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Bishop Burbidge (00:00):

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

Billy Atwell (00:07):

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Billy Atwell (00:36):

You can also sign up for our e-newsletter at Arlingtondiocese.org, where you get a lot of the latest information directly to your inbox. You can also follow Bishop Burbidge on Twitter at Bishop Burbidge, where every day he provides a short reflection on the gospel of that day. You can follow the diocese on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, and you can send your questions for Bishop Burbidge to info@arlingtondiocese.org. Again, that's info@arlingtondiocese.org. I welcome your host, Bishop Burbidge. How are you?

Bishop Burbidge (01:05):

I'm doing well, Billy. It's been a while since we've done a podcast-

Billy Atwell (01:08):

I know.

Bishop Burbidge (01:09):

... in the summer lull here, I guess. I hope everyone listening has had a good summer months and pray God time for refreshment and renewal and pray God's staying safe and healthy everyone.

Billy Atwell (01:20):

Absolutely. Has been a little bit, but we've got some good topics here and a couple of good questions from the faithful as well. Before we get into the main topics though, I want to point something out. You recently received the Fishers of Men' award from the Guadalupe Radio Network, and you're in good company with some of the past recipients of that. And the award, for those listening, was to recognize those who have successfully evangelized through media. Guadalupe Radio Network provides coverage for a lot of our diocese. What was your reaction when you found out you were receiving the award and what was your message to those at the event?

Bishop Burbidge (01:46):

Oh yeah. You're always honored and humbled when you receive an award like this and you certainly recognize that it's not only myself who was being honored, but actually, the whole communications team here at the diocese. Certainly, want to recognize that. You're right. I'm in good company. Some past recipients, including a Bishop Loverde, who's also a past recipient of this award. And I am grateful

for Guadalupe Radio Network, English and Spanish, and reaching across different parts of our diocese proclaiming the good news. I want to come in and thank them also.

Bishop Burbidge ([02:25](#)):

But my message to them, Billy, was basically about the new evangelization. We often hear that term in our Catholic church. It started with John Paul II, emphasizing it and then Pope Benedict, and certainly now, Pope Francis. And with the new evangelization, well, what's new? The gospel is not new.

Billy Atwell ([02:41](#)):

Right.

Bishop Burbidge ([02:42](#)):

The truth of the gospel is enduring and infinite in the message that has been revealed to us. But what is new is how do we communicate this gospel message, the joy of the gospel, the truth of the gospel in this day and age? As a church, we would be foolish to say, "Well, we'll just keep doing it the same way." That would not make sense, right?

Billy Atwell ([03:04](#)):

Right.

Bishop Burbidge ([03:06](#)):

As a church, we can't say, "Well, we'll just wait. We'll sit back and we'll let people come to us." No, we have to be evangelizers. That means you go out. You go out. And one of the ways you go out, it's not just physically walking door to door, which is a good thing to do, but also go out by using the tools, the instruments that God has given us to be used appropriately for His glory and in service to His church and that includes all the social media tools, all the technology that's available to us to use appropriately, to bring this good news with respect to other people, with a real effort in reaching out to those who may disagree with us, who have wandered away from us.

Bishop Burbidge ([03:54](#)):

What can we do? What are the messages that... How can we engage them where they are on the platform they're in to reassure them of God's love and the church's love for them? In receiving that award, I just wanted to make a real renewal of that commitment, that that's what we will continue to do as a diocese. And as you've mentioned numerous times in this podcast, thanks to everyone for your generosity, especially through the Bishop's Lenten Appeal. You help us to do this great work.

Billy Atwell ([04:25](#)):

You've mentioned in the past that we have to be able to take tough questions and you use the example of taking tough question from kids in schools. When you go to the schools, they're not all softballs. Sometimes you have a couple of softballs, but a lot of them are pretty tough, which shows one, an openness of the young people to ask these questions-

Bishop Burbidge ([04:40](#)):

Well, that's what you want.

Billy Atwell ([04:41](#)):

Right.

Bishop Burbidge ([04:42](#)):

What are you really thinking? What are you struggling with? Maybe there's a church teaching that you've never really understood and maybe you want an explanation. And sometimes they're hard questions and when you go on to the campuses, the more advanced the students, whether it be high school or colleges or universities, the more complex the questions. That's a good thing. That's a good thing.

