

Bishop Burbidge (00:00):

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

Billy Atwell (00:07):

Welcome to the Walk Humbly Podcast. I'm Billy Atwell, the chief communications officer for the Diocese and your co-host. This podcast is essentially sponsored by the Bishop's Lenten Appeal. The BLA makes possible many of the ministries that happen here at the Chancery, one of which is the Communications Office. So for those who have given to the BLA, thank you so much for making this a possibility. If you haven't already, please make sure you rate this podcast, write a review, wherever you're listening on iTunes, Spotify, Stitcher, or Overcast.

And if you're listening on YouTube, please subscribe and ring the notifications bell. Sign up for our e-newsletter at arlingtondiocese.org. And you can follow Bishop Burbidge on Twitter @BishopBurbidge, where every day you can read a short reflection on the Gospel of that day. You can also find us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. If you want to submit a question for this podcast, email us info@arlingtondiocese.org or you can call (703) 831-7013. I welcome your host Bishop Burbidge, Bishop, how you doing?

Bishop Burbidge (01:09):

I'm doing well, Billy, thank you, I hope our listeners are doing well. And these months ahead, these summer months will give them opportunity for some rest and renewal and refreshment and some family time together. Hope those gifts come their way.

Billy Atwell (01:23):

Well, you need some rest of renewal after last week. It was a long week for you but we'll get to that in just a minute. So I want to ask you: Arise! A Diocesan Family Celebration. This is an event that has been germinating in your brain for a little while that when we come back to Mass and the dispensations lifted, like what are we going to do? And so this is an idea. Talk about where that idea came from.

Bishop Burbidge (01:44):

Right, the idea that the dispensation is lifted, which is saying that now, friends, if you're physically and emotionally able to resume your normal activities of life, that certainly includes your spiritual life, so now is the time to come back to church. And we want to come back together as a family. It's really beautiful to see just traveling around the Diocese, how excited people are to be back in their parishes and telling me about their family events and seeing grandchildren after a year and we're a diocesan family.

So I said why don't we gather? Why don't we gather on this last Saturday in June and have a diocesan family celebration, Arise! Let's come together as God's holy family, so it should be a great day. I'm really so pleased with my team who with very short notice has done a lot of work to plan this event. It will be a St. Paul IV Catholic High School on June the 26th. We will begin at 3:30 with a holy hour, some praise and worship music, a little procession. We will have the vigil Mass, which fulfills the obligation for that weekend. Also, confessions will be heard.

And then after the Mass, we'll have some fun. We'll be together as a family celebration. The big news, I'm sure, is everyone's getting a free Chick-fil-A dinner. There you go. That's some good news. We'll have some food carts there, we'll have fun and food and games for the children. And, I think it's time for us to thank God for the gift of perseverance. It's been a tough year for all of us. And God has

given us a gift of perseverance, and also to pray. Because we are very, very mindful of those who have died this past year. So at the Mass, we will be praying especially for those who have died and their families' consolation and praying for those who are still suffering, either physically or emotionally. So it's a big family celebration. It's been a great response so far.

Billy Atwell ([03:44](#)):

We're at capacity, actually. We reached that just at the end of last week. The good news is it's going to be a good time, bad news is there is a capacity limit to the venue there at Paul IV, and we're very grateful for them to welcome us there. But we are at capacity, but we'll be posting the video of Bishop Burbidge's homily and message and those kinds of things as we move through.

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

And keep tuned during the week to invent, there's some openings that occur.

Billy Atwell ([04:10](#)):

[crosstalk 00:04:10] certainly.

Bishop Burbidge ([04:09](#)):

We don't want to make sure we keep those doors open as much as possible.

Billy Atwell ([04:13](#)):

Absolutely. So Bishop, last week, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops gathered for their spring session to discuss a number of different issues. The one that got the most attention and certainly captured headlines was about the eucharistic teaching document. But you did other good work that as well. So what were some of those issues? If you could give us that bird's-eye view?

