

Forma Fidei — Lesson Progression

Forming the Faith · Adult & Young Adult Formation at St. Patrick's

Tuesday evenings, 7:00 – 8:30 PM · Orientation Tue Aug 11, 2026 · topics begin Tue Aug 18 · no registration · everyone welcome

Four rotating pillars. **Sacred Scripture** (a book at a time + typology) · **The Church Fathers** · **Doctrine & the Councils** · **The Whole Tradition** (Church history, the saints, apologetics). Modular **4–5 week units** — a newcomer joins cleanly at any unit boundary and is never lost. Typology is taught once, then woven through everything after.

Two threads run through every unit — a point of **apologetics** (how to defend it) and a **Catholic practice** to live it. *Know it, defend it, live it.*

Fall 2026 Term — "The Word and the Witnesses"

Orientation Aug 11; fifteen topic sessions Aug 18 – Dec 8 (no class Sep 1 & Nov 24), then the Christmas break. Scripture-and-Fathers heavy — the Word, how to read it, and the first who read it.

DATE	LAUNCH
Aug 11	Orientation & Welcome — how Forma Fidei works, the four pillars, and the year ahead. No topic.

Unit 1 — The Gospel of John · Scripture

The mystagogical gospel — the text the early Church opened for the newly baptized. The perfect first unit for those just received.

Threads: 🕯 the Real Presence — "My flesh is true food" (Jn 6) answers "it's only a symbol" · 🙏 Eucharistic adoration & lectio divina on a Gospel passage.

DATE	SESSION
Aug 18	"In the beginning was the Word" — the Prologue (Jn 1). The Logos, the Incarnation, light and darkness, "we have seen his glory."
Aug 25	The Book of Signs I — Cana, Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman (Jn 2–4). Sign, faith, and being born from above.
Sep 1	No class
Sep 8	The Bread of Life — the multiplication and the discourse (Jn 6). "My flesh is true food" — the Eucharistic heart of John.
Sep 15	"I AM" — the Good Shepherd, the man born blind, the raising of Lazarus (Jn 8–11). Jesus and the divine Name.
Sep 22	The Book of Glory — the foot-washing and farewell, the Passion, the empty tomb (Jn 13–21). "It is finished"; "My Lord and my God."

Unit 2 — Typology: How to Read the Whole Bible · Scripture

Make the method explicit and read the whole Old Testament as the Church does: one story, everything converging on Christ. The lens carried through every later unit.

Threads: 🕯 "Where's that in the Bible?" — how Catholics read Scripture, and the Marian types · 🙏 the Rosary — the Gospel on a string.

DATE	SESSION
Sep 29	The Key on the Road to Emmaus — "beginning with Moses... he interpreted all the Scriptures concerning himself" (Lk 24). What typology is; the four senses; Adam → Christ (Rom 5).
Oct 6	Exodus & Passover — the lamb, the blood, the sea, the manna → Baptism and the Eucharist (1 Cor 5:7; 10). The great pattern the New Testament assumes.
Oct 13	Persons, Places & Institutions — Melchizedek, the bronze serpent, the Temple, David → priesthood, the Cross, Christ's body, the Church.
Oct 20	The New Eve & the Ark — Mary and the Church in type: the new Eve, the Ark, the Bride, the New Jerusalem. How Genesis and Revelation rhyme.

Unit 3 — The Church Fathers · Fathers

Who they are, why they matter, and what they sound like in their own words — the Church within living memory of the apostles, reading Scripture with the lens we just learned.

Threads: 🕯 the early Church was already Catholic — the Eucharist, bishops, apostolic succession · 🙏 pray the Nicene Creed slowly; the Sign of the Cross (Tertullian).

DATE	SESSION
Oct 27	The Church of AD 100 — Ignatius of Antioch on his way to martyrdom; the <i>Didache</i> . What the Church believed before the New Testament was even bound.
Nov 3	Athanasius, <i>On the Incarnation</i> — "God became man that man might become God." The logic of the Incarnation, and the bishop who stood against the world.
Nov 10	Augustine, <i>Confessions</i> — the restless heart, the garden, the stolen pears, grace that arrives before we ask. The West's great convert.
Nov 17	John Chrysostom — the "golden mouth": preaching, the poor, and awe before the Eucharist. Faith that preaches and feeds.
Nov 24	No class — Thanksgiving week
Dec 1	The Cappadocians & the Creed — Basil, the two Gregories, and how the Fathers gave the Church the words of the Nicene Creed.

Bringing It Together

DATE	SESSION
Dec 8	"The Faith Handed On" — drawing the threads together: the Word (John), the Scriptures as one story (typology), the first witnesses (the Fathers). How the tradition reaches <i>us</i> , and how we hand it on.

Then the Christmas break (mid-Dec – early Jan), matching the parish rhythm. The Spring term launches mid-January.

Spring 2027 Term — "*The Church Through Time*" (outline)

The story of the Church, apostles to today, with the councils as the doctrinal deep-dive and a Scripture unit to keep the Word central. Dates set to the 2027 calendar.

Unit 4 — The Story of the Church · *History*

- The Apostolic Church & the Age of Martyrs
- The Imperial Church & the Golden Age
- The Fall of Rome & the Monasteries
- Christendom & the Great Schism (1054)
- Reformation & Catholic Reform
- The Modern Church (Vatican I & II)

Threads: 🏰 "Where was your church before Luther?" — and the myth of the Dark Ages · 🙏 pray with a saint from each era.

Unit 5 — How the Faith Was Forged · *Councils*

- Nicaea (325) — the Arian crisis; *homoousios*
- Ephesus & Chalcedon — *Theotokos*; two natures
- Grace & Nature — Augustine vs. Pelagius; Trent
- The Development of Doctrine — Newman

Threads: 🏰 Christ is truly God (Nicaea) — answering the modern Arians · 🙏 pray the Creed as your own.

Unit 6 — Romans, in Depth · *Scripture*

- Sin, grace, justification, life in the Spirit, Israel & the Church

Threads: 🏰 faith, works & justification — answering "saved by faith alone" · 🙏 lectio divina on Romans.

Bringing It Together · *Tradition*

- The Saints as the Tradition Alive

Threads: 🏰 veneration vs. worship — "why pray to the saints?" · 🙏 choose a patron and ask their intercession.

Later terms rotate in the remaining pillars — the Sacraments as Mystery, the Medieval Mind, and Giving an Account (apologetics). A lighter summer series serves as an on-ramp.