

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

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

Tom Shakely ([00:08](#)):

Welcome to the Walk Humbly Podcast. From the St. Clare Studio in the Diocese of Arlington, I am Tom Shakely, chief communications officer for the Diocese of Arlington, and I am joined today by our host, Bishop Michael Burbidge. Bishop, welcome.

Bishop Michael Burbidge ([00:23](#)):

Great to be with you, Tom. Hope you're doing well. I hope our listeners have had a relaxing summer, and I'm sure they're saying the same thing that I'm saying, where did it go? It seems like we always say that, it goes so quickly. But hopefully it's been time for some rest and renewal.

Tom Shakely ([00:39](#)):

Yes, absolutely. I know you are just coming off some rest and renewal, right?

Bishop Michael Burbidge ([00:44](#)):

Yes. I just had a private retreat last week. The way we work it in our diocese, one year all the priests have four opportunities for a preached retreat where they pick one of the four and that group will have the retreat together, but every other year the priest is offered the opportunity and asked to make a private retreat or a retreat of his liking. And so for myself this year I did a private retreat, very peaceful, very quiet, actually in our own Spiritual Life Center, our own retreat center here in the diocese, the San Damiano Retreat Center, which is located not far from Winchester, over a hundred plus rolling green acres in the Shenandoah Valley, not far from the Blue Ridge Mountains.

([01:38](#)):

And I always say that the San Damiano Retreat Center is one of those hidden jewels, hidden treasures in our diocese. It is a wonderful place to retreat maybe sometimes for a day, maybe sometimes couples for a weekend or some groups as well, but it's available and it's a great spot. Our Lord himself left the busyness of ministry and went to the mountain to be alone with his heavenly father. And whenever we do that, God will speak in silence. God will speak to a peaceful heart. And I just say, we really do want to encourage our listeners to learn a little bit more about the San Damiano Spiritual Life Center and some of the opportunities that are available.

Tom Shakely ([02:24](#)):

Yeah, that's right. And you can visit ArlingtonDiocese.org/retreat. Bookmark it and check out all the great retreats that are happening there throughout the year. It's such an important practice to do a retreat. I know I only discovered that kind of later in my adulthood that anybody can go on a retreat and that you should go on retreat.

Bishop Michael Burbidge ([02:41](#)):

It's really essential in our spiritual lives. And again, it doesn't have to be a 30-day silent retreat. That would be wonderful.

Tom Shakely ([02:48](#)):

That's intense.

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

Sometimes it can be a day, a day of recollection, sometimes it could be a weekend. But that reminder of that priority we always need in our lives with doing and being.

Tom Shakely ([03:00](#)):

Amen. All right. Well, in ways large and small, Bishop, we've been celebrating the Golden Jubilee of the Diocese of Arlington through this year's year-long theme of renewal, renewing and strengthening our faith for the future. And in this month of August, we celebrate our Golden Jubilee through a very special Jubilee edition of the Arlington Catholic Herald. It's a glossy, full color, wait for it, 72 pages, commemorative edition, and it celebrates our rich past and present, while looking to the future with hope. Isn't it amazing?

Bishop Michael Burbidge ([03:35](#)):

It is wonderful. I know our wonderful team at the Arlington Catholic Herald and our communications team here, everyone's been working so hard on this edition, so I've been anxiously awaiting. I've seen drafts and drafts and drafts, but anxiously awaiting seeing the final product and it is, it's delightful. This was meant to be kind of like a TIME LIFE magazine, remember those things that came across where, in a very user-reader-friendly way, we can highlight the great blessings that God has showered upon us these past 50 years with photos and some short stories. It's very easy on the eye, it's very engaging and a lot of substance. And every parish, every parish is represented with some photos and a brief history of our 70-plus parishes and missions.

([04:33](#)):

So I really want to commend our Arlington Catholic Herald team, our communications team for a job well, well done. And it has everything in it. It's a keepsake. It's not one of those things you just pick up, read... I hope you leave it on your coffee table. Featuring the early days of our community when His Holiness Pope Paul VI founded our diocese, the three other bishops who along with me have been blessed to serve as a shepherd, our vocations, the faithful growth, the work of our diocese in so many, many different ways. The beauty of the Jubilee edition too, I'd like to, Tom, just say a word about that. The front cover features the... I'm giving away too much probably, right?

Tom Shakely ([05:18](#)):

No, because people are going to be receiving this in their mailbox. This is a wonderful eye on that.

