

# INFORMED

THE FORMED NEWSLETTER FOR PASTORS AND PARISH LEADERS

## TRUE REFORMERS

IN TIME OF DEEPEST  
TURMOIL, GOD SENDS  
HIS GREATEST SAINTS.

Five hundred years ago, the Church was reeling from the effects of the Protestant Reformation. Leading the Church's rebirth were six of our greatest saints:



**St. Teresa of Avila**, founder of the discalced Carmelites, whose writings and teachings on prayer led to her recognition as a Doctor of the Church



**St. Charles Borromeo**, the patron saint of catechists, who reformed the Archdiocese of Milan



**St. Philip Neri**, the Apostle of Rome, who shared the Gospel and encouraged laypeople and Church officials to lead holy lives



**St. Ignatius of Loyola**, founder of the Jesuits, whose feast day is celebrated on July 31



**St. Francis de Sales**, author of *Introduction to the Devout Life*, guide for the spirituality of laypeople, who is credited with bringing 40,000 souls to the Catholic Church



**St. Thomas More**, who was executed for his refusal to take an oath recognizing King Henry VIII as head of the Church in England and his refusal to acquiesce to the annulment of Henry's first marriage

These six saints are profiled in the Augustine Institute's series *True Reformers*. In each episode, author and Augustine Institute provost Dr. Christopher Blum profiles one of these saints, revealing the power of the human heart's response to God's grace.

Viewers may enjoy these episodes on their own or as part of a study. Available on Catholic Market, the 52-page study guide incorporates prayers, spiritual insights, episode outlines, questions for group discussion and personal reflection, and suggested resources for continued study.

# In Case You Missed It ...

This summer, find a new treasure on FORMED. Make a selection from the list below and set aside a few hours for spiritual refreshment.



## ***The Jeweler's Shop—Book and Film Review***

Catholics remember Pope St. John Paul II as a great theologian, philosopher, and pastor. Yet, he also wrote poetry and plays. *The Jeweler's Shop*, a play of his, tells of the struggles and triumphs in the marriages of three couples.

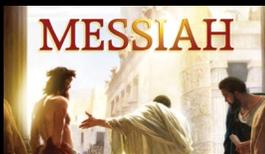
John Paul II called the 1988 film version featuring Burt Lancaster, Olivia Hussey, and Ben Cross “the best possible film based on my play.”

Watch the series of five 20-minute videos featuring Dr. Ben Akers and Dr. Scott Hefelfinger as they unpack the wonderful teachings contained in this play.



## ***Restored: Stories of Encounter***

Everyone needs a little inspiration. In six 25-minute episodes, these videos depict the profound beauty of ordinary people who have allowed Jesus Christ to radically move them. Following the lives of Connie McEldowney, Pablo Perez, Fr. Bob Lombardo, Alan Graham, Sharon Mason, and Jordan Schiele, this series displays the transformative power of grace, even in the mundane and routine occurrences of life. From Chicago, Illinois, to Austin, Texas—and even to Jerusalem—God’s grace knows no bounds and empowers all who are willing to be his instruments.

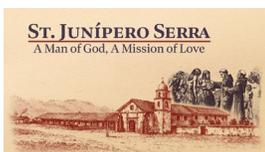


## ***Messiah***

Take an eight-episode tour with acclaimed actor Leonardo DiCaprio across the continents from the United States, to the Holy Land, to Rome to rediscover each messianic Bible prophecy and see how Jesus fulfilled each—during his life and after.

## LITURGICAL CALENDAR

To enrich your parishioners’ knowledge of and devotion to prominent saints who have July feast days, check out these resources on FORMED:



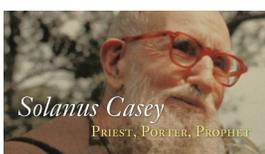
### **July 1 St. Junípero Serra**

The 28-minute documentary *St. Junípero Serra: A Man of God, A Mission of Love* delves into Fr. Serra’s missionary activity among Indigenous peoples in 18th-century North America.



### **July 26 Sts. Joachim and Anne**

In this episode of *Sacred Art*, Dr. Ben Akers and Taylor Kemp examine a signature piece of art that depicts the lives of the Blessed Mother’s parents, Sts. Joachim and Anne: Giotto di Bondone’s *Joachim and Anne Meeting at the Golden Gate*. Dr. Akers and Kemp plumb the fresco for its symbolism and theological meanings.



### **July 30 Blessed Solanus Casey**

The documentary *Solanus Casey: Priest, Porter, Prophet* tells the remarkable story of Fr. Solanus Casey, a simple doorman at his monastery. Through this minor role, Fr. Casey healed and counseled the lives of many. In 1957, more than 20,000 people attended his funeral. Interviews with his contemporaries and recipients of his counsel and healing present a fulsome image of this servant of God.

# CONTENT SPOTLIGHT

Actor, producer, and film director Leonardo Defilippis said that serving as host and doing the voiceover for the eight-episode series *Messiah* was “a great honor.”

The founder of Saint Luke Productions, a Catholic theater company, Defilippis accepted the role from his friend Rick Rotondi, president of the media company Cenacle.

“Rotondi is a great writer and researcher and has great insights,” Defilippis said.

Filmed in the Holy Land and Rome, *Messiah* explores how Jesus was the fulfillment of the Bible’s messianic prophecies.

