

Bishop Burbidge (00:00):

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

Billy Atwell (00:08):

Welcome to the Walk Humbly podcast. I'm Billy Atwell, chief communications officer for the diocese, and your cohost. If you haven't already, please rate this podcast or write a review on iTunes, Spotify, Stitcher, wherever you're listening, and sign up for our e-newsletter arlingtondiocese.org, that's been a key communications tool for us during this coronavirus situation. Again, go to arlingtondiocese.org. You can also follow Bishop Burbidge on Twitter, where he provides a short spiritual reflection of the gospel of that day. It's @BishopBurbidge. You can also follow the diocese on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, and you can send your questions for Bishop Burbidge to info@arlingtondiocese.org.

Billy Atwell (00:45):

I welcome your host, Bishop Burbidge. Bishop, how are you doing?

Bishop Burbidge (00:47):

I'm doing well, Billy. Thanks so much. And just to assure all of our listeners, all of our parishioners throughout the diocese that they and their families are very much in my thoughts and prayers, especially in the midst of this pandemic in these very unsettling days. And I know that we are continuing to pray for each other.

Billy Atwell (01:04):

Wonderful. Bishop, it feels like it's been a year since our last podcast. It was only 11 days ago, and you've put out a video message and other things since then. But since our last podcast that governor announced that he's canceling all K through 12 schools through the end of the school year, there's a 10 person limit on many businesses, and completely banned others from opening at all. Restaurants are limited to carry out and delivery, and then you suspended the public celebrations of masses, but kept our churches open for prayer, abiding by that 10 person limit. Many States have even implemented a shelter in place approach. The situation, it's obviously rapidly evolving as we go. What are your thoughts as we've traveled down this road since the last podcast?

Bishop Burbidge (01:43):

As you said, it's just rapidly evolving, it escalates. It seems every day, there's new information and new decisions to be made and we've been going at a very fast pace here to provide the best spiritual and pastoral guidance to our people, both from our diocesan center and certainly from our parishes. And I do want to assure our parishioners of that, that I'm surrounded by a great team here at the diocesan offices. I have so much wisdom and guidance of people helping me, and we continue to do our best, continue to remain in touch with our pastors.

Bishop Burbidge (02:20):

We want to be respectful. We are all here to help the common good, and we have to listen to the scientists, the researchers, medical experts, who are guiding us at this moment, this is the best thing to do.

Bishop Burbidge (02:34):

And as you mentioned, in that video that I recorded, I said we tried to continue the public celebration of masses for as long as possible, but then when the norms and protocols came down about the 10 person gathering, we of course wanted to abide to do what was best for others. But, as I said, that was probably one of the hardest things I had to convey. Whoever thought that, as a Bishop, I would be asking my priests to suspend a public celebration of masses. It broke my heart.

Billy Atwell ([03:13](#)):

It had to feel surreal.

Bishop Burbidge ([03:14](#)):

For all of us. It's so, so sad. But I do want our people to know that mass is being offered every day in this diocese. Mass is being offered for the faithful, for the intentions that were forwarded, and especially for all of us in this time of need, our priests are at the altar offering a Holy sacrifice for you and for your intentions. And I know it's being made available in very, very unique ways, especially through live streaming.

Billy Atwell ([03:43](#)):

That's been very comforting, I know for me and for other parishioners. On social media, I've noticed a lot of people wondering where the line is between keeping society safe, protecting our public health, and keeping our economy running at healthy levels. Obviously managing, either inappropriately would have serious effects on people, especially the poor. As the economy crumbles, the amount of people that qualify for Catholic charity service, for instance, will only increase.

Bishop Burbidge ([04:06](#)):

Right.

Billy Atwell ([04:06](#)):

So, as Catholics, how should we approach this balancing of goods between public health and the economy that we know uplifts the poor and keeps more people out of poverty?

Bishop Burbidge ([04:14](#)):

And I would certainly say that a concrete action we can do, we can pray for those elected officials and government leaders and all, who have some really difficult decisions to make in light of that balance that you're talking about, they're entrusted with the protection of the people within this nation, and so many decisions to be made. So we have to pray for them.