Bishop Burbidge ([04:29](#)):

First of all, just let everyone know we met via Zoom. We always try to meet in person in November and June, but last few times have been unable to do so. But hopefully, November 2021, we will get back to in person. So that was very good news. But actually, the technology and everything worked well, where everyone could speak and we could carry out our voting. We did do one topic that we'll probably talk a little bit more about in this podcast is getting the most attention. But we also talk about a proposed draft for a pastoral framework for marriage and family life ministry.

Billy Atwell ([05:01](#)):

That's great.

Bishop Burbidge ([05:02](#)):

Because we know what's going to heal our nation are strong families and strong marriages. So how can we pastorally and spiritually help our families and our married couples? Also very excited about a similar document that will reach out to youth and young adults, how can we re energize our youth and young adults and help them to be missionary disciples? We're talking about a really exciting three year plan about Eucharistic revival throughout our parishes and diocese and our country.

We talked about some of the issues related to translations that would impact the order of penance and breviary. So, it's a pretty heavy agenda, with three days of work. But Billy, I have to tell you, when we're together, it's really, in many ways, it's a very proud moment to be with so many wonderful bishops. And we debate and we disagree—the Apostles did that from the beginning. But it's always carried out with a real respect. I mean, try imagine 300 men in a room just talking, we do it pretty calmly and respectfully and passionately. So that's a good thing.

And we know that it's guided by the Holy Spirit, we pray together, we allow the Holy Spirit to lead and to guide us. And what's evident is, no matter what position bishops are holding, they love the Lord. They love the Church. They're loyal to our Holy Father, and they desire to serve. And so even though there was some back and forth, that's a good thing, it's healthy. But it really is carried out with respect. And there with that sense of unity.

Billy Atwell ([06:49](#)):

And you talked before about the benefit of hearing the perspective of other bishops and you got a question, I think it was the last podcast or the one before about as a bishop, can you be lonely? You don't work daily with other bishops typically, you're working with priests, but you're in charge of a whole diocese on your own. It's got to be some accompany to hear other bishops perspective, even if you don't agree in the end, it's good to hear it, I think.

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

Absolutely. And don't forget, we're all ministering in different situations. No diocese is the same. I mean, we gather as the bishops of the United States, and the pastoral needs, the spiritual needs, the realities, the resources that bishops had, they vary from one to another. So it's really amazing to see that no circumstance is the same, so why not listen to each other. And we do that.

Billy Atwell ([07:32](#)):

And for that same reason, the work of the USCCB is not binding on a bishop, in the end, you're still responsible to make your own decisions. You can accept the counsel of the bishops collectively or not, or you can take it.

Bishop Burbidge ([07:42](#)):

That's a very important point to remember. Sometimes that's misunderstood. The bishop is not, the Conference of Bishops does not make mandates to the bishops; they provide resources that each bishop can use and carry out in the manner he deems most appropriate.

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

And that's important for this next topic. So for a better or worse, we said that the most popular item on the agenda was the approval of the drafting of a formal statement on the meaning of the Eucharist in the life of the Church. And that was the official agenda item that was distributed. We spoke about this on the last podcast and how this is really being misconstrued as an attempt by the bishop to deny politicians in particular the ability to receive Communion, especially if they are advancing abortion policies and those kinds of things. Before we get into the specifics of it, because it would be easy to get into the weeds quick, what was your general takeaway from this segment of the meeting?

Bishop Burbidge ([08:34](#)):

So there was. This was the meeting that did have the most debate. But the question being asked was this, should the doctrine committee go forward with the drafting of a document on the Holy Eucharist? And so there were some bishops who thought that maybe it'd be best to wait until we're in person so we can discuss this because it does have implications. We're not teaching anything new in this document. We're teaching what we've always taught in Holy Eucharist, but we're applying it into the day and age and situation in which we live. Some thought it would be better to wait.

