

This transcript was exported on Mar 21, 2024 - view latest version [here](#).

Bishop Michael Burbidge (00:00):

This is Bishop Michael Burbidge and you are listening to the Walk Humbly podcast.

Billy Atwell (00:07):

Podcasting from the St. Clare Studio in the Diocese of Arlington, welcome to the Walk Humbly Podcast. I'm Billy Atwell, chief communications officer for the diocese and your co-host. If you have a question for Bishop Burbidge, send it to info@arlingtondiocese.org and you can also send your message on social media. I now welcome your host, Bishop Burbidge. Bishop, how are you?

Bishop Michael Burbidge (00:25):

Billy, I am doing well. I hope you're doing well and I hope all of our listeners are doing well also, especially as we prepare to... We're taping this the week before Palm Sunday as we prepare to enter the holiest of weeks. So praying for all of our listeners, all the faithful in the diocese, that these are days of tremendous blessings.

Billy Atwell (00:50):

Absolutely. Before we get started into our main topics, we have some new announcements here about a priest of our diocese.

Bishop Michael Burbidge (00:56):

Yeah, it's great announcement that's made public today. Pope Francis has invited priests from around the world to be selected by each Conference of Catholic Bishops to participate in the upcoming Synod of Bishops in Rome this fall. And I'm happy to announce that our very own Father Don Planty, the pastor of St. Charles Borromeo Parish and my liaison for the synod as we conducted listening sessions in our diocese these past years, Father Planty has been selected as one of five priests.

(01:33):

There's only five priests in the United States who have been chosen to participate in this endeavor. So with his experience, especially in parish life, I know he will offer great wisdom and insights to this process. As we say, as brother priests say, when one of our priests is honored, all of us are honored. And so I know I share this honor with our brother priests and really for the Diocese of Arlington and convey to Father Planty our congratulations and prayerful support.

Billy Atwell (02:03):

That was wonderful, especially since you said it's five because there was a Byzantine priest from Phoenix, someone from Little Rock, Arkansas, Stockton, California and Green Bay and Arlington.

Bishop Michael Burbidge (02:10):

And Arlington.

Billy Atwell (02:11):

The crown jewel of the United States.

Bishop Michael Burbidge (02:13):

Exactly. Exactly.

Billy Atwell (02:15):

Very good. Also, before we get to our topics, this is very recent, that's why I wanted to bring this up. You and Archbishop Broglio, who's the president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, provided a nationwide invitation to prayer. I was wondering if you could quickly highlight what that call to prayer is for.

Bishop Michael Burbidge ([02:31](#)):

Sure. On March 26th, the United States Supreme Court will begin to hear oral arguments in a case that has potential to make a major impact on the widespread accessibility of chemical abortion, abortion pills.

Billy Atwell ([02:47](#)):

Right.

Bishop Michael Burbidge ([02:48](#)):

And chemical abortions are now, this is important, chemical abortions are now the most common form of abortion in the United States.

Billy Atwell ([02:57](#)):

I saw the statistic that it's 60% of abortions are through these pills.

Bishop Michael Burbidge ([03:04](#)):

I mean, just the abortion, the taking of innocent human life in itself is the ultimate tragedy. But also to hear the stories of women who participate in this alone, suffering, and just the unsettling situation and devastating situation these pills cause in taking the life of a child, but also in hurting the woman in such a serious way, it's unthinkable. It really is unthinkable. So Archbishop Broglio and I have called for a nationwide invitation to prayer beginning on March the 25th, the eve of the oral arguments and the anniversary of St. John Paul's landmark pro-life encyclical, "The Gospel of Life." And we are invoking the intercession of St. Joseph. So we need the Holy Spirit to lead and to guide those who will be hearing these arguments, the justices, and pray God, through the intercession of Mary and St. Joseph that life will be victorious and women will be respected and protected as well.

Billy Atwell ([04:28](#)):

Absolutely. In this case, it's not even about the morality of chemical abortion, but it's been made so widely available by the FDA, even mail order. And there are doctors who are saying, "This isn't safe. There are issues with these drugs and they should be in medical care when they're receiving this." And the FDA is telling them, "No, you have to violate what you think is best as a doctor and go ahead and provide this anyway." And so it's a big issue and the Supreme Court's going to be starting to hear those arguments, as Bishop said, on March 26th. So keep track on the Catholic Herald website. We're going to be following this closely, but really anywhere you're following news, you're going to see information about this coming up.

Bishop Michael Burbidge ([05:00](#)):

Right. Thank you, Billy.

Billy Atwell ([05:02](#)):

This coming Friday is a Mass in honor of Bishop Keating. It's going to be at noon in Burke Hall of the Cathedral, while it's under construction there. Our diocese is so transient, people move in and out, especially with the military but also with business. So it's likely that a lot of listeners don't know anything

about some of our past bishops. I was wondering, you've been bishop here for a while now, so you've gotten to know the history of some of our bishops. What should people know about Bishop Keating?

