

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

This is Bishop 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 co-host. Those listening to this podcast are benefiting from the generosity of those who have given to the Bishop's Lenten Appeal. The BLA supports a lot of ministries in our diocese, but one of them is the communications office. This podcast in the studio we're recording in is made possible because of the BLA, so thank you to all who have contributed to that in the past and certainly this year as well.

Billy Atwell ([00:34](#)):

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

On today's podcast, we're going to cover a number of topics, a few of which include the new encyclical from Pope Francis on the liturgy, the aftermath of the Dobbs' case, and as well as the state of abortion in Virginia, and then also some transgender ideology situations that are prominent in the news. I welcome your host, Bishop Burbidge.

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

Bishop, how are you doing?

Bishop Burbidge ([01:19](#)):

Doing well, Billy. I hope all of our listeners are doing well and finding some time this summer for renewal and refreshment and, hopefully, some quality time with family and friends. I hope everyone is doing well.

Billy Atwell ([01:35](#)):

Absolutely. We have some breaking news also from the Holy See regarding the German Synodal Way. Bishop, do you have some details on it?

Bishop Burbidge ([01:42](#)):

Yeah, it's a statement from the Holy See that was just released as we are recording this podcast. I've been asked many times about what is going on in Germany in the Synodal Way and people seeking clarity. Certainly, that is the role of the Holy Father. He has definitely provided some clarity.

Billy Atwell ([02:07](#)):

That's right.

Bishop Burbidge ([02:07](#)):

It's a very brief statement, but if I could just read a little bit from it, the Holy See's statement says, "In order to protect the freedom of the people of God and the exercise of the episcopal ministry, it appeared necessary to clarify the Synodal Way in Germany does not have the power to compel the bishops and the faithful to adopt new ways of governance and new approaches to doctrines and morals." We have been saying that on this podcast a number of times, but we are hearing it clearly today from the Holy See.

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

I think it's very important to hear that, prior to an agreed understanding of the level of the Universal Church, it would not be permissible to initiate new official structures or doctrines in the diocese which would represent a wound to the ecclesial communion and a threat to the unity of the Church which, of course, is the role of the Holy Father, to provide clarity especially when it comes to morals and doctrine and to preserve the unity of the Church. The Holy Father recalled in his letter, his own letter, to the pilgrim people of God in Germany, the Universal Church lives in and of the particular churches, meaning, diocese just as the particular churches live and flourish in from the Universal Church. Listen to this. This is important. If they find themselves separated from the entire collegial body, they weaken, rot and die. That's the Holy Father.

Billy Atwell ([03:40](#)):

That's clarity.

Bishop Burbidge ([03:41](#)):

It's very clear and, hence, the need always to ensure that the community with the whole body of the church is alive and effective, so a good day for all of us to pause in the Universal Church and here in the Diocese of Arlington, in every local church to pray, to pray that the unity our Lord so much desires within his Church will be ours. This statement from the Holy See is a very, very helpful resource and document.

Billy Atwell ([04:09](#)):

Yeah. As you mentioned, we've gotten a lot of questions about that on this podcast and elsewhere, so hopefully that helps folks. Before we get into our main talk, I want to highlight real quick a member of our staff here with the Arlington Catholic Herald in particular. Ann Aughterton recently received a national award. It's the St. Francis de Sales Award from the Catholic Media Association. This is really the highest journalistic award you can receive in the US Catholic Church and is well received. Ann has been here for... I think it's coming on 38 years. She jokes that child labor laws were different when she started with the diocese. She has been just so steadfast and reliable in providing the newspaper on behalf of its publisher, the Bishop of Arlington, and has been just a great contributor to the team, has led many young journalists who have gone on to national roles, and been a great mentor for them, and so we certainly want to congratulate. I know you feel the same.

Bishop Burbidge ([05:00](#)):

Yes. I echo those words of congratulations to Ann, what a great honor, and to her colleagues who share in that honor, and also a moment for me to say to the wonderful staff of the Catholic Herald what I hear so often out in the field. It's how much our people receive... How pleased they are to receive our diocesan newspaper twice a month. They are always very complimentary of the content and of the coverage that is provided. It's a lot of work to produce a newspaper these days, but it's very popular in

our diocese, and I think it's because of the quality of the paper and the great work of people like Ann and Kevin and all those who work in the Herald.

Billy Atwell ([05:49](#)):

Yeah. Thank you to them. A couple of events, one coming up and one that just passed I want to ask you about, we're approaching the World Day of Grandparents and the Elderly. That's this coming Sunday. You wrote a piece for the Arlington Catholic Herald actually on that topic. It's a fairly new day of celebration that was instituted by Pope Francis. Out of curiosity, why do you think he instituted that?