The majority and the vote indicate that way of saying, no, let's listen to the presentation of doctrine committee. Let's listen to the outline that is being proposed. And let them go forward with a draft of documents. So what is important, I think, for our listeners to hear is there is no document. We did not come out of this meeting with a document. We only came out of the meeting with permission for the doctrine committee to work on the document, that will have further debate and discussion and amendments and reflection. In fact, we even agreed as the Holy See has encouraged us to have robust dialogue and debate. We even agreed. Why not even add some regional meetings in the summer? So that as this document is being prepared, we're all able to have our input and to allow that.

Let me just read quickly the outline that we saw, because here's what we're trying to talk about. And don't forget, we're concerned as bishops, we're concerned that we're losing a sense of eucharistic wonder and all in our Church, of this most precious gift that God gives to us. We're concerned of surveys that indicated the lack of belief in the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. We're very concerned with the percentage, even pre-COVID, of those numbers of people, percentage of people coming to church to receive the Eucharist each week.

And also a misunderstanding of what it is that that disposition with which we should come to receive the Eucharist, which sometimes is often miss represented. And so, as bishops, we want to help our people to regain that eucharistic wonder and all, especially as we come back after this COVID situation. So listen to the outline. Now, part one, the Eucharist, a mystery to be believe. Part two, the Eucharist, a mystery to be celebrated. Part three, the Eucharist, a mystery to be lived.

This is a document that I think is going to uplift us. So there is no document at this point. But in November, God willing, there will be a document, and we will vote on it. There is no intention in working on this document in singling out any individual or any groups of individuals. When we talk about that third section, the mystery to be lived. Because that does consist of eucharistic coherency. But we're not singling out individuals or group of people. This is for all Catholics.

And we've always taught that, that disposition to receive the Holy Eucharist. We always say, Lord, we're not worthy. None of us are worthy. This is a pure gift from a loving God. But we do have that responsibility to be in communion with the Lord in his Church, to receive Holy Communion. And so there were times, I'm sure there were times in all of our lives. I know in my life, there have been moments that I knew from just the basic teachings of my faith that I'm not prepared this Sunday to receive Holy Communion. But thank God the Church gives us the path to make that right.

Billy Atwell ([12:49](#)):

That's true.

Bishop Burbidge ([12:50](#)):

And we celebrate the beautiful Sacrament of Penance, and then we receive the strength of the Eucharist, the healing of the Eucharist, so that we can stay in communion with the Church. As a priest, it's a joy working with people who, maybe for one reason or another with their marriage, or not yet in communion with the Church, but father, will you work with us? And there's that longing to receive the

Eucharist, but let's get it right. And that joy when the Church provides that path, the Church is never excluding ever, ever, ever, anyone from discovering that path that leads us to come forward, even though we're not worthy to receive the Holy Eucharist.

Billy Atwell ([13:35](#)):

And we know from both Sacred Scripture as well as canon law, that we have a responsibility as an individual to discern our soul and to think about and make that decision that you've mentioned a second ago. Am I really worthy of this in this moment? Now, of course, we're never worthy, but have I taken the opportunities that God has given us to receive His mercy and His healing to then present myself? It's very different when someone rejects those things and still presents themselves, that's where it becomes a public scandal.

Bishop Burbidge ([14:00](#)):

And bishops can't give up their role of being teachers of the faith. I mean, we certainly hear others in the public arena trying to tell Catholics what the Church teaches on the Eucharist is, and also, as bishops, we can't give up that role. We have to teach the truth in love, and always with a welcoming spirit to help us to get you to this point where you can come forward to receive the Eucharist. So with politicians, and this was discussed at the meeting, that includes meeting with them because they're in the public arena, and they affect policy.

And so it does include that willingness to meet with them, to listen to them, to listen about their situation. And also to have that opportunity, God willing, for them to listen to us. I would love to hear it doesn't always occur when you meet with politicians, they say, "Bishop help me to understand, help me to understand the Church's teaching here. And what is being asked of me, so I can take this to prayer, so I can form my conscience." Sometimes, we can forget that dialogue is mutual, it needs listening, but we have to, again, as bishops to be teachers, to teach our truth in love.