Bishop Michael Burbidge (05:26):

Yeah, Bishop Keating, the second bishop of our diocese, was appointed Bishop of Arlington by Pope John Paul II in 1983. He was a priest in the Diocese of Chicago at the time, so it was a pretty big announcement. Father Keating from Chicago is named the Bishop of Arlington. And he was a brilliant man, a great canon lawyer, and he served in various positions of leadership in Chicago. So he brought that experience with him to our diocese. And I met Bishop Keating a few times because I had classmates from Arlington and would sometimes visit here and Bishop Keating, an opportunity to meet him.

(06:20):

A real gentleman, somewhat shy, but a real gentleman, a scholar, very respected by his brother bishops, and really led the diocese so well and a good steward of the resources, putting us in a sound position where we build upon to carry out our great ministry. So I'm honored, during Lent, I carry his crozier, Bishop Keating had a wooden crozier, very simple, and Lent is a perfect time. But I carry, just as a reminder of the great privilege I have in following Bishop Welsh and Bishop Keating and Bishop Loverde in this diocese and the privilege, the responsibility I have to continue to build upon the great leadership. We've been blessed as a diocese with three wonderful bishops.

Billy Atwell (07:15):

Four.

Bishop Michael Burbidge (07:15):

Yeah. History will tell, I guess.

Billy Atwell (07:19):

Right, sure.

Bishop Michael Burbidge (07:22):

But I really am. You know, Bishop Keating is buried in the crypt in Burke Hall.

Billy Atwell (07:29):

That's right.

Bishop Michael Burbidge (07:30):

And so it is a reminder and as we complete our renovations, we're going to draw a little bit more attention to the crypt because it's easy just to walk by the crypt without pausing to realize that there is buried a former bishop and our sacred duty to pray for him. So thank you for mentioning this and I'll be honored to celebrate the Mass for him.

Billy Atwell (07:53):

Absolutely. I don't know if you saw this, but there was good news out of Christendom College, there's a lot of good news out of Christendom, but one of them is that the women's basketball team won the national championship for their league, which I thought that was really interesting. I had only heard this recently, but what are your thoughts on this? I know you're a fan of basketball.

Bishop Michael Burbidge (08:09):

Yeah, that's great news. I mean, Christendom is, I think, only 550 students, so that's a smaller pool to draw from than other schools.

Billy Atwell (08:19):

That's true, yeah.

Bishop Michael Burbidge (08:20):

So that is a real accomplishment. And too many to mention, but I continue to hear great news from the athletics in our four Catholic high schools as well with some championships and various sports coming our way. So I would like to congratulate all of our student athletes, and I do say student athletes because I know Christendom, I know our Catholic high schools as well, make sure that those who are gifted to play athletics or to participate in the musicals, or the various shows or whatever are also above all, students, serious students, taken seriously, formation and education, of course, our Catholic identities. But you're right, lots of good news coming in from the world of athletics in our Catholic schools here in the diocese.

Billy Atwell (09:12):

Absolutely. Bishop, it was recently publicized that Vice President Harris toured a Minnesota Planned Parenthood clinic. All the major media were covering it. But it also highlights the fact that abortion is going to be a major issue in the 2024--in the upcoming presidential election. I'm curious what your response was to this news.

Bishop Michael Burbidge (09:33):

Yeah, it was so disappointing, but not surprising. This administration has been aggressively supportive of abortion, has been deliberate in increasing access to abortion as partly a response to the fall of Roe versus Wade, which we celebrated. But it's also a response that brought out the opposition in very aggressive ways. But her visit to Planned Parenthood clinic is ironic in a sense, I think, it's the first president or vice president to do so. First, I would think that if she's so supportive of women's health, why was she visiting the place which takes life? In that same area, there were other opportunities to support entities that are in the service of life, to provide an ultrasound to the baby in the womb, to learn more about the process, to provide help and support to mothers and women in need so a child could be welcomed into the world.

Billy Atwell (10:31):

Exactly.

Bishop Michael Burbidge (10:31):

Treasured and protected. And so why wouldn't she be interested in visiting places like that? So many offer free medical care to the poor. Why wouldn't she have an interest in that as well? Because it's not about women's health, her position. It's about the legal right to the end of the life of a child. And so it's disappointing. But Billy, it is, you're right, this is the issue of the day. As I always say, we are citizens and we have a sacred duty to participate in the election process even though the choices are rarely perfect choices.

Billy Atwell (11:09):

Right.

