

WH 172 Transcript

[00:00:00] **Bishop:** The Holy Father is the Vicar of Christ called by his office to preach the gospel and to speak moral truth to the entire world. So just like I mean, every father, right, every father strives for peace in his family and for his children. Holy Father wants peace in the world. He wants peace for all of us and the glory of God.

[00:00:18] **Lauren:** This is humbly. We're glad you're here.

[00:00:21] **Tom:** Welcome to Walk Humbly. I'm Tom Shakely with the Catholic Diocese of Arlington. Joined in our Saint Clare studio by Bishop Michael Burbidge. This is the first time we've spoken on Walk Humbly, Bishop, since Easter. How was your Easter and what encouragement can you give us in this Easter season?

[00:00:35] **Bishop:** Uh, it was wonderful. Holy Week, Sacred Triduum, Easter, and I hope and pray that all of our listeners also enjoyed Easter blessings as we know this season continues and pray for all of you that the peace of our risen Lord will be with you and as well as the Easter blessings that he continues to shower upon us.

It was throughout our diocese, Tom, and really throughout the church, especially in our country, just so many reasons for joyful hope as we witness an incredible number of people at our cathedral and all of our parishes being baptized and fully initiated into the church, coming into full communion, there really is something special going on in the life of our church.

I think it has a lot to do with our evangelization efforts, our desire to welcome people back home and to provide the opportunities for them to do so. Of course it's all with the grace of God, but lots of Easter blessings as you know, during Holy Week. We also on Tuesday, had our Chrism Mass. Always a wonderful privilege to gather with the tremendous priests in our diocese as they renew their priestly promises and as the church ask the people, God to pray for our priests. So thank you everyone for doing that. So pray that the Easter season continues to be a source of joy for all of us.

[00:01:47] **Tom:** Thank you, Bishop. It's really beautiful, especially the Chrism Mass. I think to see all the priests, to be with all the priests in the Cathedral as a lay person, I think first it's just amazing. What a blessing to be able to go, to be

present and to see everyone together, uh, it's like, it's better than, you know, a congressional meeting or State of the Union or anything like that.

[00:02:05] **Bishop:** It reminds us how blessed we are in our diocese and then, you know, within that Mass, the all the sacred oils and Chrism used for the sacraments who are consecrated and blessed at that Mass, and then they're carried home. So it's just powerful. We're so happy. So many of our young people were present at the prison Mass as well.

[00:02:23] **Tom:** It's true, and if you missed any of these things, of course you can go to the diocesan website. We'll link to it in the show notes. We have photo galleries and videos, including Bishop's homilies, and, and live streams from so many of these wonderful liturgical moments. Well, CBS 60 Minutes featured a special interview just this past Sunday with America's three actively serving US Cardinals, Cardinal Joseph Tobin of Newark, Cardinal Robert McElroy of Washington DC, and Cardinal Blase Cupich of Chicago.

The three Cardinals spoke on topics including the presidency, President Trump, the administration's approach to immigration enforcement, and of course the war in Iran. The Cardinals also indicated that it was Pope Leo, who inspired them to weigh in on political issues.

[00:03:07] **Bishop:** I guess it's good to see a major news organization taking interest in the church and recognizing the importance of her moral vision as the Cardinals, you mentioned spoke, they spoke as pastors and as bishops who are currently, as you mentioned, serving as archbishops of dioceses. The cardinals do not represent all the United States bishops. They speak as individuals. I concurred with the cardinals on a number of points particularly the importance of our nation adopting a comprehensive approach to immigration. That was a major topic of the interview, rooted in justice for both Americans and migrants. It's not good. It's really quite wrong that American immigration policy changes so dramatically with elections. And as the church teaches, and we say this often on the podcast, every nation has a right to regulate its borders and enforce just immigration policy and at the same time every migrant has a duty and obligation to respect the laws of the nation and always contribute positively to society. And for many, many years, decades, American immigration policy has been inconsistent, effectively, open borders and out of control under the previous administration as Cardinal McElroy observed, and now our borders are effectively closed under the Trump administration.

So I don't think either of these extremes are best for our country. The United States Bishop's special message that we recorded when immigration made it

clear. That we oppose indiscriminate and Mass deportations and Cardinal Cupich echoed that in the interview. The key word is indiscriminate. The bishops do not want to see people who may have been brought here illegally, a generation ago, for instance, suddenly rounded up despite their living, productive and otherwise law-abiding lives that would generally be unjust for such individuals who have shown by their conduct allegiance and love of our nation.