Having never been to the Holy Land before, Defilippis said that he was in awe of “the profundity and weakness of it all.” The Savior of the world walks along the Sea of Galilee, weeps over the city of Jerusalem, and passes through the midst of angry people who want to kill him.



**Leonardo Defilippis**

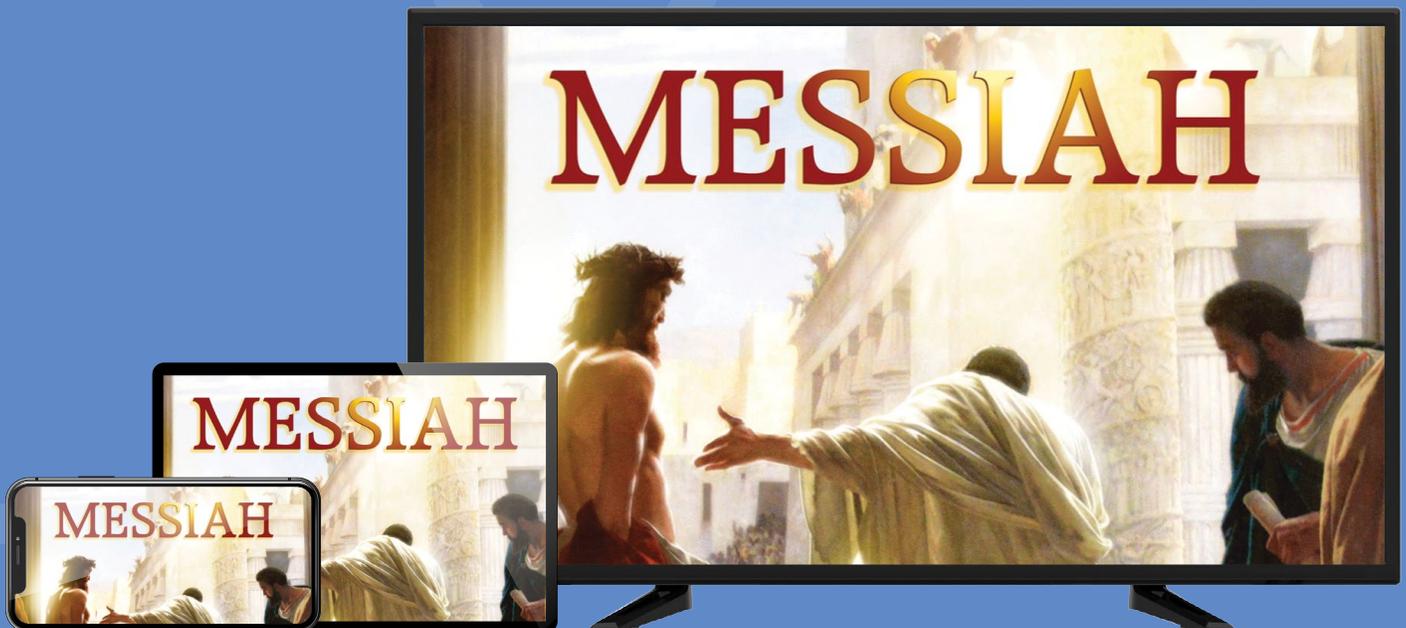
The series, Defilippis said, is intended for all audiences, ages 12 and up. That audience includes people of other faiths who seek to know more about Jesus and how he fulfilled the biblical prophecies.

Defilippis likened *Messiah* to the Acts of the Apostles as a response to the call “to bring the message of Christ to the Gentile world.”

Perhaps, ideally, it is viewed in the parish with conversation afterward. All eight episodes and the series study guide are available for free on [formed.org](https://www.formed.org).

*Messiah* meshes beautifully with the other content on FORMED, participating in the mission of the Augustine Institute to help Catholics understand, live, and share their faith.

“*Messiah* is another window into the heavenly reality,” Defilippis said.





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An offering from the  AUGUSTINE INSTITUTE and  ignatius press



## FROM THE DESK OF THE DIRECTOR

Dr. Ben Akers

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As we continue to journey through Ordinary Time, now is the perfect time to dive into the stories of ordinary people whose lives have become extraordinary by their openness to the Lord's call. To celebrate the feasts of prominent saints in July such as St. Junípero Serra on July 1, Sts. Joachim and Anne on July 26, and Bl. Solanus Casey on July 30, we recommend your parishioners watch *St. Junípero Serra: A Man of God, A Mission of Love*; *Sacred Art: Sts. Joachim and Anne*; and *Solanus Casey: Priest, Porter, Prophet*. In addition to learning about these holy men and women, consider exploring the stories of the *True Reformers*, six saints whose lives were dedicated to the rebirth of the Church after the Protestant Reformation. As many take their summer vacations this month, travel with your parishioners to sites from the U.S. all the way to Rome and the Holy Land with acclaimed actor Leonardo DiCaprio in *Messiah*, an eight-episode series about Jesus' fulfillment of the messianic prophecies. This summer is also a great time to enjoy the work of the great pope and playwright St. John Paul II by watching the 1988 film version of his play *The Jeweler's Shop*. To dive deeper into the teachings of this story, follow the film by watching a five-part series in which Dr. Scott Hefelfinger and I unpack all that this saint teaches us about love and marriage. Lastly, inspire your parishioners with the stories of ordinary people whose lives have been radically moved by Jesus Christ in *Restored: Stories of Encounter*. The team at FORMED is praying for you and your parish, and we hope you enjoy these resources.