Billy Atwell ([15:29](#)):

Absolutely. Afterward, it was painful to see some of the headlines, especially in secular publications of where it was clear, the headline in the article was written before the meeting happened, which is a frustration. But it does impact I think what some of the listeners for this podcast maybe have heard. So I want to ask you a question or two that reporters have put out, because I think it's worth addressing. So one of the questions was, are the US bishops positioning themselves at odds with Pope Francis, who has said things like, "Eucharist is not a reward for saints, but the bread of sinners." So you talked a little bit about this, but if you could address that.

Bishop Burbidge ([16:04](#)):

Right, and it's always unsettling when I hear that question. I mean, I look at the bishops in that room. And there is no doubt in my mind, because when you're ordained a bishop, you pledge that loyalty to the Holy Father. And there is going to be nothing in this document that our Holy Father himself has not said and has not encouraged and stated. So no, I think whatever position a bishop took in this issue, it's not a measure of whether we're reflecting Holy Father, and I think this will be very clear, because we'll be using many of his own words in this document to explain the truths that we hope to set forth.

Billy Atwell ([16:51](#)):

Absolutely. One of the other questions was, are you running the risk of turning the Eucharist into a political football?

Bishop Burbidge ([16:56](#)):

It's not political; it's spiritual, it's ecclesial. We are, as bishops, have to try our best, as pastors and teachers, to help people to grow in holiness and to get to heaven. And that is the motivation. And again, it's unsettling. Because when you take a position that someone assigns your motive, and it's often, that's almost like judging, and that's incorrect. This is about a spiritual ecclesial role that we have as bishops.

Another question was asked me was very disappointing too was like, what do we say to, one reporter asked, what do we say to millennials who say, I don't want to be part of a church that would exclude a president or a senator or someone from receiving Communion? The catholic church doesn't exclude. The Catholic Church, as the Lord Himself does, opens her arms for people to experience the love and the mercy of God, to walk in truth and to walk in His ways. And we want to help you to do that. And so those doors are never shut.

Billy Atwell ([18:09](#)):

Right. Absolutely. I thought Bishop Rhoades had a great answer to the political football question. He paused for a moment at the press conference and said, "No." He then went on, but I was like, you can actually stop there, and it's a pretty sufficient answer, actually.

Bishop Burbidge ([18:21](#)):

And it's like, well, you're doing it in the 2022 election is coming, the 2024 election. Well, then, if we waited when there was no political things happening, we would do nothing.

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

You'd ever be. Right. So well, thank you for that clarification. And certainly, folks, if you have questions about it, feel free to send them into the podcast.

Bishop Burbidge ([18:40](#)):

And, dear listeners, please, please, do not just be reading the headlines regarding the situation. Understand that this is a matter that is continuing to evolve. And we will have that ongoing meeting of Bishops with the chance to work on this document. But again, it's all done to lead all of us to a greater sense of Eucharistic wonder and all, recognizing the precious gift, having the right disposition. Even like fasting, we need to be reminded of that.

Billy Atwell ([19:14](#)):

That's true.

Bishop Burbidge ([19:15](#)):

Why do we fast an hour before receiving Communion? It helps us. It helps us understand what is this precious gift that I'm receiving? So thank you, Billy, for raising that.

Billy Atwell ([19:26](#)):

If anyone wants to go to usccb.org, you can see the press conference yourself and the questions that were asked in the responses from Bishop Burbidge and Bishop Rhoades, and also some of the debate that the bishops had about the topics, so you can go see those at usccb.org. Bishop, two major stories are kind of ongoing in Loudoun County as they relate to the school system there. One is about a teacher who was suspended from his job for stating at a school board meeting that he would use the pronoun that reflects the child's biological sex. The other relates to parents who are protesting pretty vigorously against what they say is the promotion of critical race theory in the school system there.

So, the teacher that was suspended, a Virginia judge has ruled on that case and said that it was an unconstitutional act, which silenced others from speaking publicly. So that was certainly a victory for him. I think he's got another road to travel there, legally. But that was an initial outcome of that, any kind of thoughts about that whole situation?

