

Bishop Michael Burbidge:

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

Tom Shakely:

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'm joined, so pleased to be joined by our host, Bishop Michael Burbidge.

Bishop Michael Burbidge:

How are you doing, Tom? Hope you're doing well and all our listeners are doing well, and it's great to be with you today.

Tom Shakely:

God is good. Yes, it's a wonderful, wonderful season. Time of transition. We're on the cusp of the fall here, can you believe it?

Bishop Michael Burbidge:

Yeah, it's nice. Even the weather's getting a little nicer too. Nice cool.

Tom Shakely:

That's right. And so we've got, of course, as we enter into fall here, one final culmination event for our Golden Jubilee. We've got our Golden Jubilee Pilgrimage, so all in the Diocese of Arlington are invited to join you Bishop Michael Burbidge and other diocesan faithful on October 5th for our Golden Jubilee Pilgrimage. This is our final celebration of our 50th anniversary of our diocese.

Bishop Michael Burbidge:

Right, and to the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, which is always a great place to visit Mary's home. And I am so glad that on October 5th we are doing that as a diocese, as you said in this our Jubilee year, our final major event. And we know that while a lot of people join us live stream, not everyone could be physically present in the cathedral for our September 5th celebration, although every parish, of course, was represented. But this is an opportunity for everyone to come to join together.

And it's such a beautiful event, and it's been part of our history for 50 years, making our way to Mary's home in Washington. It's a pilgrimage, which is reminding us that that's what life here on Earth is, it's a journey, but not one that we make alone. We make it in the company of one another, so that a pilgrimage really reflects that. But also with the accompaniment of Mary, our mother watching over us and protecting us and all the saints. So it should be a very joyful day. I hope, if you can make it as individuals, as families, as a parish community. It's a great way to celebrate our diocese and family in this our Jubilee year.

Tom Shakely:

And of course, there is no cost to attend, and there's no need to register. People are welcome to drive on their own, and there should be plenty of parking, of course, at the shrine. If you've ever been to the National Shrine of the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, you know that they're not lacking in parking. There will also be volunteers there on October 5th directing people to where they need to be.

Many parishes across our diocese are organizing buses to attend as well if you don't want to drive on your own. So if you are interested, it's worth checking first with your parish, check your parish bulletin, call the parish office to see if a bus is being organized in your parish or in your area. And there are also options, of course, for lunch at the shrine, but people are encouraged to bring their own meal to leave it in the car until lunchtime.

Bishop Michael Burbidge:

Yeah, okay. We'll have confessions available throughout the day, speakers praying the rosary together. At the end of Mass, we'll be blessing all the religious articles that people may have brought with them or purchased there. And there'll also be time which a pilgrimage should have for people to be alone, to be silent, to be with the Lord. So I hope to see all of you, dear friends.

Tom Shakely:

Yes. And of course you can also visit our website at [arlingtondiocese.org/events](http://arlingtondiocese.org/events) for all the specifics about the event to share with others as well. And there is a Golden Jubilee prayer, which you can find on that event page for this pilgrimage. And all are invited to begin saying that prayer now.

Well, Bishop, we had some really beautiful news recently. Five priests from the Diocese of Arlington were recently named by Pope Francis as Chaplains to His Holiness with the title of Monsignor. This is a beautiful moment in the life of our diocese. The new Monsignors, as some of you listening may have seen, are Monsignor Robert Cilinski, pastor, Nativity Parish in Burke and Episcopal Vicar for Charitable Works; Monsignor Dennis Kleinmann, pastor at St. Veronica Parish in Chantilly; Monsignor Robert Rippy, Judicial Vicar and Director of the St. Rose of Lima Priest Retirement Villa; Monsignor Lee Roos, pastor at All Saints Parish in Manassas and Dean for the 5th Deanery; and finally, Monsignor William Saunders, pastor at St. Agnes Parish in Arlington and the Episcopal Vicar for Faith Formation. Bishop, so wonderful. How does one become a Monsignor?

Bishop Michael Burbidge:

Yeah, well, Jubilee blessings continue. This is a great gift, as you mentioned, Tom, not only for those wonderful priests, but also for all priests. When one priest is honored, we're all honored, and it's a wonderful blessing for the church and for our diocese.

So yes, the diocesan bishop would make recommendations to our Holy Father, and then it's up to him whether to accept that recommendation or not. Usually he trusts the good judgment of the bishop. It's an honorary title., Monsignor is an honorary title to those who have rendered valuable service to the church, and certainly, as I said, an honor for the entire diocesan family.