Bishop Burbidge ([04:41](#)):

And it's a balance, but the priority right now has to be the safety and the wellbeing of our people, and the controlling of the spread of this virus. And we have to do everything possible to cooperate with that. We're recording the solemnity of the annunciation of the Lord, and I say, imagine Mary, she hears that announcement from God, from the angel, that she's going to be the mother of God. Imagine how radically her life changed. The bewilderment. And yes, she moved from fear to courage, and from doubt to trust, and from hesitation to surrender. I know in my own life, and maybe this is true for our listeners, we want to follow Mary's example, but the hardest part of that example I'm finding to follow right now in light of this moment in time is the surrendering.

Bishop Burbidge ([05:42](#)):

Our lives have radically changed in a way we never imagined or could have anticipated, just like Mary. She couldn't believe what had happened to her. But we have to imitate that willingness of surrender. What do we surrender? Will we surrender our plans, our will, our schedule, our routine, doing the things that we so much enjoy? For me, being out, celebrating public mass, being with the people. To surrender that right now, knowing, as Mary did that God is in the midst of all this, and will turn this darkness to light, and chaos to order.

Bishop Burbidge ([06:25](#)):

In the spiritual life, all the saints tell us this, you want to grow in holiness, you want to grow in your relationship with the Lord? You have to surrender your will and to entrust your life to God. I think the Lord is giving us many, many opportunities to do that right now. If we embrace it, it can be a time of grace for us. And Mary's there to help us.

Billy Atwell ([06:47](#)):

Absolutely. As we've gone down this road, the needs of the poor ... I heard actually a commentator mentioned that somebody, especially in this area, who makes \$70,000 a year, we wouldn't think of as someone who is in need or vulnerable, they said, but he missed one or two paychecks, and between mortgage, maybe medical debt, other things that continue, and lenders are not big as merciful with many, as we would like, all of a sudden they are in great need.

Billy Atwell ([07:13](#)):

But the engines of Catholic charities continue to run. The needs of the poor are being provided for. They're having to do a lot of adapting, in order to provide those services, but it's amazing to see them continue to operate and continue to provide these things, despite all these shutdowns.

Bishop Burbidge ([07:27](#)):

And I hope that makes our listeners feel very good, what you just said, because it's only through their goodness, the support, the financial resources they have shared with us throughout the years-

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

That's a great point.

Bishop Burbidge ([07:43](#)):

... and continue to do, that in the midst of this crisis, we can continue the most essential ministries of being bringing God's love and helping his people. Those in most need at this time. That's the work of God. That's the work of the church, and it must continue. And I thank all those who are helping us to do so.

Bishop Burbidge ([08:06](#)):

And Billy, I do want to say, I am just so edified, inspired with the work of our Catholic charities. Christ House, for men's transitional housing as well as their evening meal program. We're continuing to operate in new ways.

Billy Atwell ([08:23](#)):

Yeah.

Bishop Burbidge (08:24):

But we're continuing to fulfill the ministry. Same thing with the St. Lucy Food Project, the St. Margaret Cortona family traditional housing, or migration and refugee services. Mother of Mercy clinic, pregnancy and adoption, education workforce. The work of Catholic charities is continuing. It must continue, and thank you dear friends for helping us to do so.

Billy Atwell (08:45):

And one of the questions we've gotten, which is so beautiful to see, it creates such hope in me and I know the staff here is people asking, how can I help? We're going to be sending up more food drives because that's key need right now. So that's going to be upcoming.

Bishop Burbidge (08:57):

Right.

Billy Atwell (08:58):

Look out for that. But what else can I provide, donations and so on. So anyone that's asking that question, if you're wondering how you can help sustain Catholic charities through this time, because they're doing more than normal in these circumstances, I would encourage you to go to ccda.net. You can also just see what's going on with Catholic charities, but if you want to help, that's where you go. ccda.net that's the easiest way to lend a hand, because they also need volunteers. A lot of the volunteers for Catholic charities sometimes fit into that at risk category of being 60 or 65 and older, and they are in need a volunteer help too.