Billy Atwell ([05:04](#)):

That's very good. We're coming up on what is called the Season of Creation. It takes place from September 1st to October 4th and that's the five weeks that go from the World Day of Prayer for the care of creation through the feast day of Saint Francis of Assisi, who I know is dear to your heart. This time for creation offers in the words of Pope Francis, "Individual believers and communities, a fitting opportunity to reaffirm their personal vocation to be stewards of creation, to thank God for the wonderful handiwork that he has entrusted to our care and to implore his help for the protection of creation, as well as his pardon for the sins committed against the world, in which we live." Bishop, what should people know about this Season of Creation because it's flown under the radar a little bit with everything else that's going on, but it shouldn't get missed.

Bishop Burbidge ([05:47](#)):

Yeah, and this is the fifth anniversary of our Holy Father's encyclical, *Laudato Si'*-

Billy Atwell ([05:52](#)):

That's right.

Bishop Burbidge ([05:52](#)):

... which really highlights some of those points you just mentioned. And it's really an encyclical I really do encourage our people to read. There's some really beautiful reflections and insights from our Holy Father in that encyclical. And with the COVID still going on, and I'm sure like myself, I know I'm taking a lot more walks outside and I think this gives us the opportunity to think about how the gift of God's creation is evidently beautiful to us, that so many times that we maybe just take for granted. But to take it in, this is one of the ways that the Lord reveals himself to us. By an appreciation for the creation, the gift of creation, we can be drawn closer to the Lord and that's certainly what he wants for us.

Bishop Burbidge ([06:40](#)):

And if we believe that this is one of the ways the Lord is present to us, then we must take care of the creation. We must be stewards of the creation and there's all kinds of ways of how we use energy, our own... Whether it be in our own home or companies or whatever it may be, how we take care of it ourselves. Sometimes when I'm walking in a park, I see these young people volunteering. They're cleaning up the park. Well, that's a great thing to do. I know a number of our parishes are even looking into ways, and I want to do this across the diocese, at better incorporating solar panels in our buildings, as well as infrastructural systems, HVAC, et cetera, that are extremely efficient, but more respectful of

the resources and creation. Maybe some of our readers saw the article in their Herald, the Catholic Herald, and those efforts just a month or two ago.

Billy Atwell ([07:38](#)):

Yeah that was-

Bishop Burbidge ([07:38](#)):

I'm very proud that our dioceses got front on this issue.

Billy Atwell ([07:42](#)):

And that article really highlighted how many are doing it. I hear about it here and there at once. Once it was consolidated to an article, it's impressive.

Bishop Burbidge ([07:47](#)):

Quite a number.

Billy Atwell ([07:48](#)):

And it's growing.

Bishop Burbidge ([07:49](#)):

Right.

Billy Atwell ([07:49](#)):

I mean, this is an increased effort that we're seeing across the board.

Bishop Burbidge ([07:50](#)):

Yeah, I know. Queen of Peace, Nativity, Saint Bernadette's, Saint Anthony's, and the list is continuing, and we're going to make resources available on our website as we go through this sacred season.

Billy Atwell ([08:00](#)):

Yeah, this Season of Creation, for those that want to maybe access some prayer resources that have been provided by the Peace and Justice Commission of the diocese, just go to Arlingtondiocese.org/peace, which I feel like is such a great URL. Arlingtondiocese.org/peace. How can you avoid that, right? All right. And also, if you go to the Arlington Catholic Herald, Bishop Burbidge's September column is actually dedicated to this topic so you don't want to miss that. Stay tuned for when that is published. You can check it out online or in print.

Bishop Burbidge ([08:28](#)):

Right.

Billy Atwell ([08:28](#)):

Bishop, as our schools are beginning class again, many are back in the classroom fully while others in our diocese are using a hybrid model. And we even launched the first diocesan, online-only school, Saint Isidore Catholic school, which is really a big milestone for us. In a recent video message to all parents,

you reassured them that the schools are doing everything reasonable and practical that they can to ensure that children are safe and that we'll adapt to those circumstances. And you also hosted a Catholic educator's day, which was live streamed throughout the diocese. Talk a little bit about the message because you've talked about your message to parents and so on before, and that video message is certainly... What was your message for the teachers, the faculty and the staff that were part of that Catholic educator's day?

Bishop Burbidge ([09:08](#)):

Well, I began, of course, I'm sure, on behalf of our parents and students with a big thank you, with an incredible thank you for what they did when our schools had to shut down and go virtual in March and what they had been doing to prepare for the return of our students. I thank our pastors, our principals, administrators, and really, our teachers who are going at great length to make sure that our students are returning to in-classroom learning because we all know, and even the Pediatric Association has made clear that bringing back students to an environment where they are socializing and back in the community is very important for their emotional and mental health.