And certainly may have contributed as we see within our parishes to the common good of our society. At the same time, there are many individuals who have entered our nation illegally, which we must acknowledge illegally and present, who have, while here have committed other criminal acts. And if civil authorities, they, the civil authorities have a duty to care for the safety and security of our communities.

So deportation of such persons may be necessary. Why? For the good of all people. Mm-hmm. Including other migrants who may be victims of criminal activities such as human trafficking, for example. And so, Tom, as I've shared previously on the topic of immigration. The church challenges political leaders to do two things at the same time, respect human dignity and serve the common good, which includes upholding justice and the rule of law, and this is the key point.

Human dignity and the common good are not in conflict. They can never be in conflict. So enforcing immigration law, if I was being interviewed on that 60 minutes segment, can be done in ways that respect the human dignity and serve the common good. We're a great nation. We can do both.

[00:06:18] **Tom:** That's true.

Thank you, Bishop. That's encouraging. And I know, you know, the Cardinals spoke about the Holy Father and some of his comments, and particularly the ongoing war in Iran.

[00:06:28] **Bishop:** And on that topic, it's great that our voice, the church is being respected and heard. And on the topic of Iran and the United States led war, the church can and should be a moral voice and witness, especially when it comes to the necessity of pursuing justice and peace and bringing such conflicts to a swift conclusion.

Swift as possible. So the church, again, this is a great opportunity on this podcast to speak to our listeners about our church's teaching. The church

recognizes the right and duty of Nations to use armed forces and take military action for the purpose of legitimate defense. Obviously, many believe that Iran obtaining a nuclear weapon would pose a threat to world peace and make defensive actions necessary.

As the catechism teaches, it is up to those entrusted with public authority to make the determination about whether conditions are present or not for a Just War. The church guided by the Gospel of life always promotes and pursues justice and peace. And we all know this to be true in our own lives. We live in a fallen world.

We recognize that as much as we desire it, that the path to peace may sometimes involve conflict. It always has, but conflict should always be avoided. Wherever and whenever possible through tireless and relentless dialogue and negotiation. So Pope Leo has been an incredible witness to the gospel promoting peace since the war broke out.

He's that moral voice. So what do we do? We all desire peace in our hearts, in our homes, in our lives, but also peace in our world. So what do we do? Prayerfully, as the Pope Leo asks us to do, he said, let's come together in prayer. Let's be united in prayer. Imploring God's grace upon our civil authorities in all nations, but especially in the United States and Iran, that peace may reign for the goal of all people.

That's the beautiful words that our risen Lord first spoke to his disciples. We heard it in last week's gospel three times, peace be with you. Yes, that peace is possible if we adhere to Christ and his laws and his ways and his commands abide in our lives.

[00:08:44] **Tom:** Bishop, you mentioned Pope Leo the 14th, calls for peace, his persistent calling for peace.

I think as Catholics, you know, this isn't surprising that the church would want this or that the Holy Father would call for it in any and every circumstance. I think President Trump appeared to respond maybe to the CBS news interview we just discussed. But in any event, president Trump posted materials on Sunday night attacking the Holy Father and the church.

And that post has been widely condemned, widely circulated and condemned, and Pope Leo himself was asked about it. He refused to engage terribly deeply, but really focused the attention on the priority of peace.

[00:09:23] **Bishop:** Well, no doubt the president's posts crossed the line. It truly did, but just before expanding on that, based on our last segment of pursuing peace, I do want to just take a moment just to thank all those serving in our military services for the cause of peace.

It's heroic, it's courageous. I want to thank all those serving in the military, many of whom are from our own diocese and their families, their families too, in allowing their loved one to sacrificially offer their service for justice and for peace. So we want to pray for them, and that includes thanking our chaplains who accompany the military personnel at a difficult time.

Eight of our priests serve as military chaplains. They're very much in my heart, in my mind right now, too, praying for all of them. So, so as I mentioned, to pray for peace, let's pray for all who are serving. Yeah, I mean, the president's posted across the line, Tom. It's unfortunate and it's disheartening as Archbishop Coakley, the United States President of the Conference of Bishops and Pope Leo himself has said The Pope is not a politician.

He was not speaking as a politician. He's not a political rival. The Holy Father is the vicar of Christ called by his office to preach the gospel and to speak moral truth to the entire world. So just like, I mean, every father. Right. Every father strives for peace in his family and for his children. Holy Father wants peace in the world.

