearts as we prepare to celebrate Jesus' Resurrection on Easter Sunday.

This Lent, the Augustine Institute invites your parish to explore and develop the virtues with Dr. Edward Sri in a new video series on his latest book, *The Art of Living: The Cardinal Virtues and Freedom to Love*.

In *The Art of Living*, bestselling author Dr. Sri helps readers discover the close connection between growing in the virtues of prudence, fortitude, temperance, and justice and having friendship and community with others.

A consummate teacher, Dr. Sri leads viewers through the virtues, demonstrating that they are the basic life skills we



need to give the best of ourselves to God and to the people in our lives. In short, the practice of the virtues gives us the freedom to love.

Consider initiating a parish small-group study on *The Art of Living* video series with Dr. Sri and the accompanying book. Each chapter of Dr. Sri's book includes reflection questions, with biblical citations, to answer and discuss.

Let Dr. Sri and the Augustine Institute help your parish become a model of virtue this Easter.



Dr. Edward Sri, author, *The Art of Living: The Cardinal Virtues and Freedom to Love*.

HIGHLIGHTS ON FORMED

Anticipating the beginning of Lent on March 4, the Augustine Institute suggests these resources for your parishioners' spiritual journeys:



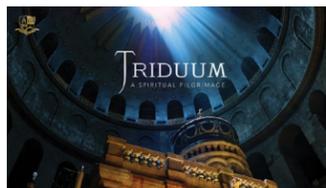
The Tears of Christ, audio meditations for Lent by St. John Henry Newman

“Jesus wept, not merely from the deep thoughts of his understanding but from spontaneous tenderness, from the goodness and mercy, the encompassing loving-kindness and exuberant affection of the Son of God for his own work, the race of man.”

This precious insight takes us to the heart of the interior life of St. John Henry Newman (1801–1890), from the treasures of which these meditations are offered as a Lenten devotional aid. Drawn chiefly from his sermons and gently modernized, these meditations offer a share in the fruit of his contemplation, that we might better enjoy with him the “one thing which is all in all to us,” which is “to live in Christ’s presence, to hear his voice, to see his countenance.”

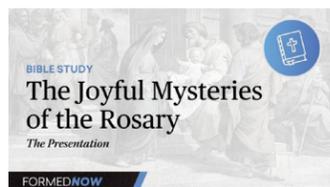
Triduum: A Spiritual Pilgrimage

Triduum: A Spiritual Pilgrimage is a beautiful, 30-minute contemplative documentary that cinematically walks through the locations of the Holy Week story, re-presenting the most important days of human history. Immersed in the real and sacred places of the Holy Land, the pilgrim faithful are brought tangibly nearer to the story, the landscape, and the reality of the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. *Triduum* draws Catholics and those with open hearts and minds to experience a deeper understanding of these events and places, and offers rich meditations for the pilgrimage of daily life. Now more than ever, as more people are confined to their homes, to journey along this spiritual pilgrimage is to be drawn more deeply into the life and love of God.



LITURGICAL CALENDAR

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



February 2 The Presentation of the Lord

Celebrate the Feast of the Presentation by viewing this 20-minute segment on the fourth Joyful Mystery of the Rosary from *A Bible Study on the Joyful Mysteries*. In this 20-minute episode, Dr. Ben Akers and Dr. James Prothro dissect chapter 2 of Luke's Gospel to provide historical, theological, and spiritual insights into Jesus' Presentation in the Temple.

February 11 Our Lady of Lourdes

On the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, view the feature film *Bernadette*. The late Jean Delannoy, one of France's foremost filmmakers, directed this top-quality story of St. Bernadette and the apparitions of Our Lady of Lourdes. Actress Sydney Penny, supported by a superb cast, gives a beautiful performance as Bernadette. Shot on location in France with outstanding cinematography and a beautiful score, this film was chosen to be shown daily at the shrine in Lourdes.



February 20 Sts. Francisco and Jacinta Marto

On the feast day of two of the children who beheld Our Lady of Fatima, view the powerful and in-depth documentary *Finding Fatima*. The film combines archival footage, dramatic reenactments, original interviews with Fatima experts, and stunning visuals to tell the whole story of the apparitions of Our Lady of Fatima and its message of prayer, penance, and conversion so desperately needed in the modern world. From the initial apparitions of the angel to the Miracle of the Sun, this illuminating and inspiring film is sure to have an impact on all who see it.

PARISH SPOTLIGHT

For a Lenten mission, consider offering your parish *Forgiven: The Transforming Power of Confession*, as St. Michael Catholic Church in Livermore, California, did several years ago.

After its scheduled speaker for the parishwide Lenten mission unexpectedly canceled, the staff at St. Michael Catholic Church chose to make *Forgiven: The Transforming Power of Confession* available to its parishioners as Plan B.

The parish sent its members a weekly Flocknote, inviting them to watch that week's session of FORGIVEN with their family or small group, leading up to the parish's Lenten Reconciliation service. St. Michael's pastor centered his Lenten homilies around material from FORGIVEN's four sessions.

The watch-at-home format was ideal for the 3500-family parish, located in an inland valley, 45 miles east of San Francisco. The diversity of the parish's members, 40 percent of whom are Spanish speaking, meant that FORGIVEN's availability in English and Spanish allowed everyone to participate.

“It's difficult for us to get any excitement around gathering in a physical space after work,” said Tina Gregory, St. Michael's coordinator of Communication and Adult Enrichment.

When the day of the parish Reconciliation service arrived, Gregory said that the change was “huge.”

The service began at 7:00 p.m., with six to eight priests available to hear confessions.

“It was standing room only,” Gregory said.

Staff members finally had to close the church at 11:00 p.m.

Since then, St. Michael's has incorporated FORGIVEN into an additional parishwide Lenten study, RCIA, marriage and baptismal preparation, and to help parents whose children are readying for their First Reconciliation.

“We tell people, ‘Watch the last episode of FORGIVEN on a day that you know Reconciliation is available. You won't want to wait,’” Gregory said.



“COME AWAY AND REST AWHILE” MARK 6:31

A VIRTUAL CONFERENCE FOR LAY LEADERS

If you are a lay leader serving in a parish, diocese, or other Catholic apostolate, join Augustine Institute faculty for a virtual conference to inform and refresh you for the important work you do.



SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2022 | 9:00AM-12:00PM MST

Register by visiting layleadersconference2022.augustine.edu