What I'd like to see too is that the title of Monsignor not only honors the individuals, but also honors their ministries. So Pope Francis would like all the Monsignors to be those who have the heart of a pastor, and all of these men do, but it also honors... there's certain ministries too, are highlighted.

You mentioned that Father Monsignor Cilinski is the Vicar of Charitable Work, so that beautiful ministry of Catholic charities and all that good does for all the people in our diocese. Monsignor Saunders, the Vicar for Faith Formation, honors all those involved with religious education, Catholic education, the formation of children. Father Rippy, Monsignor Rippy, I have to get used to these titles, working so hard in the marriage, promoting marriage and sacredness and helping couples to be in union with the church. And of course all of them, the ministries that they carry out, the countless ministries in their parishes.

So it's also, all these priests are very humble and they don't seek this title or anything like that. So I just encouraged them. I said, "Just see it not as for yourself, but it's for all those you serve. Let us celebrate

together." And I know that the parishioners in all their parishes and those they serve are very, very excited for them.

One of the new Monsignors asked if he could trade the title for an extra week's vacation. I said, "No, it doesn't work that way. It does not work that way."

Tom Shakely:

Oh, that's too bad.

Bishop Michael Burbidge:

So congratulations to all of them. We'll be having a celebration for them. We have to give them time to get their new cassocks, but we'll be announcing the date where we'll have a solemn evening prayer, Vespers in our Cathedral, and it'll be open to all in the diocese. So we'll get back to everyone with that date.

Tom Shakely:

That is wonderful. And yeah, if you'd like to learn more about our new Monsignors here in the Catholic Diocese of Arlington, just pick up a copy of the latest edition of the Arlington Catholic Herald or visit [catholicaherald.com](http://catholicaherald.com) where you can learn a lot more about each of them and about their good work.

Well, an ambitious coat drive is underway. I was amazed when I saw this. It's there. It's being run to help, of course, those in need this winter. Bishop, would you tell us about this?

Bishop Michael Burbidge:

Yeah, I'm very, very excited about that. As we know, people right in our own community, our own brothers and sisters sometimes lack the basic necessities in life, including coats. And as we mentioned, as the weather begins to change, we need to help people to keep warm, to stay healthy and safe. So Catholic charities and area parishes are aiming to collect 10,000 coats, 10,000 coats.

Tom Shakely:

Incredible.

Bishop Michael Burbidge:

Yes, for the homeless, refugees, immigrants, single mothers, and anyone else in need of the region. And organizers are also hoping to collect a wide range of new items, including hats and gloves and scarves. This is a, we were just talking about ministries being honored, and of course the beautiful ministry of being an extension of the Lord's charity and compassion. This is a concrete, powerful way to practice charity as we enter into the fall months.

And I'm sure if we all, myself included, if we look into our closets, there are probably some coats and things like that we have not worn in a while, so why not allow one of our brothers and sisters to have that. A powerful and practical way to help those in need. And we know everyone in our diocese, everyone is so generous and good, especially when they're aware of a need. And I really believe we're going to meet this goal of 10,000 coats.

Tom Shakely:

Yeah. So between now and September 27th, not that much time, but there's enough time to act, anyone interested in donating a new or gently used coat can drop it off at Holy Spirit Catholic Church in Annandale any day, daily, between 8:00 AM and 6:00 PM, and donations are also welcome. The weekends of the 21st and 22nd and the 28th and 29th at St. Michael Catholic Church in Annandale, Nativity in Burke, and St. Mary of Sorrows in Fairfax. And if you can't make it to any of these drop-offs, you can visit the Catholic Charities Amazon wish list just online. Just pop it up on your phone or your computer and contribute through an online gift. Make a purchase of one of those items on the wish list. We'll link to that in the show notes.

Bishop Michael Burbidge:

That's great. It makes it easy for people to do. That's wonderful.

Tom Shakely:

It's so easy. Exactly. All right, well, we spoke recently, Bishop, in advance a couple of weeks ago of the presidential debate that took place between Donald Trump and Kamala Harris. Recently on his return from Singapore, September 13th, the Holy Father was asked by a journalist on the flight back to Rome what advice he would give to Catholics voting in the United States. Pope Francis declared that in his view, that both were against life, "Both," he said, "the one who throws out migrants and the one who kills children, both are against life." Direct quote from the Holy Father. He went on to describe abortion as, quote-unquote, "an assassination," and at the same time urge that we must never overlook "the orphan, the stranger, and the widow." Bishop, I guess first, do we want to talk a little bit about that debate, or is there anything we can learn from that?

