

The Augustine Institute and Ignatius Press Renew Catechesis in Completed Word of Life Curriculum

Evangelization rooted in salvation history reinvigorates the Catholic faith for students, parents, teachers, and catechists alike in popular new curriculum.

Denver, CO, June 10, 2024—As any catechist can attest, old models of passing on the Catholic faith to the next generation grow less effective by the minute. This generation desires new methods to learn the faith and be invited into a relationship with Jesus. To answer this need, Catholic publisher Ignatius Press united with the Augustine Institute, known globally for its dynamic Catholic content and evangelical tools, to complete the Word of Life K–8 curriculum.

“Word of Life builds students, parents, and teachers into strong Catholics who not only know what the Church teaches but who also truly live it,” said Dr. Ben Akers, chief content officer at the Augustine Institute. “The curriculum models an ‘evangelizing catechesis,’ in which the truths of the faith are taught in a fresh way in order to invite a deeper following of Christ.”

These two apostolates combined their expertise to craft a curriculum in which students, parents, and teachers learn the truths of the faith alongside each other while deepening their relationships with Christ. Emphasizing dialogue between teachers and students, Word of Life creates a shared experience rather than a download of information.

There are already more than 110,000 students using the Word of Life curriculum across hundreds of parishes. The newly added middle school materials complete and complement the earlier grades by maturing the presentation of the faith as students grow. Grades 6–8 focus especially on the person of Jesus as the fulfillment and center of salvation history (Grade 6), the call to virtuously live a life of Christian discipleship (Grade 7), and the models of great saints throughout Church history who transformed the world for Christ (Grade 8).

“Today more than ever, middle schoolers in particular need more than a simplistic view of the Catholic faith. They need understanding, solid answers to their questions, and a personal faith in Jesus Christ,” Mark Brumley, president of Ignatius Press said. “We want to help them know that Christ and his Church are the way to happiness in this life and the next.”

Trusted theologians from the Augustine Institute and publishing and education experts from Ignatius Press collaborated throughout the multi-year development of Word of Life, which has been approved by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. The curriculum extends and enriches the content of its books with a variety of digital materials, including videos by the award-winning Augustine Institute Studios.

Word of Life gets to the heart of the Christian experience. It highlights four key themes, or “golden threads,” that run through the curriculum. The first thread, *Salvation History*, reveals God’s presence and plan throughout history and man’s place in that plan. The second thread is *Christian Anthropology*, which answers questions about the true identity of the human person. Third is *Heroic Virtue and Character Formation*, which encourages cooperation with God’s grace to live the virtues and moral teachings of the Church with conviction, as best attested in the lives of the saints. Lastly, the fourth golden thread is *Learning Through Discipleship*, a theme that emphasizes the witness of the saints and integrating the Catholic faith into daily life.

Word of Life is available in two primary formats: school and parish. The school edition includes daily lessons, review days, and other resources to enliven the classroom teacher’s presentation of the material. The parish edition presents weekly lessons that ensure volunteer catechists have a firm grasp of the subject matter before instructing.

The complete K–8 curriculum includes a generous assortment of digital learning resources from the Augustine Institute, Ignatius Press, and other materials that support continued faith formation.

For more information and a full press kit, visit <https://info.wordofliferies.org/press>.

Dr. Ben Akers, chief content officer at the Augustine Institute, and Mark Brumley, president of Ignatius Press, are available for comment. To schedule an interview, contact Carrie Kline at carriek@missionadvancementpartners.com.

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About the Augustine Institute: The Augustine Institute is a Catholic educational apostolate founded in 2005 that exists to help Catholics understand, live, and share their faith through initiatives like Amen, FORMED, the Graduate School of Theology, Word of Life, and others.

About Ignatius Press: Ignatius Press is a Catholic book and film publishing company founded in 1978 by Fr. Joseph Fessio, S.J. Its mission is to collaborate in the evangelizing, catechetical, liturgical, and educational work of the Catholic Church. Ignatius Press promotes spiritual growth through the publication and distribution of Catholic print, video, and audio materials, as well as via the internet and social media.