Bishop Burbidge ([20:27](#)):

I mean, I think it's a very appropriate outcome. The teacher, in my view should never have been punished in the first place. He stated that he was a Christian, and that his religious faith requires him to speak the truth and to accept the sex given to a child by God, this should not be revolutionary. This is also not religion. This is common sense. An interesting point he was suspended with pay. But he was told he could not set foot on school property nor could he speak at school board meetings, that seems really over exaggerated reaction. He was treated really like a second class citizen, as though he is some sort of threat to students because he was speaking the truth. And you could tell of his love for the students. Only wanting them to hear the truth.

So I think that decision was a win for religious freedom, though, and for families in Loudoun County, but it's about more than religious freedom. And we might be, I think, doing a disservice, limiting it to that. It's about freedom of speech and the fact that the state cannot compel speech, and especially not speech that goes against what is true. And it also gets immediately to the transgender issue and the meaning of language, a boy is not a girl and should not be addressed as she or her, a girl is not a boy, should be addressed as he or him.

And so that's a policy. This whole, we talked about this before, the transgender identity issue is something that we as a diocese are working on, we're working on a pastoral statement that will clearly convey our church teaching in a pastoral way, help our parents, help our teachers in this confusing world where there's so many different voices being heard, and also, as it would impact our policies. So that's something that we're working on as a document.

Billy Atwell ([22:31](#)):

Very good. So the other story was that the Loudoun County school system has, by parents' testament, has been promoting critical race theory in different ways. The school system, the superintendent particular, said that they have not adopted critical race theory, but parents are pointing to things like the school system's budget, which has a diversity council, and they spent \$400,000 on equality consultants, who specifically noted their work was for the development of critical race theory.

For those listening, there's a lot of different definitions or explanations of critical race theory. And the one that we're kind of going to discuss here is the belief that racism is integrally woven into our institutions and identifies those groups who have benefited from racism historically, and seeing them as part of the problem. And as such, proponents believe at least that the legal structures should be put in place to create equality of outcome for minorities. Bishop, what is your thought on this. This is a kind of a newer story that's been hitting, but got a lot of momentum, both in the news and with parents.

Bishop Burbidge ([23:36](#)):

And again, as always, there is no room for racism in our nation, in our Church. We have a very great counsel assisting me on how to implement the bishops document against racism. And it's been a very helpful counsel and guidance, and we must continue to acknowledge the evil that we sometimes do see. But what you're talking about is something I've been following on the news. And I've seen parents speaking out against what is discriminatory set of beliefs.

There are disputes about what critical race theory actually is, and whether they allow these schools or are drawing ideas from it. However, I think the key point is that when we look at the issue of racism, how we combat it, what we cannot and should not do is denigrate one another in the process, I mean, that is defeating the purpose. The goal here is true unity, where nobody is told to be quiet. And while people won't agree on everything, we can ensure that each person is treated with equal dignity and respect.

I think when you look at an evil such as racism through a secular lens in which the solution is government policy, forceful degrading education or new forms of institutional racism creates more of the same problem. A Judeo-Christian perspective, we look at sacred scripture and first ask ourselves, does God love us differently based on where we are from? No. Does God love us differently based on what we look like? No. Does God love us differently based on our income? No.

So our starting point is how we treat others, is recognizing that God created us in His image and likeness, and that we're responsible for treat each other with that profound dignity. When God gives us a gift, what do we do? We protect it. And since he created each of us, we treat each other as that gift from God. I would say that racism and critical race theory have a common difficulty. There is that tendency, and this is where we have to be vigilant and careful, that both see everything in terms of groups and not individually. And they both also look at people not as gifts from God, but as problems or solutions or people whom we can judge as a group without really knowing anything about them as an individual.