Bishop Michael Burbidge:

Well, again, I don't think there's a lot to learn because unfortunately, I don't think the debate was really a great exchange of ideas and policies that we would like to see in an in-depth way. Many times, I thought the debate went off track, and certainly I don't like the tone of debates these days. I used to be... I love watching debates of the past where there was real dialogue and respectful conversation.

But anyway, just to get to the Pope's comments too. Before that, we were also recording this podcast right after learning of another second assassination attempt on Donald Trump...

Tom Shakely:

That's right.

Bishop Michael Burbidge:

... Former President Trump. And again, I was grateful that leaders on both sides of the aisle denounced that in strong terms, but we have to be very concerned. And the violence that is in our midst, the evil attempting again to take the life of someone in service is just very, very frightening. We have to pray for the end of such violence and also for those who give their lives in service of protecting the others, the agents and all the different officers who every day risk their own lives in service of others. So we have to be united in prayer for that.

As Pope Francis rightly emphasized, we must always act in accord of our conscience. We've talked about that many times on this podcast, an informed conscience in line, in harmony with the teachings and the sound doctrines of our church. So we have to properly form our conscience, which comes from Latin, simply means with reason or with knowledge. So when we say we're acting in conscience, we're just

saying that we're acting with reason. It's not just how I feel, right? It's forming that conscience. So the drama of the moral and political life turns and whether our reasons are good and true.

So let's not absolve ourselves of moral reason. Let's continue interrogating ourselves in a sense as we consider casting a ballot, it's what I'm about to do truly good? Am I making a decision that will protect life and that will do the most good possible? And trust God. We can't form our conscience unless we're prayerful people, because we have to ask the Lord to enlighten our hearts and to guide us in all of our decisions.

And so I think in his comments, the Pope was trying to promote the gospel of life in all its entirety. All of life is sacred, and yet, if we don't get life right in the beginning and protect the most vulnerable, the preborn, then how can we expect that other issues will be treated with that same reverence for the sacredness of life? And we say that taking the preborn, it's so many innocent lives are taken every day through the horrific act of abortion. So the Holy Father, I think was saying the gospel of life is at every stage we're reverent and we protect that and defend it, and our votes should reflect that voice.

Tom Shakely:

Well, as we talk about the importance of properly forming consciences, we have something great here to celebrate in the Diocese of Arlington, the second annual CALLED Conference for Young Adults takes place this coming Saturday, September 21st. It's a very special event that takes place in Reston at which you, Bishop, will be celebrating the Vigil Mass on Saturday. The event is actually at capacity already. Incredibly, that's great to see the enthusiasm and zeal of so many young adults and families.

Bishop Michael Burbidge:

I know. That is great. I think there's over 400 young adults out of... That does my heart so much joy that 400 plus young adults in our diocese could do anything they want on any given Saturday, I'm sure many invitations, and they choose to give this day to the Lord to learn more about their faith, to celebrate their faith, to be with other young adults, to encourage each other in faith, to attend workshops where their knowledge can be formed and enhanced to receive the sacrament of confession and the Holy Eucharist. And then also to enjoy each other. There's a nice dinner and a dancing and all those things afterwards. But the fact that we have over 400 young adults united in their faith and the spirit of joy, it does my heart a lot of great... And we have a great speaker. I think he is from Harvard. I think, Arthur Brooks.

Tom Shakely:

Oh, Arthur Brooks, that's right.

Bishop Michael Burbidge:

Yeah, will be the keynote speaker, speaker on the topics of leadership and happiness, true happiness, what that really means. Yeah. And so I think it's going to be a great day, although like you said, I think it's really not a commercial, but I think we're full capacity. But maybe if someone's interested, maybe there's another seat available or so.

Tom Shakely:

Exactly. Yeah, things change, and although the event is at capacity currently, there is a waitlist. And so again, if you go to the [arlingtondiocese.org/events](http://arlingtondiocese.org/events) and find this CALLED Conference on Saturday, you can join the waitlist in the event that others aren't able to make it. So worth, worth doing.

We're also in another season right now, September 15th kicked off Hispanic Heritage Month here. Runs from September 15th through October 15th. Bishop, you'll be in attendance for our annual diocese in Hispanic Heritage Mass and Festival, which takes place at the conclusion of the month at the Cathedral of St. Thomas More on October 13th.