Bishop Michael Burbidge (11:09):

But we have to participate in the process and we have to do so as faithful citizens. We're citizens, but we're called by God to live the Gospel, to follow the mandate of the Gospel of Life, and to be faithful citizens and to take our beliefs and our convictions into the political arena. And so I pray always that the faithful in our diocese will take seriously their right to vote and to do so prayerfully and in the service of life.

Billy Atwell ([11:41](#)):

Absolutely. Bishop, on the topic of abortion, one of the most targeted groups, sadly, for abortion at the earliest stages of development are those who have been found to have Down Syndrome because that's something that we can test for in the womb. And coincidentally, March 21st is identified by the United Nations as World Down Syndrome Day, it's day of global awareness. Well, it ties in very well with the robust efforts we have going on here in our diocese, thanks to your leadership, that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities are integrated into our schools and classrooms, into our parish religious education efforts and different programs and initiatives. What do you hope people think about as our world recognizes this day?

Bishop Michael Burbidge ([12:22](#)):

The sacredness of all human life, that every child is a child of God created uniquely in his own image and likeness, is God's gift to us, every child. And we see, to know that the abortion industry will target those with Down Syndrome, with those disabilities, is so disrespectful of that. Every child's life is a gift, and uniquely. And we certainly know in our diocese as we celebrate the lives of those in our families with Down Syndrome and intellectual and developmental disabilities, what they bring to us, the joy they bring to us, just how they enrich our lives and make us better people. And so that's what I'm hoping and praying for.

([13:19](#)):

And I'm glad that there is a day for this awareness. And again, our sacred duty to protect these children who are so vulnerable in the womb and especially with a diagnosis, "Oh, this child's not worth bringing into the world." How dare we interfere with God's plan, God's plan, this gift that he wants to give us, this person he wants to give us? And so thank you for mentioning this as well, Billy. And again, the more we're aware of the threats that are around us and what's at stake, the more that we, God willing, will be inspired to act, especially rooted in our prayer as well.

Billy Atwell ([14:02](#)):

Absolutely. We've had some heavy topics, so I'm going to give you a lighter one to end this here.

Bishop Michael Burbidge ([14:06](#)):

Yeah, let's do a lighter one.

Billy Atwell ([14:07](#)):

And then we've got a couple of questions from the faithful. So to go out on a light note, I'm curious what you're thinking going into March Madness. I'm as clueless as it comes when it comes to college basketball, so you're not going to offend me with whatever your picks are, but do you have any predictions or hot picks going into the tournament?

Bishop Michael Burbidge ([14:21](#)):

Well, Billy, if our listeners who are serious about the NCAA bracket, their brackets, which is fun. A lot of offices and individuals have a great deal of fun with this. But I'm sure if they listen back to my previous

predictions over the years, they're not going to pay one bit of attention to what I'm about to say because I have been so far off.

Billy Atwell ([14:47](#)):

Good thing you're not a betting man then? Yeah, just enjoy the game.

Bishop Michael Burbidge ([14:50](#)):

So I want to give that clarification there, that warning. But okay, I'll give it a shot. So I did my bracket and I'm a little unpredictable here. I can just give the final four. I went with a one, a two, a four, and a five. That's how they're ranked.

Billy Atwell ([15:10](#)):

Okay.

Bishop Michael Burbidge ([15:11](#)):

But to be in the final four, I have Yukon.

Billy Atwell ([15:15](#)):

All right.

Bishop Michael Burbidge ([15:16](#)):

Arizona, Duke, I'm a little biased there, I think, and Gonzaga.

Billy Atwell ([15:22](#)):

Well, Duke does have a decent track record.

Bishop Michael Burbidge ([15:24](#)):

Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. They've had a rough couple of weeks.

Billy Atwell ([15:27](#)):

Well, that's true.

Bishop Michael Burbidge ([15:28](#)):

But I think they're going to bounce back. And I think Gonzaga, they're ranked, they're a number five seed, but I think they can get there too.

Billy Atwell ([15:36](#)):

That's your final four. Do you have a prediction for the tournament?

Bishop Michael Burbidge ([15:39](#)):

I'm going to wait and see maybe our next podcast, I think we'll have time to pick the final four.

Billy Atwell ([15:42](#)):

There will be time, don't worry. All right, real quick before the questions. If you're listening to this podcast, you are benefiting from the generosity of those who have given to the Bishop's Lenten Appeal.

The donors to the BLA support so many ministries throughout this diocese including our communications efforts. We want to say "thank you" to those who have given in years past and certainly this year too as we come closing in on the end of Lent here. If you haven't yet, please make sure you rate this podcast or write a review on iTunes, Spotify, Stitcher, wherever you're listening. And if you're on YouTube, please subscribe to our channel and ring that notification bell. Sign up for our e-newsletter at arlingtondiocese.org.