So I think they're just, some of the sensitivities that we must bring to light here. I think, on both issues, on the transgender issue, on this critical race theory, I think our parents whose children are attending our public schools, government schools, I think there's a real call to celebrate that you're the first teachers of your children. And I think more than ever, dear parents, you have to be very vigilant. I think you have to, sometimes the election of school board members is sometimes is something we don't think twice about.

Billy Atwell ([26:41](#)):

It can impact your life a lot more than your senator, your president.

Bishop Burbidge ([26:44](#)):

And we're seeing it, we're seeing it now. So I think every parent who is using our public schools should be very actively engaged who we putting on these boards, because they are given some authority and power that is somewhat incredible to see. Take a look at the curriculum, take a look at the curriculum. What are your students, what courses are they taking? What's the outline of the year for that course? Take a look at the assignments they're given.

Billy Atwell ([27:13](#)):

Essentially, even if you send your kids to a private school, you're still paying for the public school. So at least, get involved where you can because you're footing the bill for these things. Well, so, Bishop,

yesterday was World Refugee Day. And while it's now a day past, I wanted to ask about this because we know the Catholic Charities in our diocese has done a lot to help resettle refugees. In the past, we've talked about this, it's interesting stories where we've helped welcome refugees from Afghanistan, who helped the US militaries, especially as translators and such, and were put at great risk after the US started withdrawing from Afghanistan. Why have you ensured that Catholic Charities has focused so much on this particular need?

Bishop Burbidge ([27:57](#)):

Well, again, it goes back to what we were just talking about, to recognize that we're all created in the image and likeness of God, and we are owed a respect and a dignity that must be upheld. And I think, in this case, we as Catholic Charities play a significant role in helping our brothers and sisters in these various situations. I knew we were going to be talking about this subject, so I did want to share with our listeners some important facts, there are almost 80 million forcibly displaced people in this world, and this includes people displaced within their own country.

There are 26 million refugees worldwide, people who have crossed the border in a country other than their own. In 2019, the United States resettled a total of 31,250 refugees, and prior to this, the United States average between 75,000 and 125,000 refugee families. In the United States, the refugee resettlement process can take from two to 20 plus years. Eight federal agencies are involved in the screening of refugees. In our diocese, Catholic Charities migration and refugee services resettled 487 individuals in 2019, 512 in 2020, over 85% were from Afghanistan.

And last year, Catholic Charities helped 550 refugee clients find jobs or improve their employment. Beginning in October Catholic Charities Migration and Refugee Services expects to welcome 600 refugees to our diocese within a year. Most of these refugees to our diocese have special immigrant visa status, meaning that they assisted American troops in their home country, and their lives are now threatened if they remain. And the main goal is to help our clients flourish and become a thriving part of our society. Billy, in meeting these families and then being with them, hearing their stories and seeing their deepest spirit of thankfulness for how we as a church in this, particularly we as a diocese, are there to help them. You may imagine just starting all over with nothing.

Billy Atwell ([30:17](#)):

And is truly nothing. I remember meeting a refugee family over at Migration and Refugee Services, and they were getting like bedsheets for the child. I remember just thinking it's such a basic need, that you can't even cover wherever you're going to put your child for the night. You don't have something to cover it, they really come with nothing.

Bishop Burbidge ([30:33](#)):

And what's really beautiful, too, is that members of our own team here in the diocese, they're meeting them at the airport. Because now as you get off the plane, what do we do? Where do we go? We're there right from the beginning. And God willing to they're settled and have jobs and are flourishing.

Billy Atwell ([30:48](#)):

Absolutely. Bishop, I wanted to ask you about a major Supreme Court case that was just handed down very recently. It was on Thursday, actually, the Supreme Court issued a nine to zero ruling in the case of *Fulton v. City of Philadelphia* that held that Philadelphia had placed an undue burden on religious freedom of Catholic social services there when they said that the agency could no longer place foster

children for the city. The city had said that the agency violated its non discrimination laws by declining to place children in the homes of unmarried couples or same sex, married couples, civilly married couples. What are your thoughts on this case? Obviously, this is your hometown. But this is a case that impacts the country. It's a Supreme Court case.