Bishop Burbidge (09:29):

Right.

Billy Atwell (09:29):

So if you can help provide that, go to ccda.net.

Bishop Burbidge (09:33):

And Billy, I do want our listeners to know too that we are, very much here in the diocese, aware of the financial strain that this is placing on our parishes at this time. I do want to assure our listeners that we're very sensitive to that. We are trying in very creative ways and practical ways of making sure our pastors are not feeling additional pressures, to alleviate some of that pressure. And we've reached out to them and they know we're there to help them at this moment too.

Billy Atwell (10:06):

And speaking of our pastors and our priests, you've held webinars with them throughout this crisis, to check in, update them on what's happening here at the Chancery as well as to look for feedback about how to best adapt to what's happening, to hear from the boots on the ground, so to speak. Any notable takeaways from the more recent webinars you've had?

Bishop Burbidge (10:22):

Well, first of all, as always, I am so proud of our priests. I can say one thing, in this diocese, there is no spiritual distancing going on.

Billy Atwell ([10:32](#)):

No spiritual distancing. Right.

Bishop Burbidge ([10:34](#)):

We're respecting the social distancing, but there is no spiritual distancing. Our priests are staying connected with their parishioners and people in new and creative ways. We're finding new ways to evangelize here. We mentioned the live streaming.

Bishop Burbidge ([10:49](#)):

I just saw today, a clip of podcasts, and movies, and talks, and lectures, and conversations that are going on. And I've heard a number of our parishioners say, "There's so much out there, I'm overwhelmed."

Billy Atwell ([11:08](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Bishop Burbidge ([11:08](#)):

So in the midst of not doing what we would want to be doing publicly, I give so much credit to our priests and our religious leaders, and all those who are helping them to really stay connected.

Bishop Burbidge ([11:23](#)):

I guess, the one thing that stands out in the webinars is just to hear and to recognize that the priests and I, we're missing so much being with our parishioners. And I want our parishioners to know how much we miss you, how much you're loved, and God willing, we'll be together soon, celebrating together our faith.

Billy Atwell ([11:55](#)):

So we've got Holy Week coming up, and there's a lot of people have questions about what happens with that. Talk a little bit about the plans for Holy Week and how you want to accommodate that.

Bishop Burbidge ([12:05](#)):

Right. And even the Holy See has weighed in on this, understanding that throughout the world and including our own nation, things are going to be radically disrupted.

Billy Atwell ([12:14](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

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

And so it's very clear that we must continue at this critical period. We have to stop the spread of this virus, and so this critical period is for people not coming together, especially in any public celebration. Faith leaders were on a call with the governor just the other night, and it's very clear, this applies to places of worship, because they are getting that medical research, saying, "Please help us right now."

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Bishop Burbidge ([12:45](#)):

So Easter's going to be radically disrupted. So here goes to surrendering again.

Billy Atwell ([12:48](#)):

Right.

Bishop Burbidge ([12:49](#)):

And now we're going to have to celebrate Easter in a different way. All of Holy week, as always, will be celebrated in the cathedral.

Billy Atwell ([12:58](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Bishop Burbidge ([12:59](#)):

So we'll be live streaming the Palm Sunday Mass, even the Chrism Mass and we'll be doing Holy Thursday evening, Mass of the Lord's Supper, Good Friday, Easter vigil, Easter Sunday.

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

I know that many, many of our parishes will also be also live streaming their celebration of Holy Week. So again, we'll be together in a different way than we've ever imagined. But the celebration of Easter will be made available through those means.

Billy Atwell ([13:30](#)):

Yeah. So just for everyone listening, here's a quick summary. This will be on our website, so you'll be able to find us, and on social media, we'll be promoting these as we go. But for the upcoming diocesan Holy Week live streams, again, your parish might have some as well. Palm Sunday is going to be 11:15 AM on Sunday, April 5th, the Chrism Mass is going to be 10:30 AM on Thursday, April 9th, Mass of The Lord's Supper is 7:30 PM on Thursday, April 9th. So again, that's two in one day, one in the morning, one of the evening. Passion of the Lord is going to be 3:00 PM on Friday, April 10th, the Easter vigil will be 8:30 PM on Saturday, April 11th, and Easter Sunday Mass will be 9:30 AM on Sunday, April 12th. Again, you don't have to write all this down. You can find them on the website, but we will be live streaming those for you, in the hopes that we can create the sense of unity that we would normally have there live.

