

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, Chief Communications Officer for the Diocese and your cohost. Everyone listening to this podcast is benefiting from the generosity of those who have given to the Bishop's Lenten Appeal. The BLA, as we call it, supports many ministries throughout the diocese, education, vocations, pro-life ministry, support for the poor and needy, but it also includes the communications' office, so we want to thank those who have made this possible.

Billy Atwell ([00:33](#)):

If you haven't already, please rate this podcast or write a review wherever you're listening to it, and if you're listening via YouTube, please subscribe to our YouTube channel and ring the bell. You can sign up for our e-newsletter at arlingtondiocese.org. A lot of times that's kind of the head of the spear for major announcements from the diocese. You can also follow Bishop Burbidge on Twitter @bishopburbidge, where every day you can read a short reflection on the gospel of that day. You can also follow the diocese on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Send your questions to info@arlingtondiocese.org, or you can call 703-831-7013. Welcome your host, Bishop Burbidge. Bishop, how are you doing?

Bishop Burbidge ([01:10](#)):

I'm doing well, Billy. I hope our listeners are doing well and the summer weeks are providing some opportunities for rest and refreshment and renewal, maybe some quality time with family and friends.

Billy Atwell ([01:20](#)):

Yeah, and speaking of quality time with friends, this past weekend was Independence Day weekend. How did you spend your weekend?

Bishop Burbidge ([01:26](#)):

Yeah, I did have some time. This actually is a week annually that some priest friends and I get together. We usually tour a different US city. This year, we did not plan as well in light of the COVID situation so they visited me here and we did some touring locally and had some quality time together, and that's always great to renew friendships to be good priest friends.

Billy Atwell ([01:53](#)):

Absolutely. Absolutely.

Bishop Burbidge ([01:54](#)):

And there's a lot we celebrate. There's a lot to celebrate this past weekend and I always appreciate to see how our country loves Independence Day. You see celebrations in the communities and throughout, and I think it's a great reminder of the gift that we celebrate, the gift to live freely and independent of foreign rule. And it's a reminder. Sometimes we take that gift for granted and I think Independence Day helps to renew that appreciation and thankfulness we should have.

Bishop Burbidge ([02:26](#)):

And we realize, of course, that our freedom did not just happen. It took devotion, it took sacrifice, it took the blood of many thousands of our forefathers who ensured that we were free to live according to our principles.

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

That's true.

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

So we know that path to freedom is never straight. There were mistakes along the way. We have to acknowledge that even in our history that not everyone experienced freedom immediately. And we acknowledge that because it's only in acknowledging where there have been mistakes that we can improve and always try our best to move forward. And I think that's what makes us great. It was what makes us unique. It's our constitutional foundation. Our founding principles, when you think about it, paved the way for such freedoms to continue to develop and to be enshrined. So we're not perfect, but we're always going through try to be perfected.

Bishop Burbidge ([03:31](#)):

And the American experience as we know it is always working to ensure that all Americans experience true freedom and liberty. And I think that's the joy that I and many others experience on Independence Day. And certainly a good hamburger or cheeseburger doesn't hurt either. Thank God for the gift of freedom. Let's pray that freedom and dignity that is deserving of all persons is carried out throughout our land.

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

Absolutely. And actually on the topic of celebration, it feels like a while ago now, but it's not that long ago we had a rise, a diocesan family celebration. That was an idea that you had had to bring the faithful together to celebrate the lifting restrictions and the ending of the dispensation from the obligation to attend Sunday mass. What was your reaction to how it turned out other than hot?

Bishop Burbidge ([04:23](#)):

Right, of course it was hot, but it wasn't raining so we prayed for no rain. It was absolutely incredible. I experienced what I could see in the faces and heard in the voices of all who gathered. It is so great to be back together. We were at our campus at St. Paul VI High School and families, so many families, so many young children were there. We celebrated a Holy Hour, we had Mass, and then we had tons of fun with music. And just to see everyone saying, "Isn't it great to be back together as a community?"

