

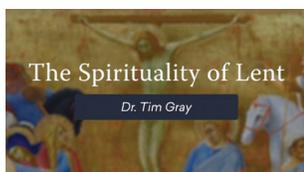
# INFORMED

THE FORMED NEWSLETTER FOR PASTORS AND PARISH LEADERS

## GROWING IN DEVOTION



This March is the perfect time for your parishioners to have a more personal encounter with the Lord. As they continue their Lenten journey and prepare for the joy of Easter, invite them to grow in their holiness and devotion to God. *The Spirituality of Lent* and *The Bible and the Virgin Mary* are two great resources to inspire your parishioners during this holy season.

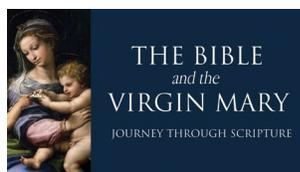


### *The Spirituality of Lent*

Lent is a time set apart by the Church, an anointed time, in which she renews her ardor for God. Individually, it exists to

prepare you for Easter, to refocus your attention on God, and to enrich your spiritual life. In this short talk, Dr. Tim Gray emphasizes how each person can imitate Christ during Lent. Just as Christ prayed and fasted for 40 days in the desert before beginning his public ministry, each Christian is invited to do the same by embracing prayer, fasting, and almsgiving during this holy season.

As the 40 days of Lent continue throughout March, it can be difficult to persist in the practices to which each person commits. Reinvigorate in your parishioners a spirit of perseverance through *The Spirituality of Lent*. This overview on Lent encourages a stronger devotion to living out the season and educates individuals on the significance of Lent and intentional preparation for Easter.



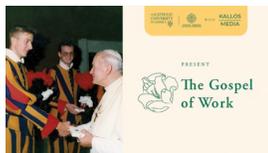
### *The Bible and the Virgin Mary*

The Church celebrates the Annunciation partway through the season of Lent. Just as each person is called to imitate Christ,

so are they called to echo Mary's faithful "yes" to God. By emulating Mary and growing in devotion to her, one can know Jesus more intimately. When one comes to know and understand Mary better, one comes to know and understand Christ better.

*The Bible and the Virgin Mary* is the perfect tool for aiding your parishioners in their relationship with Mary. A 12-part study based on Dr. Scott Hahn's work—with the option of purchasing leader and participant study guides—this series is a beautiful way to bring your parish community together to know the Blessed Mother as the perfect example of faith in and love for God.

# HIGHLIGHTS ON FORMED



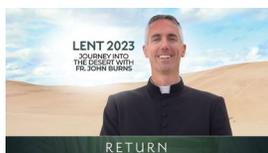
## ***The Gospel of Work***

How should Catholics think about work? Often, people's lives are centered around work or are spent trying to avoid it. Yet, the vocation of work is meant for our sanctification; this vocation invites us to imitate God's act of creation and to improve, develop, and innovate within the world around us. This

8-part series with Andreas Widmer—professor, author, and former Swiss Guard for Pope Saint John Paul II—is an effective resource for working parishioners to see the joy of their labor.

## ***The Biblical Roots of the Eucharist***

This study examines the Jewish Passover sacrifice and its significance for understanding Jesus' Last Supper and Crucifixion. As Dr. Tim Gray and Dr. John Sehorn unpack the scriptural roots of the Eucharist, discussing how the Passover shaped the identity of Jews and now continues to shape the identity of Christians, your parishioners will grow in love and knowledge of the Eucharist.

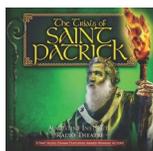


## ***Return with Fr. John Burns***

Another excellent resource for your parishioners this Lent is *Return with Fr. John Burns*. This guided collection of Lenten meditations is rooted in Joel 2:12-13. It challenges individuals to return to God with their whole heart through the practices of prayer and penance during Lent.

# LITURGICAL CALENDAR

This March, encourage your parishioners to continue growing in their devotion to Mary and the saints with these great FORMED resources:



## **March 17: St. Patrick**

### ***The Trials of Saint Patrick***

*The Trials of Saint Patrick* is an epic audio drama that chronicles the life of St. Patrick. Not only is it beautifully produced, but this engaging audio drama faithfully retells St. Patrick's heroic life of hardship, mercy, and forgiveness. This audio drama features award-winning actors, cinematic sound and music, and an incredible story, and it is fantastic to promote for families and individuals of all ages.

## **March 19: St. Joseph**

### ***St. Joseph: Our Spiritual Father***

This March, encourage your parishioners to celebrate the Solemnity of St. Joseph by watching *St. Joseph: Our Spiritual Father*. This film reveals the role of Joseph as the protector of families, the patron of the universal Church, the guardian of the Holy Family, and the model of Christian virtue. His example of obedience, humility, and trust in God shows each person how to guide, protect, love, and sacrifice for those around them. The documentary is perfect for individuals, families, or as an excellent resource for men's groups in your parish.



## **March 25: The Annunciation**

### ***The Annunciation | Sacred Art***

The Feast of the Annunciation is a unique time for each person to recall how they can welcome Christ into their own hearts as Mary did. *The Annunciation*, a Sacred Art episode, invites viewers to consider the holy moment Mary shared with the archangel Gabriel. Through this episode, viewers will develop a greater understanding of the mystery of the Annunciation.

# PARISH SPOTLIGHT

**At Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church in Seneca, Kansas, parishioners have renewed their Eucharistic vigor through the resources on FORMED.**



Susan Stallbaumer

“I couldn’t do what I do without [the videos on FORMED]. People are so hungry because of what has been happening in the world. They’re looking, and that’s so exciting to see,” says Susan Stallbaumer, co-director of Parish Evangelization at Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church.



Joan Henry

In 2018, Stallbaumer and her fellow co-director Joan Henry inaugurated their parish evangelization group after attending a convocation titled “Inflame Our Hearts, Homes, and Communities.” It was here that they learned about the resources available through FORMED from the Augustine Institute.

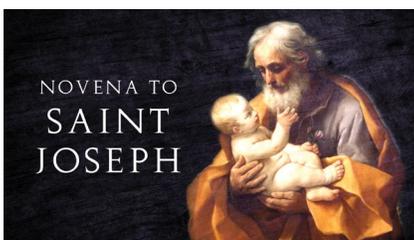
In the fall of 2021, Henry, Stallbaumer, and the parish evangelization team hosted a parish mission on the Eucharist, organizing four nights centered around *Presence*, FORMED’s series on the Eucharist. Each evening included prayer, music, a video, and personal testimonies. Henry saw the mission as a way of developing “the understanding of Jesus [as] truly present [in the Eucharist].”

“[P]eople are starting to understand the reverence for the Eucharist,” said Henry, pointing to a scene early in *Presence* as particularly moving when two priests emerge from a burning church clutching the blessed Hosts.

The success of Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church does not have to be isolated. The programs on FORMED are “beautiful tools for us to use,” said Stallbaumer, and Lent is the perfect opportunity to reignite your parish with love for the Eucharist. Consider running a similar parish-wide mission centered around the Eucharist by using *Presence*. These events will unite your parish community and invite people to deepen their faith and devotion.



## DEVOTIONAL CONTENT



### **St. Joseph Novena**

Pray as a parish community this Lent by praying a novena to St. Joseph in anticipation of his upcoming solemnity. Using FORMED’s *Novena to Saint Joseph*, your parish can grow in its devotion to this incredible saint and ask for the intercession of our spiritual father. Each video offers an extended meditation around a title of St. Joseph that can guide each person in their prayer and offering of intentions.

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