Bishop Burbidge ([09:57](#)):

We are doing everything possible, with the great leadership of our school educators, our Catholic educators, to make sure they're coming back not only to a loving and welcoming community, but as our highest priority, a safe and healthy priority. And I said, "Isn't that what leaders do?"

Billy Atwell ([10:16](#)):

Yeah.

Bishop Burbidge ([10:16](#)):

Leaders see, okay, there was a challenge in front of us. We know what we want to do. We know what we should do. And so, we can't just say, "Well, but with all these obstacles, we just can't do it." No, leaders step up and say, "Wait a second. Maybe there is a way to do this." Now that demands a lot of creativity and expertise and consultation and wisdom, but that's what we've seen in our Catholic schools.

Billy Atwell ([10:40](#)):

That's exactly right.

Bishop Burbidge ([10:41](#)):

I mean, people coming together so we can do this as long as we do this, this and this, making sure we're following all the protocols of the Commonwealth, but even beyond. And I am really confident that our students are returning to an environment that will keep them safe and healthy. But what also leaders do is they constantly evaluate and they're vigilant. And if the facts change or something changes, the circumstances changes, we evaluate and we adjust accordingly and we're going to be vigilant and that's what we are going to continue to do. And as you mentioned, Billy, what we're doing with our parents is we're giving them an option.

Bishop Burbidge ([11:24](#)):

We're not saying, "This is the only way your students can have education in our Catholic schools." And most of our schools are doing that hybrid model with the in- classroom learning and the virtual learning. And for schools unable to do that, our diocese... I'm very proud of our school's office for the initiative in midst of everything we're doing, to start a school, to start a new school at this time. And there is another option so our parents have that. Again, a big thanks to all of our Catholic educators and to the pastors who are supporting them.

Billy Atwell ([12:04](#)):

Yes. If you were interested in learning about Saint Isidore's school, just go to the Arlington Diocese website, you can find that on a big banner there for the school. You can also just use the search bar and look for Saint Isidore because that's a great new option that again, shows that spectrum of purely in-class learning, hybrid models, as well as an online-only a school that was just developed.

Bishop Burbidge ([12:24](#)):

Yeah, and it's funny, just as I was coming over to do the podcast, I was walking through our cathedral parking lot at the school and they're out there. They're out there. All the teachers are out there and they're practicing. Okay, here's the drop off. And then when we drop off, here's where you go. And then at the end of school, here's how we're doing dismissal. And they're going to have orientations for the [crosstalk 00:12:42] students. But in the meantime, they say, "Bishop, can you just say a few words?" I'm like, "All right. Sure."

Bishop Burbidge ([12:47](#)):

But maybe it was the Holy Spirit, but I like to say... What I did say to all of our students. I was standing in an empty parking lot, with the school building behind me and I am so excited that our schools very soon are not going to be empty. We are so much looking forward to welcoming our students back and reassure all the parents that we'll take good care of them and we'll work closely with you to your parents.

Billy Atwell ([13:10](#)):

That's wonderful. Thank you, Bishop. Bishop, throughout the coronavirus pandemic, we have heard about the impact the quarantine, business closure, social distancing have had on people's mental health. You alluded to that in the last segment about education. And mental health care needs are on the rise and really not showing any sign of slowing. And here are a few stats from the CDC in a survey that they did. 31% of respondents felt symptoms of anxiety or depression. 26% said they had symptoms of trauma or a stress-related disorder. 13% said they had begun using substances to cope. 11% said they had recently considered suicide and 25... That's 25% amongst those 18 to 25 who have recently considered suicide.

Billy Atwell ([13:55](#)):

This past week you celebrated a mass for mental healthcare workers. Two questions, if you don't mind. First, what was your core message for those mental healthcare workers who are obviously seeing an uptick in need right now and what do you say to those who are experiencing anxiety or depression at this time? What would be your message for them?

Bishop Burbidge ([14:12](#)):

Yeah, Billy, and it's true. When you hear those statistics it's alarming, but it's real and they're not surprising because as I talked to parishioners, they share what we're all experiencing. This is traumatic for all of us and the inability to live the way we're used to, to socialize the way we're used to, the additional burdens and concerns coming to family. It's not surprising. And for that reason, counseling in our diocese has been in tremendous demand. And thank God once again, because of the generosity of the faithful, to the BLA that supports a large part of the work at Catholic Charities, we've been able to increase the numbers of counselors available to provide assistance. But our mental health workers, our counselors... It's extremely demanding upon them right now because they have an expertise that's extremely much needed.