Bishop Burbidge (31:32):

And first of all, I mean, that's what the Catholic Church has done for years, I mean, years, in being playing a leading role in providing homes for children in the adoption role, loving homes with loving parents, we've done that so well for all these years, and we're a partner, we love our children, we want to give them a great home. So I think the ruling was a tremendous outcome for the children, biological parents and foster parents, served by Catholic Charities and for people of all faiths.

So I mean, this isn't just a Catholic issue, this is a tremendous outcome for people of all faiths. And like I said, throughout our nation's history, that the faith of Catholic men and women has inspired them to assist those in need in many ways, including by caring for children without stable homes, providing foster care and adoption. And in its ruling, the United States Supreme Court unanimously upheld the right of the faithful to provide this life giving aid to children without violating their religious beliefs.

And this right is enshrined in the First Amendment to the United States Constitution. So I think the Court made it clear that faith based entities should not be forced to choose between their essential beliefs about the sanctity of marriage and our mission to serve those in need, we shouldn't be forced to choose that.

Billy Atwell (33:01):

That's exactly right.

Bishop Burbidge (33:02):

And this ruling upheld a fundamental principle of our Constitution Republic that individuals and organizations have the right to religious freedom, free from government corrosion. So I think Billy, the decision benefit those served by Catholic social services and all people of every faith. But also at the same time, we have to say it also reminds us of our continued need for vigilance against ongoing threats to religious freedom, including attempts to stifle the truth specifically. And we see this happening, specifically the attempts to stifle the truth about marriage, human sexuality and the human person.

Billy Atwell (33:40):

You're right that we've got to stay focused on this. In part, we know because nine to zero decisions don't come from the Supreme Court very often, there's people with very divergent ideas about religious freedom on the court. So the fact that it was nine to zero tells us it was somewhat narrowly decided. So there's many more unfortunately battles to come. But there's a certainly a victory for that week. It was great to see that for sure.

Bishop, we're still in the year of Saint Joseph, which was called for by Pope Francis. And so what better year to celebrate Father's Day with a little gusto this year. So obviously, we're one day past the Father's Day, but what are your just general reflections and thoughts given this year of Saint Joseph?

Bishop Burbidge (34:19):

First of all, hope all our dads had a Happy Father's Day and saw as an opportunity to realize how appreciated you are, the beautiful vocation God has given to you and to renew your vocation, to be faithful to what the Lord has asked of you. Pope Francis says that fathers are not born but are made. And I think that's really a beautiful statement and how are fathers made? It's daily yes, it's a daily yes that they have to renew like Saint Joseph, to be humbled, to be obedient, to be sacrificial, to be selfless.

And so that daily yes of renewing the vocation, a day like Father's Day lifts us up and renews us in that commitment. And dear dads, it is your Saint Joseph. So more than ever entrust your vocation, entrust yourself to Saint Joseph and his protection. So that through your example, through your witness, through your love, you're helping your family become a Holy Family.

Billy Atwell ([35:26](#)):

That's beautiful. Bishop Burbidge has written a column on Saint Joseph in the gift of fatherhood for the Arlington Catholic Herald. So if you go to catholicherald.com, you can check that out or check it out in your latest print edition. So Bishop, we got a couple questions from the faithful here. So the first one is the clergy have been unsung heroes of the pandemic, with many of us starting to take vacations that made me wonder, do priests and bishops get summer vacations? And do priests have to get your approval to take one?

Bishop Burbidge ([35:52](#)):

Yes, we do get vacations. So that's good, that's a good sign, right?

Billy Atwell ([35:55](#)):

Everyone needs a vacation.

Bishop Burbidge ([35:57](#)):

Everyone needs a vacation. And again, I hope, as I said in the beginning, I hope we all have some time for renewal. Yes, but priests are allowed some vacation time, which is good, it's meant to be. I often say that sometimes the best gift that you give your parishioners is taking that vacation, because you're not doing it to be selfish, you're going away so that you can be renewed and strengthened and come back stronger than ever. So I usually take two vacations, one with some priests friends, we usually go to a different US city for a week or so. And we have no agenda, we just show up and tour that city. We haven't done it, we did not do it last year nor this year, because it was hard to plan with the COVID. But that's always a great week for me.