Bishop Burbidge ([04:56](#)):

And of course where that is most important is that we gather together as the body of Christ around the altar, where we are enlightened by God's word, nourished by his body and blood, and it strengthens us as a community. And so it was really a wonderful celebration. I have a funny story though. As I was leaving, it was at the end of the evenings around eight o'clock at night and I'm walking out and this young boy, he must've been I would say five or six years old, he comes up to me and he says, "Bishop Burbidge, I have a proposal." And I'm like, "Oh, okay." I said, "What's your proposal?" He goes, "Let's do this every month."

Bishop Burbidge ([05:38](#)):

I was thinking to myself, "I'm not sure my staff would appreciate that proposal."

Billy Atwell ([05:44](#)):

Might not get my [inaudible 00:05:45]. That's great. And it was a great showcasing for PVI as well. I had not been to the campus yet surprisingly enough. With COVID, it just wasn't prudent, but really an amazing facility there, both the indoor gym, as well as the outdoor fields, and just really impressive.

Bishop Burbidge ([06:01](#)):

Right and everyone there welcomed the diocese because that campus is a proud endeavor initiative for the entire diocese, so it was great. Everyone got to see it.

Billy Atwell ([06:13](#)):

Yeah, big thanks to them for helping out. Bishop, on Thursday, June 24th, as many know, a south Florida condo complex partially collapsed and sparked what's begun a two-week investigation and rescue effort in attempt to save as many people as possible. The efforts were hampered by the fear that the rest of the building would come down as well. The latest numbers as of yesterday were that 28 people have been confirmed dead and 117 are unaccounted for. The rest of the building was taken down in a controlled demolition after search crews cleared the rest of that building. Bishop, you I know have been with families who have experienced different types of tragedies in their lives, both as a pastor, but also as a bishop, you've been present for those.

Billy Atwell ([06:54](#)):

What goes through your mind when you see a disaster like this? It's different than, I'm sure, what a fireman or a police officer might think instinctively. As a pastor, what is your first instinct when you see something like this?

Bishop Burbidge ([07:04](#)):

Sure. And you know, the June 24th tragedy just brings so much sadness to all of us, to see death and to see so much suffering and concern, and your heart goes out to family members experiencing all that. It's only human to ask, "Why does this happen?" But I always think it's better to focus... Because we cannot fully explain or answer that question in human terms, but we can answer the question, but what? What happens in the midst of this? And in the midst of any tragedy or suffering, which we know is going to be part of our human lives, it's what it means to follow Christ. We will endure crosses. But something of this extent is just beyond our imagining.

Bishop Burbidge ([07:58](#)):

But we do know this, that in the midst of that suffering, even in the midst of death itself, that God is present and that God assures us that whatever suffering, as great as it is, it will not be greater than the glory that awaits us. And the death is not an end, but it leads to new life. And so we have to cling to our faith at that very moment, share that faith with others, and then also to respond.

Bishop Burbidge ([08:30](#)):

And I think that really has been just inspiring to see first responders and members of the community all coming together. I mean, that's one of the things that you heard throughout this process, something our

nation needs right now, that it was no longer about political parties or ideologies or anything like that. It was people coming together to be present and especially to help those families. And so that part of it was inspiring. We're not helpless here. You know, even though there's distance between where we are and Florida, we're united and we're not helpless. We can pray. And I've asked our pastors to do so, especially at mass, and ask all of our listeners to continue to pray for the families who are experiencing such grief at this time.

Billy Atwell ([09:26](#)):

Absolutely. Bishop, there are two events coming up in this diocese that I know are very close to your heart. One is called Quo Vadis and one is called FIAT. For those who are unfamiliar with these events, could you talk about what they are and how they serve young people?