That's true. He wants peace for all of us and the glory of God and faithful citizens are to bring about that peace in our own relationship with God and living the demands of the gospel and public life. So the church, you know, we can engage and, and seek to influence and inspire political life. Politics often involves applying because politics involves applying principles of the moral law and the church to the issues of our day. So we will always, as a Holy Father, has done so beautifully, call civil leaders to recognize what scripture tells us that the ultimate authority comes from God. That was our reading at Mass on the day we're recording the podcast at, you know. At the threat of death Peter the apostle says, we're not here to obey man. We're here to obey God. And so we, we want what's best for all of our political leaders and nations. We will continue to repeat the truth that world peace and harmony order is always ours when we're living and following the commands that the Lord gives us.

And so please continue to pray for our Holy Father, Pope Leo, as he remains his voice for all of us and for all those entrusted, for the leaders, for the common good.

[00:12:03] **Tom:** Thank you, Bishop. That's very encouraging. And I know to your point about all those serving actively, the Holy Father just recently, you know, a couple weeks ago, spoke really eloquently on the vocation of a Christian soldier, right.

What it means to be a Christian soldier. And in that way, it's like he's echoing his spiritual father, Saint Augustine, who wrote about the same theme. So these, these things, these, this conversation, if you will, the public conversation is one that's been going on since the beginning of the church, hasn't it?

[00:12:26] **Bishop:** Exactly, exactly. Tom. And certainly present in, in our day and age.

[00:12:32] **Tom:** Well, Bishop April is Child Abuse Prevention Month. This is a time when the church and our communities, of course, renew our commitment to the importance of protecting children and supporting any and all who may have been harmed. Can you share, Bishop, you know, just a little bit of your perspective on, on why this month is so important and, and what the diocese does?

[00:12:51] **Bishop:** Yeah. And again, it's child abuse prevention month, but every day we know we're called to follow this mandate, this is just to highlight and to remind us of the call that belongs to every person, that belongs to every institution, that belongs to every faith denomination. We have to work together to prevent child abuse, and we're reminded that it's a sacred responsibility.

It's part of the gospel of life. And so what does that mean for us here in the diocese? It means to ensure that our parishes, our schools, our campus ministries, our places of safety, trust, and care nationally, we've seen thank the good Lord, a continued decline. In reported child abuse cases over the past several years.

One case is too many, but a 3% decrease just last year and a 2% reduction over four years. So it seems that people of goodwill, people of faith, are coming together to put in programs and protocols that ensure this safety and this trust. So the progress reflects, uh, something important when communities are informed, engaged, and committed to prevention it makes a real difference. Prevention's the key. We see it in education where parents and caregivers and safe environment training and in strong collaboration between families, parishes, and institutions, which we certainly practice here in the diocese. I am firmly committed, uh, and I renew that promise every day in the Catholic Diocese of Arlington to the sacred responsibility, protecting the dignity and the

safety of all. That is why in this is interesting. That's why in the past year alone, we held over 81 VIRTUS training sessions, training more volunteers than ever before. Wow. Wow. So it's required, you know, if you're gonna be with children, you're gonna be with minors you need to participate in programs that prepare you, that enlighten you, that guide you in the prevention of child abuse.

Nearly 30,000 young people. Participated in safe environment programs throughout our diocese and adults of all ages, learning how to recognize and to respond to such situations, and we continue to do whatever we can to support those who are victims of child abuse. We never tire of extending our deepest regret, apologies and sorrow for anyone who's been a victim of child abuse, especially if it's been done at the hands of, of clergy or religious, we provide counseling, support groups, healing Masses, listening sessions, stations of the cross. It's my privilege at times to gather with victims of sexual abuse in our diocese and to see it's a lifelong process of healing.

How they have not allowed, despite such serious wounds and hurt to persevere in their love for God and their relationship with them, despite many obstacles that they face a source of great inspiration. So let's work together with the grace of God to continue to do our part.

[00:16:04] **Tom:** Thank you very much, Bishop.

Well, the National Eucharistic pilgrimage is nearly upon us this summer. It's gonna be very special, you know, across the country but here in our diocese in particular, 'cause the Diocese of Arlington is playing a really meaningful role. Maybe Bishop, you could tell us about what that looks like.

[00:16:20] **Bishop:** Yeah, the 2026.