And then I do take a week with my family. We go to the beach together and live in the same house. And then I wonder when I come back, was that a vacation? No, I'm only kidding. I don't want my family yelling at me here. I don't want them yelling. I love being with them.

Billy Atwell ([37:03](#)):

I always say, when you have kids, there are vacations and there's trips. The kids are there, it's a trip because it's not always a vacation, but it's always a trip.

Bishop Burbidge ([37:08](#)):

No, I love being with them and they really lift me up. It's fine. It's fine.

Billy Atwell ([37:13](#)):

Very good. So the next one is our family has been having fun with the three questions exercise. I'm interested to hear both you and your co host answers. So the first one is what is one sport you cannot live without? Please differentiate college and pro if applicable. So that's the first one.

Bishop Burbidge ([37:29](#)):

Wow. That's a great one. I actually would have two, I would say college basketball and NFL football.

Billy Atwell ([37:36](#)):

That makes sense. For me, it's Olympic judo. It's a very random sport. Because I did it growing up, so I got my black belt with my dad growing up.

Bishop Burbidge ([37:46](#)):

Where does one watch that?

Billy Atwell ([37:46](#)):

You don't, that's the problem, that's why, you could do it online a lot now. But when the Olympics come around, it's gotten more popular on TV. What is a one favorite food that you could not live without?

Bishop Burbidge ([37:58](#)):

I'm one of those eaters. I have a wide variety. So one was taken away from me, it wouldn't bother me, I could go to the next group.

Billy Atwell ([38:09](#)):

For me, it's my wife's pasta, whichever one she wants to make. She makes it homemade. It's always good. What is one thing you could not live without, Jesus and our Faith, family or implied? But what's one thing you cannot live without?

Bishop Burbidge ([38:21](#)):

Sure, it's the Mass, it's the opportunity to celebrate the Mass and preach the word and to receive the Holy Eucharist. I mean, it's the source of who we are, it's the source of our lives. And again, also with family, right? God's gift to us. God puts special people in our lives to love and to be loved. And so it's always a great blessing never to be taken for granted.

Billy Atwell ([38:49](#)):

Well I can't choose a different other than that.

Bishop Burbidge ([38:51](#)):

Yes. You'd rather not. I'm already in trouble with my family, you better not get in trouble with yours.

Billy Atwell ([38:59](#)):

Bishop, we obviously went through a lot this podcast, but any final thoughts? And if you would send us off with your blessing?

Bishop Burbidge ([39:04](#)):

I would just ask our listeners to please continue to pray for your bishops. It was three days of pretty intense meeting via Zoom. But we certainly long to be led and guided by the Holy Spirit to do what is right and service to the church and to God's people, that's our heart. That's what we want to do. But we need the grace and gifts of the Holy Spirit and we need your prayers. And we want to be instruments of unity among ourselves and among God's holy people. And so let's try not to fall into negativity and division. That's where the evil one works. This is what the evil one really wants to do right now. He wants to see that those divisions, the bishops did not agree 100% on everything, so let's divide, let's put them in groups and label them.

So let's not fall into that as a diocese. Let's have that respect and love for one another. And as I ask, humbly ask for your prayers, I certainly pray for all of you and your families, that God will keep you safe and healthy. Again, maybe give you some time together to be renewed and refreshed this summer and pray that we're strengthening our resolve to walk humbly with our God.

Thank you for listening to the Walk Humbly Podcast. Make sure you check out more episodes on iTunes, Google Play, Stitcher and Spotify. You can follow me on twitter @BishopBurbidge, where I offer gospel reflections each morning and share photos and updates of what is going on in the Diocese of Arlington. Stay up to date with news, event information and inspirational content by subscribing to our e-newsletter at arlingtondiocese.org.