Bishop Michael Burbidge:

Yeah, this is another one of my favorite events. This is just a great, great day. Now, I'm so glad we can have it at the cathedral, our mother church this year. It's a free event, as you mentioned, celebrating rich spirituality, our beautiful faith celebrating the cultural music, delicious regional food of our Hispanic brothers and sisters.

I like the festival too. It's very fun. There's lots of music and there's great food. But of course, it's all rooted in our being together at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

In the United States where more than half of Hispanics identifies Catholic. These weeks are an opportunity to recognize and celebrate the diverse and the rich contributions of Hispanic community, a gift to our diocese, a gift to the entire church. And the Hispanic community encompasses a rich tapestry, I would say, of nationalities and cultures to our nation and church. And it's great to see them all being reflected at Mass and at our festival.

And it's also an opportunity to look at the challenges, this month is dedicated to Hispanic Heritage Month, many Hispanic families are facing such as discrimination, fear of deportation, and poverty. Many Catholic Hispanic parents cannot afford a Catholic education in our Catholic school, so we're working on that as well. So I look forward to celebrating this month. The church lifts up our Hispanic community throughout this month, and in particular, October 13th.

Tom Shakely:

Something great to look forward to. Well, Bishop, it's been a great conversation. We're already, believe it or not, at our maybe favorite segment, questions from the faithful. Of course, a general reminder for those listening, if you haven't asked a question, we welcome questions. So just email us at [info@arlingtondiocese.org](mailto:info@arlingtondiocese.org) with a question you would like to pose to Bishop Burbidge or reach out to us on any of our social channels, Facebook, X, Instagram, even LinkedIn. You can ask us a question, and we'll look at it for the show. So a listener writes, "I am in my twenties and I'm basically the only one in my immediate family still practicing my Catholic faith. It's my hope that my parents and siblings eventually return to the faith. How should I navigate this situation?"

Bishop Michael Burbidge:

That's a great question, and I'm sure all of our listeners are in similar situations where people we love and are dear to us and that love will never... it's endless, the love we have for them, but we do hope for them. We love them so much, we want them to be in union with the church and actively participating. So it's a great question, but first of all, to the individual asking the question, we just thank God for the grace He has poured out upon you that you are remaining steadfast in your faith because we know it is by the grace of God. And so allow those you love just to see your joy in living your faith. And I think that sometimes is the best way to invite others to return to the church and to evangelize.

Because people, especially in these challenging times, they're looking for where do I find joy? Where do I find serenity? And if they ask us, "Where do you get your joy?" And we're able to say, "Well, really, it's because of my relationship with Christ and allowing Him to be such a part of my life and receiving Him in the Holy Eucharist." Some people will say, "You know what? That's what I want." And so don't underestimate how the simple power of your example and witness may touch the hearts of others, and

never give up on our family members returning. We know how hard St. Monica prayed for Augustine, and she never... Many, many tears. But eventually...

Tom Shakely:

[inaudible 00:20:14] Monica, yes.

Bishop Michael Burbidge:

... Augustine returned home, and so she persevered. So we never give up in the power of God to transform hearts and to bring His children back to Him. So we always say, we always entrust those we love to the Lord. There always is... And so we pray for them. We give them the good examples.

And sometimes too, maybe there's other events going on in your parish, for example, that could be just a small way of getting them back to see the church. Maybe your parish is having a festival, or maybe your parish is having a lecture series or a jazz concert or something like that. And the invitation can be, "Hey, how about if you come to this with me?" Something that may not be as intimidating to people saying, "Come with me right now back to church."

Sometimes it's just the gentle invitations and planting those seeds that begin to evangelize too, and our parishes have so many things that people can come to, feel part of a community, but trust God's power. He makes all things new, and He's always transforming our hearts, and continue to give good example. The witness of your joy may touch hearts in your family in ways that you don't even imagine.

Tom Shakely:

Well, Bishop, we've covered so much good ground in our conversation today.

Bishop Michael Burbidge:

Thanks, Tom.

Tom Shakely:

Any final thoughts?

Bishop Michael Burbidge:

Yeah, it's great to hear all the great things coming up, right?

Tom Shakely:

It's true.

Bishop Michael Burbidge:

In our diocese, there are many things that we're celebrating, and I just continue to pray for all of our listeners that you will have the peace, the serenity, the joy that only Christ can give, and I pray for that gift for all of you and your families as together we continue to walk humbly with our God.

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