Bishop Burbidge ([14:23](#)):

Billy, thank you for reminding me of all the homilies I have yet prepare.

Billy Atwell ([14:27](#)):

Yeah, you will not be getting a day off between now and then. You've got a lot to work on there. Bishop, as a parent, I know that one of the hardest things my wife and I are dealing with right now, in addition to educating our kids at home, the e-learning situation and all that, is keeping our children spiritually connected to the mass, especially with me having little ones. But I know folks with teenagers have the same issues. Do you have any recommendations for how we do that, as we're in a borderline shelter in place scenario?

Bishop Burbidge ([14:51](#)):

Yeah. That reminds me, a great shout out to our parents who are, in addition to all your other responsibilities, assuming this responsibility without a professional educator right there with you.

Billy Atwell ([15:02](#)):

Right.

Bishop Burbidge ([15:03](#)):

Assuming all those additional responsibilities of educating and informing your children at this time. I know dear parents, that's a lot of extra responsibility and I really do admire and commend you for what you're doing. I wanted to give a shout out to our Catholic school leaders in our diocese too.

Billy Atwell ([15:20](#)):

Yeah.

Bishop Burbidge ([15:21](#)):

We were well prepared for this-

Billy Atwell ([15:22](#)):

Very well prepared.

Bishop Burbidge ([15:22](#)):

... and we hit the ground running with learning, and it's not been interrupted, the e-learning. And I'm very, very happy to hear that. I think now, it's different though. Instead of the kids complaining about homework, the parents are complaining about too much homework.

Billy Atwell ([15:38](#)):

Yeah.

Bishop Burbidge ([15:39](#)):

But to get back to your question. Yeah, it's hard. It's hard enough in church to keep the children focused and all too, so yeah, I have a couple of practical suggestions. Good opportunity to teach. You can review what just happened, what they're seeing, as it's taking place.

Bishop Burbidge ([15:56](#)):

I think also, let's say we're going to church together, and let's do it the same way we would as if we were going into the physical building.

Billy Atwell ([16:07](#)):

Okay.

Bishop Burbidge ([16:07](#)):

So, let's dress up. We're getting ready for mass.

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

All right.

Bishop Burbidge ([16:11](#)):

We're getting ready to watch the mass. Some people told me this really helped too, not just young people but the adults, participate at mass. When it's time to sit, sit, when it's time to stand, stand, when it's time to kneel, kneel. So it's an active engagement. It's an active participation, not just because it's live stream, you don't want to just sit back and be passive.

Billy Atwell ([16:32](#)):

Right.

Bishop Burbidge ([16:32](#)):

You want active and full participation. Maybe after the mass, consider of talking about what just happened. What was the homily? How does this apply to our house?

Billy Atwell ([16:47](#)):

That's true.

Bishop Burbidge ([16:48](#)):

What do we have to learn from this? And Billy, one of the most beautiful things too is the spiritual communion. I know a number of priests are praying that at the end of mass with the people, for the people. But dear friends, that is a beautiful thing, that you are not able to receive the body and blood of Jesus as you are accustomed to doing. That is a great pain. If you're feeling that pain, in a sense, that's a beautiful gift because it shows how deep your love is for the Lord.

Bishop Burbidge ([17:21](#)):

So make that spiritual communion of Lord, I desire so much to receive you. And there's some beautiful spiritual communion prayers out there. Say that prayer and then offer that spiritual communion for a special intention. Maybe it's for your family, maybe it's for the end of this pandemic, whatever it be. But that spiritual communion, God receives that. That is a powerful prayer. And you are United with him in a very powerful way at that moment. There's so many spiritual communion prayers out there, and I would suggest our people to look at them.