Bishop Burbidge ([09:41](#)):

Yeah, it's an invitation to young people throughout our diocese to come away for a week, to come and see, and really to allow a week in the summer to spend with the Lord and with peers. And it's rooted in prayer, teaching young people how to pray as you seek to discern God's holy will. And so throughout the week, there are many opportunities for that. The Quo Vadis is for young men. The FIAT is for young women.

Bishop Burbidge ([10:20](#)):

For the Quo Vadis, our seminarians are there with them. There were other priests and lay people who are offering inspiring talks and same in the following week with FIAT. Many of the consecrated women religious are there. It's a great opportunity for young people to grow closer to the Lord. And of course, it's rooted, if you're going to gather a young people with all this energy, it is rooted with lots of fun also.

Billy Atwell ([10:50](#)):

Yeah, good.

Bishop Burbidge ([10:51](#)):

Lots of fun. Lots of opportunities for sports and activities and games and music and all those kind of things. Many of our seminarians, many of the young women who have entered religious life have told me that really that call to do so was first really heard and then intensified at a Quo Vadis or FIAT experience.

Billy Atwell ([11:18](#)):

That's got to be wonderful to hear.

Bishop Burbidge ([11:19](#)):

Yeah, it's great. And the first night we invite their families to come out and join us and have a nice cookout and all those kinds of things. I think I'm the only Bishop who gains weight in the summer. We have all these events and all these celebrations

Billy Atwell ([11:34](#)):

The one thing that I hear is people, I think, when they hear it's a vocations retreat put on by the diocese, they think, "Oh no, my son's going to walk away in a cassock, and my daughter's going to walk away in habit."

Bishop Burbidge ([11:46](#)):

Right, no, no.

Billy Atwell ([11:47](#)):

But there's speakers who talk about the married life. I was privileged to do that one year for the Quo Vadis retreat. And it's very much a seeking of God's will retreat more so even specifically than a vocational retreat, but obviously it leads there with a young person. What are you called to do? Who are you called to be?

Bishop Burbidge ([12:03](#)):

Right. Thank you for raising that. That's very important because at the heart of that week together is really trying to teach young people how to pray, how to speak to God, how to listen to God. What is God asking you to do? What does it mean to live a virtuous life as a young man and young woman? I mean, that's a call we all share.

Billy Atwell ([12:25](#)):

That's right.

Bishop Burbidge ([12:25](#)):

And so that's a week that intensifies that in a very enjoyable atmosphere. And, and so I ask our listeners to pray for the young men and women who will be participating. It's great to see young people. They have many choices of how to spend a week in the summer and the fact that they enthusiastically choose to be part of this every year, different young men and women attending, it's just a great sign.

Billy Atwell ([12:53](#)):

And it's specifically for high schoolers, so those who are interested in sending your kids in future years. This year was a little bit of a condensed list because of COVID restrictions and so on, so there's 11th and 12th grades. But next year, I talked to our Vocations Office, we're back to full capacity. We're going to get back to normal. I got a great question when I gave my marriage talk. A young man raised his hand and I figured, high school boys, how complicated could the marital question be? And he said, how do you know the difference between being in love and being infatuated with somebody? I was like, "Oh boy. I've got to get my thinking hat on here. I should have read up more."

Bishop Burbidge ([13:27](#)):

Those kinds of questions surface.

Billy Atwell ([13:28](#)):

Very good questions.

Bishop Burbidge ([13:29](#)):

Exactly.

Billy Atwell ([13:29](#)):

Very deep questions. Sometimes I think it's easy to trivialize what a high schooler might be thinking about in terms of vocation. Very, very deep, very thoughtful questions. So basically I've got some updated statistics from Catholic charities, and I wanted to run some of these numbers and just get your reactions to it. It's really pretty amazing. All right. So between April of 2020, so last April, and March of this year, so a full calendar year, Catholic charities distributed \$4.8 million in food, rent and utility assistance to 90,000 clients.