Bishop Burbidge ([15:10](#)):

First of all, again, I thank them and I am so proud that those that I was addressing, even many of the students for Divine Mercy University, both graduates and those present, they bring to their counseling and they bring to their therapy, not just the expertise and the skills that are needed. We need professionals. We need professional cares to treat some of these symptoms and all too, but they also bring a faith perspective.

Billy Atwell ([15:40](#)):

Exactly.

Bishop Burbidge ([15:40](#)):

And that's where we're going to have the most success, where counseling is also rooted in the core dignity of the dignity of every human person, that we're body and soul and spirit. And so, the counselors we're making available through our own Catholic Diocese of Arlington, bringing that healthy perspective, which I think is the most effective. We are praying for our mental health workers and counselors and therapists, not just in our diocese, but throughout our nation. And we ask that... We encourage them to take care of themselves too because we need them. We need them for the long haul.

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

And Billy, for all of us at this time, who... Not all anxiety or depression is clinical, that requires professional treatment and maybe in-house treatment, which is that's God's gift to us. I mean, I'm always uplifted when someone says, "I need help and I need professional help," because they recognize, well God says he's going to provide you healing, but he's going to give you the tools-

Billy Atwell ([16:43](#)):

That's right.

Bishop Burbidge ([16:44](#)):

... and the instruments to do it. And same thing with us who are maybe just... We know that beautiful phrase in the gospel when the Lord says, "You're anxious and upset about many things," to Martha. That's probably all of us right now.

Billy Atwell ([16:58](#)):

Right, right. Yeah.

Bishop Burbidge ([16:59](#)):

I don't know anyone who's not anxious and upset about many things because there's so much going on. But what the Lord is saying to us is that when you feel that anxiety, when you feel that stress, when you feel like you're getting overwhelmed, that's precisely the moment that you need to be at his feet, that you need just to step away and just sit in his presence, tell Him your concerns and trust them to Him, allow Him to speak to you. I'm sure it might be true with many of our listeners. I know it's true with me. When I find that stress and anxiety is just getting a little bit more than usual, it's usually because I am not doing exactly what I just said to do.

Bishop Burbidge ([17:46](#)):

But going into the presence of the Lord is an additional gift that is so helpful to us. Again, when you say and acknowledge, "I need also professional help," that's a yes through the Lord. It's another way the Lord's going to help you. I just encourage everyone just to be honest, just to acknowledge whatever it is you're going through, not to be afraid to ask for help, whether it be from loved ones or for professionals, if you need it. But know when we pray at mass, "Deliver us Lord from all distress," that's a beautiful prayer and God will do that for us.

Billy Atwell ([18:26](#)):

That's wonderful, Bishop. We have a couple of questions from the faithful, if-

Bishop Burbidge ([18:32](#)):

Okay, sure.

Billy Atwell ([18:32](#)):

... if you don't mind. All right. Iris, from the Cathedral of Saint Thomas Moore here. It says, "What is the significance of the head dress the Bishop wears? Why does he take it off and put it back on during different times of the mass?"

Bishop Burbidge ([18:45](#)):

I know. That's a great question. I get asked that a lot because people see I put the mitre on, I take it off and all those things. But first of all, mitre comes from the word Greek word, headband. It means headband. It was worn by the high priests of the Old Testament and it's often seen as just... Again, all these are signs and symbols, right? The teaching office of the Bishop and it's on and off because... And the liturgy is a symbol reverence and humility. You remove the miter, when making an act of veneration. For example, kissing the altar, offering prayers, as well as listening to the proclamation of the Gospel.

Bishop Burbidge ([19:28](#)):

You take it off. Jesus is present to us in such a special way at those moments. It's a sign of respect. It shifts the focus from the minister to Christ at those times. It's a very symbol... I always make it even more simple, I guess. I like the fact that... That's not an easy hat to wear. It's a literal... Wow. But it points up doesn't it?

Billy Atwell ([19:52](#)):

Yeah.

Bishop Burbidge ([19:53](#)):

The peak of the mitre points up and maybe that's just a reminder to me and to all the faithful that that's really where our attention should be drawn, not on the minister himself, but one of the one who is above, who is the true teacher and the good shepherd. I was just at an ordination of an École bishop in Baltimore last week. He was a priest and now, after the ceremony, he became a bishop. And he gave a beautiful remarks at the end of the mass, but they were also very challenging. All of a sudden, he's looking at himself in these vestments and he's wearing the mitre and a ring and a crosier.

Bishop Burbidge ([20:32](#)):

And he said, "All of these are external signs. And throughout hundreds and hundreds of years, they had been worn by saints and by scoundrels." And he says, "They don't make the person. It's the person who's wearing them and who he is and what he does with the ministry entrusted to him." And then he promised of course, his faithful and dedicated service to the Lord and his church. And so, that was a great challenge for every Bishop, not for us never to get in awe of what we're wearing, but what we're doing with the ministry entrusted to us.