Bishop Michael Burbidge ([05:22](#)):

Everyone gets the Herald will be getting a copy. And parishes will have copies available as well. But it features the stunning new rose window. The cover is beautiful, renovated Cathedral of Saint Thomas More, attractive timeline of our diocese, wonderful photos, the multicultural richness of our community, thriving state of vocations, as I mentioned, the parish profiles and a sneak peek in the back cover of what the sanctuary in our renovated cathedral will look like. So it is really, I think, something well done. And it's coupled with, we decided to do it in two different formats. It's coupled with a book, a detailed kind of historical look at our diocese, very scholarly, by our own Father William Saunders.

Tom Shakely ([06:12](#)):

Oh, that's wonderful.

Bishop Michael Burbidge ([06:12](#)):

Pastor of Saint Agnes Parish, Vicar for Catholic Evangelization and Formation. Father has done a tremendous job in producing this book that I think is matched with the Jubilee edition of our diocese. It's really a great, great way of learning more about who we are as the Diocese of Arlington. So again, the book will be available to parishioners and even through their parishes as well.

Tom Shakely ([06:41](#)):

That's a wonderful gift. It's a wonderful way to commemorate this moment. I think both Father Saunders' book that you mentioned and the Jubilee edition, every edition of the Herald, I think, is informative and great, but it's nice to pick up this Jubilee edition, the glossy, the color, not get any newsprint on your hands, and just as you're saying, hold something really that you realize that you can pass along even in your family, so that years from now, even generations from now, this is one of those things that your kids, your grandkids can look back on to understand, especially if they're still living here, to understand what was mom and dad a part of at that point? What was the life of the Church like at that point?

Bishop Michael Burbidge ([07:17](#)):

That is very true. And it's like you said, it's a separate keepsake. It's a separate edition. And yeah, so very exciting.

Tom Shakely ([07:25](#)):

Well, let's talk about a different aspect of our Jubilee. The Arlington Catholic Herald Golden Jubilee edition is just one of the many wonderful things happening this summer. We mentioned briefly in a previous conversation, we'll mention again as we approach, that we're growing closer to Thursday, September 5th, a day when all are encouraged to participate virtually in our Golden Jubilee livestream celebration. You can attend a special streaming event featuring a premiere of a historical documentary of the diocese, as well as an exclusive narrated first look of that renovated Cathedral of St. Thomas More that you mentioned, Bishop, that you get a preview of in that Arlington Catholic Herald Jubilee edition. Now you can actually see a narrated version with Father Hudgins.

Bishop Michael Burbidge ([08:12](#)):

I believe Father Hudgins is going to walk us through the cathedral, who has beautiful insights to share.

Tom Shakely ([08:17](#)):

That's right. As well as, of course, all of this followed by a solemn Mass and altar dedication, which you will be celebrating.

Bishop Michael Burbidge ([08:26](#)):

Yes. And I'm very much looking forward to this. September 5th is the Mass of Thanksgiving for God's blessings upon our diocese as we celebrate our 50th anniversary and within the Mass, the dedication of new altar, which is a very beautiful, very, if people have never seen that, very, very powerful rite that prepares the altar of sacrifice for the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. We'll be joined by many bishops, I think close to 30 bishops, from around the country, as well as Cardinal Gregory will be joining us.

Cardinal Pierre, the Apostolic Nuncio, will be reading a greeting from the Holy Father on this joyful occasion in the life of the Diocese of Arlington. Every parish will be represented and all our major organizations and entities as well. We wish we could invite everyone. That's what we did for the Jubilee Fest. But as you said, Tom, so well, everyone has a chance to participate through the livestream, which will be carried out that day.

Tom Shakely ([09:28](#)):

Exactly, right. So yes, this is a livestream-only event, but it is accessible through livestream to all on ArlingtonDiocese.org, right under "Events." And we'll certainly talk more about this and look back on it fondly in the future. So Bishop, another jubilee-related thing going on is your column this month in the Arlington Catholic Herald, you reflect on our theme of renewal that I mentioned at the start of our conversation here, inviting us to renew our relationship with our Lord. And I was really struck, you posed a number of thought-provoking questions. We talked a little bit about the importance of retreat earlier. It seemed to me that these were right up that alley helping people, maybe if you didn't have time to make a retreat this summer formally, some of these questions kind of pose retreat-type questions.

Bishop Michael Burbidge ([10:13](#)):

Yeah, it really does. We focus this year, our final year of preparation for our Jubilee, on that word "renew," on the words of our Lord Jesus in the Book of Revelation from his heavenly throne. "Behold, I make all things new." The Lord does. He makes us new. He makes us a new creation. He transforms, with his saving grace and power, our situations. Nothing has to stay the same with the Lord. He's always renewing us and renewing the face of the earth. He asks only that we cooperate with His grace, with the grace that brings about transformation, the grace that brings about renewal. And so I do think that part of that cooperating with God's grace is self-reflection in the spirit of humility. Some of the questions I propose were, am I living out my baptismal promises to the best of my ability, being faithful to the Lord and his ways? Am I calling upon God to pour out his grace upon me, remembering the Lord's words, "Without him, we can do nothing."