Billy Atwell ([14:02](#)):

And here's how that breaks down. Two million pounds of food was distributed, which is about \$3.4 million worth provided to almost 27,500 people. That's 115% increase in the number of people who were served. And then the remainder of that is \$1.4 million in emergency rent and utility assistance, which is 130% increase in clients. You have thanked the donors and those who have stepped forward, but these numbers bear out the amount of people who needed help, the increase in need, and the generous response of the faithful here. It's really a remarkable story.

Bishop Burbidge ([14:36](#)):

It really is. And it's inspirational. It gives you hope. You know, sometimes we only hear the darkness in our world and it seems like it's reported every day, but this kind of news has to be shared. It has to be shared because it reminds us that there are good people out there every single day, trying to do whatever they can to help, to support others in need. And what we've been through this past year, to see that in an extraordinary way like that, it just reminds me of the extraordinary goodness of men and women throughout our diocese who are willing to be generous, to offer sacrifice, to be mindful of others.

Bishop Burbidge ([15:24](#)):

And you know Billy when you're reading those numbers, it's important to hear those numbers. But also think about the persons behind those numbers, the young and the old, the faces that were served, that saw the face of Christ in the midst of such difficult times, because we were able to provide them with the necessities of life that we so often take for granted.

Bishop Burbidge ([15:58](#)):

So, as you mentioned, I cannot offer enough thanks to all those who are just so good and generous in helping others and really so proud of our Catholic charities right there on the front lines, making sure that these resources that are sent our way are utilized and used as people intend and what is needed gets into the hands and into the homes of the people who are asking for our help and assistance. So what a great collaborative effort.

Billy Atwell ([16:30](#)):

And it's important to remember the timeframe in which all this was done. Staff and volunteers were serving clients with food and emergency assistance when we had no idea what the effects of COVID were going to be. There was heightened fear. You know, people washing their groceries when they get home and those kinds of things, and they're on the front lines helping people, providing these things, at

potentially great risk to themselves. I mean, it was really a fantastic witness of our faith. And you've got a big event with Catholic charities coming up later this month.

Bishop Burbidge ([16:58](#)):

Yeah. We have another opportunity to bless an ultrasound machine that will be used at one of our clinics. And I want to thank the Knights of Columbus once again for making this possible. Again, there you hear stories of men and women discerning, actually thinking about the possibility of abortion, and yet by the grace of God and through so many prayers, visit our clinic, and we're able to use the ultrasound, and when they see that child within the womb, we've heard many powerful stories of how that very glimpse of that child changes and they say, "No, no, I choose life."

Bishop Burbidge ([17:47](#)):

And so many thanks to the generosity of the faithful throughout our diocese and to the Knights of Columbus for making this possible. It's always a great joy to bless that machine. Just saying, "Lord, this is your instrument and we know you're going to use it in powerful ways."

Billy Atwell ([18:02](#)):

Absolutely. That's wonderful. All right, so we have a couple of questions from the faithful. The first is from Kyle at Our Lady of Hope. He says, I work outside all day in a gardening job and I find myself frequently working alone and I'm curious how to make the most of it with regard to my faith. Do you have any recommendations for prayer reflections or other suggestions on how to strengthen my faith at work during peaceful moments?

Bishop Burbidge ([18:25](#)):

Yeah, and first of all, Kyle, thanks for that question. I'm kind of jealous. That sounds like a great job. Sounds like a wonderful job and what a beautiful question that all of us should ask, even if our job is not kind of a serene setting as Kyle's is, even if it's in a busy situation, all of us should be asking that question. Throughout the course of a day, whatever work I'm assigned to do, where am I seeing the presence of the Lord in my life? I think sometimes praying the Psalms and just being reminded that the goodness of the Lord, the beauty of creation, his presence has revealed to us in so many ways. Maybe Kyle could look at some of the Psalms and pick out his favorite. Just pick out two sentences or a phrase from the Psalm that you just keep repeating throughout the day. Praise the Lord for all his creation, his goodness to me. There's so many beautiful lines in the Psalms that you could just memorize and throughout the day, maybe have a different one each day to kind of repeat.

