

# INFORMED

THE FORMED NEWSLETTER FOR PASTORS AND PARISH LEADERS

## HONORING THE GIFT OF LIFE

This October, we celebrate Respect Life Month—a time dedicated to recognizing and raising awareness for issues concerning the dignity of the human person.

Pope Francis writes that “every human being is the object of God’s infinite tenderness, and he himself is present in their lives” (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 274). We are called to recognize this inherent truth and see the value of each person. However, the times we live in promote a culture of death rather than life. This fails to realize the dignity of others and takes away their right to life.

In 2023, the USCCB calls for Respect Life Month to be a time of “radical solidarity”—that is, authentic companionship and support for those who face the terrible choice given by our culture between

life and death. As disciples of Christ, we are called to care for these individuals while also guiding them to see the dignity of life within them and those they care for. As mothers face unexpected pregnancy and families consider physician-assisted suicide or euthanasia for their loved ones, the Lord asks us to receive them into our hearts and share his love with them.

The answer to these issues is not in arguments and ostracizing; rather, it is in intentional accompaniment and genuine conversations. *Into Life: Love Changes Everything* on FORMED is a great starting point for educating ourselves and our parishes in beginning the conversation on life. This online formation program contains 12 videos detailing how to build a culture of life and solidarity through informative talks and opportunities for prayer and reflection. A collaborative effort between the Sisters of Life, the McGrath Institute for Church Life at the University of Notre Dame, and CampCampo Films, this series is perfect for educating your flock and inviting others into the dignity of life conversation.

As we enter Respect Life Month, consider bringing *Into Life* into your parish and promoting a culture of life and radical solidarity.



# NEW ON FORMED



## ***St. Thérèse of Lisieux | Littlest Saints***

Are you looking for a creative way to teach kids about the saints? The *Littlest Saints* series is created for children and told by children. In this episode about St. Thérèse of Lisieux, families can watch and learn about the beauty and littleness of St. Thérèse, the Little Flower. Full of drama, comedy, and everything in between, this episode is perfect for St. Thérèse's upcoming feast day this October 1.

# HIGHLIGHTS ON FORMED

Help your parish better recognize the importance of honoring life with these great resources on FORMED:



## ***When a Loved One Dies by Suicide***

*When a Loved One Dies by Suicide* is a grief support resource dedicated to walking

with individuals who have experienced suicide loss. With eight videos, a reflection guide, and a facilitation guide, this series can both help the bereaved in a grief support group and offer a learning opportunity to individuals who have not experienced this type of loss. *Warning: This series contains sensitive content and is not suitable for children.*



## ***The Fifth Commandment: Promote the Culture of Life***

How can we, as Christians, build a culture of life? In this episode of *ECHO* with Bishop Donald

Hying, viewers will explore how the fifth commandment reveals the call to defend the dignity of the human person. By examining who we are and how we are created in the image and likeness of God, we can recognize the value of each person and respond to the culture of death.

# LITURGICAL CALENDAR

This October, teach your parishioners more about Respect Life through Mary and the examples of the saints with the following resources on FORMED:



## **October 7: Our Lady of the Rosary**

### ***How and Why to Pray the Rosary***

Through the Rosary, we can come to know the heart of Mary and her holy motherhood. In this video featuring Dr. Tim Gray and Dr. John Sehorn, viewers can learn the beauty of this prayer.



## **October 16: St. Margaret Mary Alacoque**

### ***Behold, This Heart | Divine Mercy | Episode 2***

St. Margaret Mary Alacoque was a French nun and mystic who experienced private revelations of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Celebrate her feast day this year by coming to know Jesus' Sacred Heart.



## **October 22: St. John Paul II**

### ***Letter of Pope John Paul II to Women | Given Institute***

During his papacy, St. John Paul II redefined the Church's approach and response to the culture of death. This is reflected in his *Letter to Women*, where he speaks of the gift of women, the challenges to women's dignity, the theology of man and woman, and the feminine genius.



# CONTENT SPOTLIGHT

## Cultivating Catholic Feminism | The Catholic Woman

“In transforming culture so that it supports life, women occupy a place, in thought and action, which is unique and decisive. It depends on them to promote a ‘new feminism’ which rejects the temptation of imitating models of ‘male domination,’ in order to acknowledge and affirm the true genius of women in every aspect of the life of society, and overcome all discrimination, violence and exploitation.” — St. John Paul II, *Evangelium Vitae*, 99)

With these words, St. John Paul II set the tone for the Church’s response to the world’s culture of death. As Christians, we are called to see and recognize that God created each person in his image and likeness. Through this, personal worth is found in a person’s very existence—not in beauty, intelligence, usefulness, or anything else.

The rich theological vision of the Church is, in part, to create an authentically Catholic feminism that fully understands the role of women and the value of life. By reshaping the concept of feminism, we can reshape the concept of the human person and a person’s dignity.

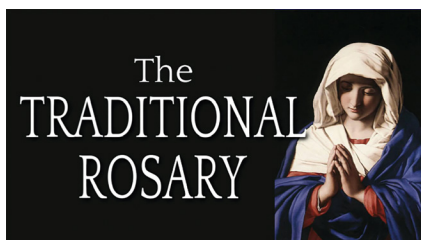
Considering this, the Given Institute’s *Cultivating Catholic Feminism* by The Catholic Woman examines our culture today and how the Church can directly respond through Catholic feminism and how each person is called to live this out.

With 21 video lessons written and presented by professor and writer Abigail Favale, Ph.D., and five mini-documentaries featuring the stories of Samantha Povlock, Shannon Ochoa, Justina Kopp, Krista Corbello, and Sister Josephine Garrett, C.S.F.N., this series is designed to help your parish explore the depth and meaning of the culture of life. Moreover, this program is a fantastic resource for women’s and Respect Life ministries.

Through Scripture and Tradition, Mary and the saints, and an understanding of the needs of our modern age, *Cultivating Catholic Feminism* builds a framework for a new feminism that honors the sacred gift of life.



## DEVOTIONAL CONTENT



### *The Traditional Catholic Rosary*

Enter more deeply into the mysteries of Christ with *The Traditional Catholic Rosary*. Featuring sacred art and the recitation of the Joyful, Sorrowful, and Glorious Mysteries, this video is a beautiful way for your parishioners to come to know the Lord through prayer. As October is both Respect Life Month and the Month of the Rosary, consider inviting your flock to pray a Rosary for the end of abortion, euthanasia, assisted suicide, and all other issues concerning the dignity of the human person.



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An offering from the  AUGUSTINE INSTITUTE

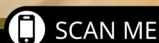
# ETERNAL REST™

THE ART OF DYING WELL

DEATH IS AN END,  
BUT IT'S NOT *the* END.



We all have very real questions about death. What happens when we die? What does Scripture teach about death? How do we prepare for the life to come? The Augustine Institute invites you to *Eternal Rest*, a four-part film series exploring the mystery of death and the promise of everlasting life.



Available only on **FORMED.org**



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