(16:21):

And Bishop Burbidge is on X @BishopBurbidge where every day he provides a short Gospel reflection for that day. You can also follow him on his Instagram account @BishopMichaelBurbidge where we post quotes and clips and messages from Bishop Burbidge as he travels throughout our diocese and even throughout our nation. If you'd like to follow the diocese on Facebook, Instagram, or X, we would greatly appreciate it. Bishop, a couple of questions from the faithful here. So I thought you would really enjoy these. So the first is, what is your message to catechumens who don't have support from their family? I thought it was a very timely message for those who are entering the church.

Bishop Michael Burbidge (16:59):

Right, exactly. Well, I guess my advice would be to remember you have a diocesan family and we have been, as you've been making this journey, both in our prayer as a parish, as a diocese, liturgically in our celebrations. We have been walking with you, accompany with you, leading to this glorious Easter in which you will be fully initiated in the Catholic Church and you are our family and we will continue to uplift you and to support you in prayer. And many times when those who make that decision to enter Catholic Church and do not have the support of their own family, siblings or parents, whatever, give it time, they'll see your joy. And when they see your joy and then your faith, so often they come around to embrace you as well in this decision.

Billy Atwell (17:54):

Wonderful. And the last is: Is leading a diocese similar to being a CEO of a company or is it completely different?

Bishop Michael Burbidge (18:01):

No, I think there are many similarities. And in fact, many times when I'm trying to improve my leadership skills and abilities, I not only talk to brother bishops, I talk to very successful people in the corporate world who have assumed leadership roles in various businesses and organizations. And I try to pick their brain and learn from them because there are many skills that you can apply as far as leadership skills that are so, so important. And in fact, we just had a talk at our Peace and Justice Conference from the former Swiss Guard, he's author of "The Pope and the CEO." Because there are many qualities that can be applied. I just attended the board meeting at the Catholic University of America the past two days.

(19:02):

And around that table, besides some brother bishops, are lay people from around the country who are there because of their expertise, whether it be in finances, whether it be in human resources, whether it be in investments or building, construction, whatever. And I never leave those meetings without learning something from them to take back to the diocese. So there are many, many similarities. And I guess the biggest similarity, and every successful CEO would say this: The heart of your success will be two things, will be to the extent that it's rooted in prayer and carried out for the service of God and to the extent that you surround yourself with good quality people on your team. And so I'm blessed to have such a team around me in the diocese. And again, every day I entrust the needs of this diocese and whatever I can do as an instrument here to the Lord's divine assistance.

Billy Atwell ([20:10](#)):

Absolutely. Bishop, any final thoughts and then if you would send us off with your blessing.

Bishop Michael Burbidge ([20:13](#)):

Yeah, thanks Billy. Maybe just a final word. We are taping this right before Holy Week, and we also receive an invitation to do our part to make it holy. It's Holy Week, but we have to do our part to make it holy. So what does that mean? Maybe to begin, this weekend, to shift gears a little bit. Get in the right spiritual disposition of what we are about to celebrate as begin with Palm Sunday and prepare ourselves to celebrate the Sacred Triduum and then Easter. So I would ask, try to make it holy by getting in the right spiritual disposition, carving out some time throughout these sacred days for your own prayer and meditation. Not only listening to the Passion being proclaimed on Palm Sunday and Good Friday, but maybe spending some time meditating upon the Passion of our Lord yourself in prayer, in silent prayer.

([21:19](#)):

And if at all possible, to attend the liturgical celebrations, of course on Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday, of course, it's our obligation. But also to consider being at the Mass of the Lord's Supper and Holy Thursday to be there at the Good Friday liturgy and the veneration of the cross, so that with God's grace, it will be a Holy Week for you and filled with abundant spiritual blessings. On Tuesday of Holy Week, we also have our Chrism Mass, beautiful Mass in which the Chrism is consecrated and the oils are blessed that will be used for the celebration of the sacraments throughout our diocese, but also is a day that our priests renew their priestly promises. So I would ask all the faithful, especially on Tuesday, as I gather my brother priests and faithful throughout the diocese for the Chrism Mass to pray in a special way for the priests who so faithfully and generously serve you.

([22:16](#)):

We depend on your prayers and wish everyone listening, many, many blessings throughout these sacred days. May they be a time that you grow closer to our Lord and know his great love for you, and with his help to walk humbly with our God. Thank you for listening to the Walk Humbly Podcasts. Make sure you check out more episodes and all the podcasts our diocese offers on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, and our diocesan website, arlingtondiocese.org. You can also follow me on X, formerly Twitter, [@BishopBurbidge](#), where I provide a short Gospel reflection each morning and on Instagram, [@BishopMichaelBurbidge](#). Stay up-to-date with news, event information and inspirational content by subscribing to our e-newsletter at arlingtondiocese.org.