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

I remember in grade school we used to pause at certain hours of the day, just the loud speaker would come on and it would say let us remember the holy presence of God. And we'd all saym "and let us adore his divine majesty." I remember it as a child. Wouldn't that be great in our own daily lives? Just stop and let me remember the holy presence of God. Let me adore his divine majesty in the work I'm doing and whatever I'm offering to the Lord that day. And God is present in our work, that work is more fruitful when we carry it out in his name and offer it, offer your work Kyle, for the glory of God.

Billy Atwell ([20:25](#)):

Some great advice there.

Bishop Burbidge ([20:26](#)):

Yeah.

Billy Atwell ([20:27](#)):

All right. We have another question. Bishop, you've just reached 20,000 followers on Twitter. You were an early adopter. What are some of the best and worst parts of posting every day, and with Twitter getting increasingly hostile to our beliefs, do you see yourself staying on Twitter?

Bishop Burbidge ([20:45](#)):

Yeah, I think it's an important means to communicate. The reflections that I offer, they're not personal reflections telling you where I am that day. They're a reflection on the Gospel of the day. So it's really helpful for me personally, in my own spiritual life. It allows me and directs me to make sure I look at the readings for the next day that the church gives because sometimes I'm not using the same readings because I have confirmation at night and we're using the confirmation readings. So I'm looking at the readings of the next day before I go to sleep and I say a little prayer like, "Lord help me tomorrow to just maybe offer..." Twitter keeps you pretty brief, "... a reflection on that Gospel or that reading of the day or that scene of the day that may be helpful to your people."

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

So I always pray that it's helpful. Maybe there's something in that tweet that is just something that God wanted to speak to another person and simply used me as an instrument. That's all I am. But for me personally, it's a great discipline. I do that every morning on the gospel today and I make it my meditation of the day too. It's an easy way to communicate and so I will continue to do that. I do not look at comments or anything.

Billy Atwell ([22:28](#)):

If anything is really out of hand, we'll let you know.

Bishop Burbidge ([22:34](#)):

I'm counting on you and your team to let me know. It is like getting a grade though every day because you do get a notice of how many people liked it or whatever, and it's like a homily. Sometimes you think you come up with this great homily and people are leaving church and they don't even mention it. And there's other days you're like, "Boy, that wasn't my best." And people are like, "Oh great homily Bishop." So it's the same times with the tweets. Sometimes I do this tweet and it's like, "Wow, I like that tweet. That's good." And you look at the response, it's like, "No, that wasn't that good." So it keeps you humble.

Billy Atwell ([23:17](#)):

We'll pray for the consistency.

Bishop Burbidge ([23:18](#)):

I just pray, "Lord, it's all yours. Let your spirit work through me." And if it's helpful, then that's a good thing. But again, I say to people, I don't like doing social media, talking about what I ate this morning and all that stuff. It's about the word of God.

This transcript was exported on Jul 08, 2021 - view latest version [here](#).

Billy Atwell ([23:35](#)):

Yeah, absolutely. It's catching on, so congratulations on that. Bishop do you have any final thoughts and if you would send us off with your blessing?

Bishop Burbidge ([23:41](#)):

As I mentioned at the beginning of the podcast, I do hope that the summer does allow you to slow down a little bit, if at all possible. It's been a very challenging year for us and I think we're more tired than we realize physically and emotionally. So if God gives you the opportunity to slow down and maybe to change the scenery or to relax, don't feel guilty. It's God's gift to you. Enjoy it. It's been a tough year. God wants you to be refreshed and renewed. So try and find that time for yourself and with those you love. And I'm sure you'll find many blessings in that. So stay safe everyone and enjoy these summer weeks. And let's pray for one another that together we will walk humbly with our God.

Bishop Burbidge ([24:33](#)):

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.