Billy Atwell ([21:14](#)):

That's a beautiful anecdote there, because again, it's expressing what we're called to. I think if even with a wedding band, you know what I mean?

Bishop Burbidge ([21:22](#)):

Oh, yeah.

Billy Atwell ([21:22](#)):

Gold, and it's like, "Okay, does that make me a married man or is it my actions and the-

Bishop Burbidge ([21:27](#)):

Exactly.

Billy Atwell ([21:28](#)):

... Does it call me to something more? That's a wonderful... I think a lot of us can benefit from that.

Bishop Burbidge ([21:31](#)):

And that's a great example to. I've seen some really beautiful wedding rings but what-

Billy Atwell ([21:38](#)):

Are we living up to that?

Bishop Burbidge ([21:39](#)):

... are you going though? Exactly. Exactly. I certainly approached less Tuesday when I heard those words as a challenge and prayed for the grace of God to not to be the scoundrel, but try my best to be saintly and holy to the best of my ability.

Billy Atwell ([21:52](#)):

He's early in his ministry as a Bishop and he's already [crosstalk 00:21:54].

Bishop Burbidge ([21:54](#)):

He's preaching to all the other bishops. Exactly. Well, that's what ordinations are for. They renew all of us.

Billy Atwell ([21:59](#)):

Yeah. All right. Well, Terry, it didn't mention the parish, but "A Catholic priest spoke at the Democratic National Convention. If Bishop Burbidge had been offered to speak at a political convention like that one, would he have done it?" One clarification on this was the priest gave a benediction but we'll leave the question as is. If you're offered the chance to speak at a political convention, would you do it?

Bishop Burbidge ([22:21](#)):

I would consider it, I'll say it that way. I would consider it and I know I can't legislate. I'm not an elected official, but I can pray. And so, if I was invited to do so, whether it be the Democratic Convention or a Republican Convention, I think I would consider it. But I would want to make sure of this. That first of all, that nothing would be dictated to me, that "This is what you can say and this is what you can't say." If you've asked me to pray, I'm going to pray from my heart.

Bishop Burbidge ([22:55](#)):

And certainly, I would know that at this time in the life of our nation, I would be honest with whoever invited me saying, "In my heart right now, and where I think we need our greatest prayers, is for our nation, and that we will become a nation that shows reverence for all of human life, beginning with the unborn and upholding that at every stage and protecting the dignity of all human persons, avoiding racism, injustice, discrimination, all those things. I will pray for the poor and the vulnerable and those who need us the most. I will pray for the dignity of marriage, the sanctity of marriage as Jesus taught us. And for religious freedom that people of all faith and all denominations can pray, can exercise their faith in the public arena without a cost or a risk."

Billy Atwell ([23:43](#)):

That's the full gospel message there, yeah.

Bishop Burbidge ([23:46](#)):

If they said, "Yes, you can. Yeah, absolutely. Whatever's in your heart, you can pray," then I would discern in prayer myself saying, "Okay, Lord, if I accept this invitation, would it cause more good or would it be a distraction to what we're trying to do?" And so, I would have to pray myself before I make the final decision. I may want to check with my communication's director and see what he says too. But I was certainly discern that because I would want it to be for something good. To answer the question, I don't know. It's a hypothetical I wasn't asked, but if I was, I would at least prayerfully discern.

Bishop Burbidge ([24:28](#)):

But I can say this to all of our listeners, we are all called to pray right now. We are called to pray right now for our nation that is in great need of Christ to restore all things. That's the only way we're going to get out of what were... Some of the evil and division and all that we're experiencing. Dear friends, I do

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want to maybe just use this question to just encourage myself and all of you to really pray fervently for our nation and especially at this critical time.

Billy Atwell ([24:56](#)):

Very good. Bishop, thank you. Any final thoughts, and then if you would send us off with a blessing.

Bishop Burbidge ([25:00](#)):

No, but thank you, Billy. It's been great to get back in to do this podcast. Even though we have not been doing it in recent weeks, I certainly been keeping everyone in our diocese in my daily prayers, praying for you, praying for your families, that God will give you strength and courage and perseverance as we make our way through this pandemic, and that God will keep you safe and healthy. And for any of you who are suffering, that He will bless you with his healing love and asking God to give us all the grace and all the help we need that together, as His holy family, we may walk humbly with our God.

Bishop Burbidge ([25:35](#)):

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