Billy Atwell ([18:01](#)):

And in line with that, we're not supposed to eat or drink anything other than water for a certain amount of time before mass. I've heard folks going even further with that spiritual communion, where they would not eat or drink for an hour beforehand.

Bishop Burbidge ([18:12](#)):

Right.

Billy Atwell ([18:12](#)):

Before they watch the mass. Now obviously it's not an obligation to do that, but what a great way ... So you're not sitting in front of mass, eating a bowl of Cheerios or something. They say, "No, no. We're taking this hour as a serious hour, as if we were going to mass."

Bishop Burbidge ([18:22](#)):

Definitely.

Billy Atwell ([18:23](#)):

I think this will actually create a resurgence of faith in folks. Some people are worried, will people come back? I think more people might come back. This has been so disruptive. They need to go back to what's going to recenter them, and they know that it will only be found in Christ and the Eucharist.

Bishop Burbidge ([18:36](#)):

And I suggest that as one of the intentions our faithful may offer at their spiritual community, that this will lead to a deeper desire of all people for our Eucharistic Lord, and the celebration of the Holy sacrifice of the mass, and bring so many people to him. What a powerful intention.

Billy Atwell ([18:53](#)):

Yeah, right. We know Christ can turn a bad thing into something good, and hopefully that happens here.

Billy Atwell ([18:58](#)):

So folks, again, if you go to arlingtondiocese.org, you can click on a button right there on the homepage that says, "Live stream masses, prayer guides and more," that is going to be your one stop shop for, as you might expect, live streams, prayer guides and more. But that's where we're really trying to compile all the resources, not just of what the diocese is doing, but if your parish has a live stream, you can go to that page and find it. Or if your parish might not have one, because of technological issues or whatever, you can find one nearby. But every parish that has one that has told us about it, we have listed it there, and those links are there.

Billy Atwell ([19:28](#)):

There's also great prayer guides that are provided by our office of divine worship from the US conference of bishops. And even from the Vatican, different resources and live streams and things that you can participate, and really try to immerse yourself in those. But there's a lot of great resources there, right on our homepage.

Bishop Burbidge ([19:41](#)):

Billy, I want to thank you and your team here in our communications office for the many ways you're helping people to stay connected. We are on every social means possible. Some of the ones you just mentioned. Thank God we as a diocese are in this position to use technology as an instrument to bring the gospel, to bring God's presence to others. So thanks to all of you also.

Billy Atwell ([20:04](#)):

We're blessed to be able to do it, and thank you for your commitment to communications, because I know it's been so appreciated by the faithful. Any final thoughts or comments before we close out?

Bishop Burbidge ([20:12](#)):

Simply, dear friends, let's continue to pray for one another. Let's be strong in faith, let's be joyful in hope. Our Lord Jesus is in our midst, and I would ask if maybe I could conclude today by asking everyone to join with me in saying a Hail Mary at this time. We're celebrating this solemnity of the annunciation of our Lord and Mary's yes to God's will, to God's plan, to God's love.

Bishop Burbidge ([20:39](#)):

And then I would like also to conclude with the prayer that we've asked everyone to pray, the prayer to Jesus for healing and guidance.

Billy Atwell ([20:47](#)):

Absolutely.

Bishop Burbidge ([20:47](#)):

Hail Mary, full of grace. The Lord is with thee, blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus, Holy Mary, mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Bishop Burbidge ([20:59](#)):

Prayer to Jesus for healing and guidance. Jesus, son of God, you were sent by the father to bear our weakness. Be with us in this time of crisis. Merciful savior, heal and comfort the sick, so that with health restored, they may give you praise.

Bishop Burbidge ([21:15](#)):

Divine physician, accompany our caregivers so that serving with patients, they may heal wisely. Eternal wisdom, guide our leaders so that seeking remedies, they may follow your light. Christ, the anointed, protect us in body and spirit, so that freed from harm, we may be delivered from all affliction who live and reign with God, the father in the unity of the Holy spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.

Bishop Burbidge ([21:41](#)):

And Mary, through your powerful intercession, may we go forth today and always and walk humbly with our God.

Bishop Burbidge ([21:48](#)):

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