National Eucharist pilgrimage is taking place as part of the celebration of 250th anniversary of the founding of the country United States, 42 days. It runs 42 days. Over the course of the 42 days, pilgrims will travel through many of the original 13 colonies reflecting on our nation's history.

Under the theme one nation. Under God, the pilgrims will first arrive in our diocese on Friday, June the fifth, where they will gather for a holy hour at the basilica of St. Mary in Alexandria. That evening will be dedicated in a special way in praying for vocations. Then the pilgrimage returns On Sunday, June 7th, the Feast of Corpus Christi celebrate a Massive Thanksgiving at St.

William of York Parish and Stafford. It'll be a celebration of Eucharist and also a beautiful moment for that parish as they mark their 70th anniversary.

[00:17:10] **Tom:** That's really cool. It's really cool and you can look up, we'll link to it in the show notes, but you can look up the national Eucharistic pilgrimage website and see their route and to see how they're doing it.

It's really exciting. You don't have to wait until they come to Arlington if you're interested in being a part of this, or c you could head down to, to St. Augustine or any of the other cities and be a part of it there too.

[00:17:27] **Bishop:** And I, I love Eucharistic pilgrim pilgrimages and processions. They just think, they remind us visibly that is the Lord who leads us.

Right? The blessed, the sacraments carried in front of the procession is. The Lord who leads us, and then we walk together in faith following the Lord with our focus always on him. So a beautiful reminder. We ask for God to protect all the pilgrims throughout their journey.

[00:17:49] **Tom:** Alright, well of course you can connect with Bishop Burbidge by texting, WALKHUMBLY, all one phrase, no space to 84576 and receive periodic alerts and updates Walk Humbly welcomes listener questions. Anytime from Bishop Burbidge, you can call or text the show, (703) 778-9100. You can, uh, pose whatever your question might be to Bishop Burbidge, and we might even feature it here on the show. So, Bishop, today's question is when someone feels like they've drifted away from their faith, what's a good first step to come back?

[00:18:22] **Bishop:** I think it a first step is really reflection. Recall, never doubt that you are God's beloved child. Right? We often, it's easy sometimes for us to see ourselves as the prodigal child, the one who has fallen away, and we're good at that. But sometimes we find it more difficult to see ourselves as God's beloved son, God's beloved daughter.

And so just to reflect that, no matter if you have drifted away, even if you've fallen away, and as as seriously, God has never and will never give up on you. So God is always there to welcome you back in his mercy and in his love. I think a good first step also may be just put one step forward, maybe go to your parish for an event that they may be holding.

I just recently celebrated Exalt, which was for young adults, young adults who were there to worship. Just first of all, have some quiet time with the Lord. Before the blessed of sacrament, the opportunity for confession was there and then there was a wonderful social afterwards where young adults, united in faith, some maybe really strong in their faith, maybe some were there who have fallen away, and just said, well, maybe if I regroup with other people who live this faith that might help me.

Just remember that you're never alone. But it's hard to come back to the faith in isolation. And so the church is always there to welcome you. Just never give up on yourself and be convinced God never gives up on you.

[00:19:56] **Tom:** Thank you so much, Bishop. Well, we covered a lot of ground. Uh, what, gosh. World politics, war vocations, Eucharistic Pilgrimage.

[00:20:03] **Bishop:** Well. Yeah. There's so much going on in, you know, in our country and our world and our lives. And again, I, I think if we summarize this podcast, it's just the need for peace. And I just ask everyone through your own prayer, through your own sacrifices that you make, maybe for the intention of peace continue to be united, that the peace of Christ will reign in our world, in our nation, in our hearts and home.

So that together we may Walk Humbly with our God.

[00:20:30] **Lauren:** Thank you for joining us on Walk Humbly, where Bishop Burbidge shares the joy of the gospel through conversations on Catholic culture, faith, and family. Connect with Walk Humbly and Bishop Burbidge by texting WALKHUMBLY all one phrase to 84576 for occasional alerts and updates. Walk Humbly welcomes listener questions for Bishop Burbidge. Call or text the show anytime at 703-778-9100 with a question for Bishop to consider in a future episode. Follow Bishop Burbidge on X @BishopBurbidge and on Instagram @bishopmichaelburbidge. Subscribe to our diocesan newsletter arlingtondiocese.org to be equipped and inspired in your spiritual life.

As together, we strive to do justice, love, goodness, and walk humbly with our God.