([11:18](#)):

So often our restlessness is a sign that we're trying to do it all by ourselves. We're really not surrendering. We may say a quick prayer, but we're not surrendering. Are we calling upon God's grace? In the midst of our responsibilities, do I make a priority throughout the day for some time for prayer, companionship with Jesus, a moment of silence. Can I make a better use of the beautiful Sacrament of Reconciliation where God says, "Return to me with a contrite heart. There's no sin greater than my love." Be reconciled. Don't carry around guilt, shame, be reconciled, be made new. Am I witnessing? Am I a good example to my faith? Am I allowing others to see the joy that's mine in living my faith? And am I willing to bring it into a public arena? And also, to what extent am I serving, to what extent am I serving others, especially those we know who may be lonely, suffering, afraid, poor? What am I doing to participate in the many opportunities our parishes and our diocese gives us to do the works of charity and the works of mercy.

Tom Shakely ([12:31](#)):

Thanks so much for posing these questions. I mean, they're important ones for, I think, Christian reflection all year round, but especially now in this particular season for us in the life of our diocese. I think too, when we think about the importance of growing in our faith, growing in our trust with our Lord, we think about how that translates into our capacity for effective witness. And we got opportunity

for that with the recent Paris Olympics, which we'll talk about in a second. But as we think about the Olympics, I don't know, have you been watching the Olympics?

Bishop Michael Burbidge ([13:05](#)):

A little bit. Not too much. Not as much as I usually did.

Tom Shakely ([13:08](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. Do you have any favorite sports?

Bishop Michael Burbidge ([13:11](#)):

Yeah, I definitely like the swimming and diving, and I also always enjoy the gymnastics.

Tom Shakely ([13:18](#)):

Oh, it's amazing, right? Yeah. There was a, from my alma mater, Penn State, there was a guy who won, I think, the gold in pommel horse, which I can't say I'm an expert in pommel horse, but I did see clips of his victory go viral. It was pretty amazing stuff.

Bishop Michael Burbidge ([13:33](#)):

You think of the dedication, everything that has led to these talented athletes being able to be part of the Olympics, the work, the hours, the perseverance that they have demonstrated. So congratulations to them.

Tom Shakely ([13:51](#)):

Yes, amen. Well, I guess on that note too, we should discuss the controversial opening ceremony. I don't know if you caught that.

Bishop Michael Burbidge ([13:59](#)):

Yes. Yes. And very disappointing, upsetting, unsettling, to say the least. I'm like many of our listeners, I'm sure, I enjoy sports, competition. I love watching it as a sense of relaxation. And you certainly don't want such incidents like this, agenda-driven positions and all to ruin the sport itself and the whole purpose of Olympics, which it did with that really horrific mock of our Lord's Last Supper. It was an obvious mocking of that. Despite what I think, respectfully, was a lame, sorry if you were upset, afterwards by the Olympic organizers. Everyone knew what they were doing. You couldn't help to. And none of us would want to see anyone of any faith or persuasion to be offended like that. And yet, millions and millions of people across the world were.

([15:06](#)):

So on August 2nd, I joined with more than two dozen of my brother bishops in speaking out against this offense in a statement. And I'll just read very briefly part of that statement. "In obedience to God's call to humble ourselves in prayer and turn away from evil, we, the undersigned, the bishops, commit to a day of prayer and fasting in reparation for this blasphemy. As part of our prayer, each of us will offer the holy sacrifice of the Mass in which Christ's passion, death, and resurrection are made present to us by the obedience to the commandment he gave us at the Last Supper, 'Do this in memory of me.'" So that's a commitment the bishops who signed the letter made. And I would suggest for people to consider that

possibility in reparation for this blasphemy, making your own sacrifice, your own penance, whatever it may be, to do good in the face of what we really saw which was evil, actually.

Tom Shakely ([16:04](#)):

That's such a fitting thing that you and your brother bishops are doing and encouraging us, inviting us to participate in. I think it's a powerful thing. And it's a reminder, too, that we should focus on the good of the Olympics and not the sad moments. There was no need for what they did, but the athleticism and too, I think, so many of the athletes, as you were alluding to, in their victories even, you see them giving glory to God. They're done. Maybe it's a sprinting event, maybe it's a swimming event, something else. And maybe they make a sign of a cross. Maybe they write "Jesus is Lord" on their name tags. I've seen all sorts of things and it's amazing. It's amazing to see that.

Bishop Michael Burbidge ([16:36](#)):

Isn't it wonderful when people recognize that the source of all their gifts is God. And anything we do in using those gifts should be for his glory, and we can celebrate that too. So let's get back to sports.

Tom Shakely ([16:51](#)):

That's right. That's right. All right, well, Bishop, we've got a good question from the faithful this week. And as a reminder too, anybody can submit these questions. They are crowdsourced. Folks are emailing us these questions, email address is on our website and on the Walk Humbly Podcast page, as well as some folks send them in over direct message on our social media channel. So whatever way is best for you, if you have a question for Bishop Burbidge, please send it in. So today, a listener from Holy Spirit in Annandale writes, "I was incredibly inspired by the Eucharistic Congress. My fear is that we will lose momentum. Rather than plan another Congress for a decade from now," this person writes, "why not have a similar event more often? What about a Eucharistic Congress taking place on alternating years, maybe when World Youth Day is not being held?" That's a good question.

Bishop Michael Burbidge ([17:40](#)):

It is a good question. And I share the enthusiasm of the person who raised the question because I, too, was so deeply inspired, as I mentioned in our last podcast, by 50,000 plus people being united in love for our Eucharistic Lord. I mean, it was extremely, extremely powerful. And as we mentioned also, this is actually the same question that Bishop Barron raised on the last evening of the Eucharistic Congress. So what is this all for?

Tom Shakely ([18:12](#)):

Yes.

Bishop Michael Burbidge ([18:13](#)):

And it is actually all in vain if we do not take home the renewal of Eucharistic wonder and awe back to our parishes, speaking about it, witnessing to it, sharing it with others, and especially maybe those who have wandered away from the Lord and his church. So everything, those incredible days of revival and energy are in vain unless it has that impact. That's what it's meant to do. It's meant to energize us to go and now share. We just celebrated the Transfiguration. The disciples were on the mountain, and Jesus is showing them a glimpse of his glory because they were so afraid when they heard about his suffering.

Well, they, of course, wanted to stay on the mountain. Why not? It was a place of great comfort and consolation. And the Lord says, "No, you got to leave the mountain."

[\(19:07\)](#):

And it's the same thing the Lord said to everyone in the Congress. Yeah, it'd be great to stay here every day, spending hours before the Blessed Sacrament, people who believe and all those things. No, you got to leave the mountain. You got to go home. And so it is with the grace of God now that we have to share what we have. Those events are great on a national level. But first of all, a practical answer to the question, it took two years to prepare, and there's a huge expense and all kinds of organization. So it would be hard. I mean, I think nine years, maybe it could be shorter or whatever, but it's a lot of preparation. But the hope is, well, what about a diocese? Maybe a diocese could do its own Eucharistic Congress. Maybe parishes could increase opportunities for people to be with the Lord.

[\(19:58\)](#):

We are so blessed that one of the fruits of our first year of preparation for our Golden Jubilee, when we focused on the Eucharist, was I had asked every parish to bring back the practice of 40 hours where we have 40 hours of devotion, Eucharistic devotion. And every parish did that. And many, many, if not most, are continuing, which I hope, that's my request, that every year at some point in our diocese, there's 40 hours devotion going on. So you see, it's what we bring back to our local situations. These national events are great, but they're energizing us to do something locally. We do it in our own lives, our own witness, but also at the parish and diocese level. So great question.

Tom Shakely [\(20:45\)](#):

Yeah, yeah. No, that's beautiful. And it's a reminder, yeah, that we've got to bring it into our homes, into our lives, into our parishes. Well, we're going to be speaking in our next conversation, it's already going to be back to school time, so we're going to have a lot more to talk about. But Bishop, thanks so much for all these great conversational points today.

Bishop Michael Burbidge [\(21:00\)](#):

That's unbelievable.

Tom Shakely [\(21:00\)](#):

Something to be grateful for.

Bishop Michael Burbidge [\(21:01\)](#):

Remember, as a child, I don't if you remember or not, I used to get so sad when I saw my first back-to-school ad on TV. I'm like, "Oh no." But I know we are praying for our parents and children as they prepare to return to the school year, and we'll talk about that next time.

Tom Shakely [\(21:19\)](#):

That sounds good. Thank you, Bishop.

Bishop Michael Burbidge [\(21:19\)](#):

So Tom, great to be with you and our listeners. Pray for continued renewal in our own lives. And let's be united, dear friends, in prayer as we look forward to September 5th and the beautiful celebration of our Golden Jubilee. And in the meantime, we'll continue to walk humbly with our God. Thank you for

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