Bishop Burbidge ([06:11](#)):

I think it's the idea that he recognizes our grandparents and elderly are people of wisdom and grace and experience. The Holy Father makes this point clearly, of course. Our love for our grandparents and elderly will lead us to take care of them and to be compassionate to them. The Holy Father is also making a strong point that we should also take that extra step and learn from them. They bring so much wisdom, so many insights.

Bishop Burbidge ([06:50](#)):

I know when you ask, whenever I visit the elderly, it's important to ask questions. How did they deal with certain situations in their lifetime? Where did they find the strength to be steadfast in marriage and to raise a good family and to weather through the storms that they experience in life. Every generation has them. It's a day to celebrate our grandparents, both living and deceased, as well as our elderly friends, to take the extra step and maybe visit them, call them frequently, but learn from them. Learn from their wisdom.

Bishop Burbidge ([07:32](#)):

Grandparents and elderly, this will be your day. I hope it's filled with many blessings for you.

Billy Atwell ([07:37](#)):

There's so much to learn from them. My daughter does Irish dance, and there was an event coming up where she could dance at a senior center. It really didn't work out with the schedule. It was going to be quite a bear, but we, my wife and I, decided she's going to gain so much from this as well as them. Obviously, that's mutual, but she will learn something from them. I think Pope Francis really much focused on those who are marginalized. For some reason, society, the elderly can be marginalized. They're put off the side, but there's so much that they can offer that we should be ready to receive it.

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

Yeah, very, very much so, and I do take this moment here to thank our priests, extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion, who bring the Lord to the elderly who, for so many years, came to church, but because of physical circumstances cannot. We bring the church. We bring the Lord to them. Thanks for that beautiful ministry, everyone.

Billy Atwell ([08:30](#)):

Absolutely. Going to the other end of the spectrum, we had two events recently for the youth, one called Quo Vadis and one that's Fiat. They're very popular retreats. If you would, for those who aren't

familiar with them, please describe who Quo Vadis and Fiat are really intended for and what you hope people will experience in those retreats?

Bishop Burbidge ([08:49](#)):

Yeah, a longstanding tradition in our diocese that continues to remain vibrant. Of course, we had a little bit of a slowdown with the challenges over the last couple of years, but we're back to full force now. These camps are the Quo Vadis. It's a camp for young men, sophomores and above, sophomores to seniors in high school, who are just willing to spend a week with the Lord, with other young men their age to discern God's call. Where is the Lord leading it? Not necessarily to priesthood or consecrated life or married life, just an openness to how do I discern God's call? How do I learn how to pray? How do I learn to be not just a follower, but a disciple? With the help of our priests who come and spend time with them throughout the week and our seminarians who are there with them, our vocation director, it's a wonderful, wonderful week for them.

Bishop Burbidge ([09:48](#)):

Of course, if you have 90 men, which we do at this camp, you are also going to keep them very busy. There will also be those activities for sporting events, athletic events, group events and, by the end of the night, they are certainly tired. Father Isenberg, our vocations director, just mentioned how intentional these men were especially when it came to wanting time for prayer, wanting time for the blessed sacrament. It's followed the following week, Fiat, Mary's yes, for young women, and same ages, and you see the same qualities present there. During that week, we have women religious from various orders from around the country who come and spend the week with the young ladies, teaching them to pray and talking to them about the various charisms of the community and, again, having fun with them.

Bishop Burbidge ([10:43](#)):

Like I always say, I celebrate the first mass of each week and always say, if you look at 90 high school students, and all the invitations, all the opportunities they have to spend a week in the summer, how inspiring it is that they choose to give these five days to the Lord. I assure them, if you give these days to the Lord, you can be guaranteed that He will fill them with blessings for you and he will speak the message or messages He wants you to hear about. It's inspiring to see so many of our happy, young friends in Christ spending this time with the Lord and with one another. I certainly thank their parents at the mass for supporting and encouraging their sons and daughters to spend a week in this way.

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

I know Father Isenberg emphasizes that it's not a week-long sales pitch to be a priest or a nun. There are people that come and speak about marriage. I was invited once to do that. It was a great experience. It is truly about how do you discern your vocation. In today's world, there's very little resource on how to do that, and so this is a great intentional week for that. The other thing I've heard about it is they come away with great friendships.

Bishop Burbidge ([11:57](#)):

Oh, they do.

Billy Atwell ([11:57](#)):

People they didn't know from other schools or other groups and, all of a sudden, they know each other. In today's day and age, it's very easy for them to connect through social media and stay friends and stay close.

Bishop Burbidge ([12:06](#)):

No. That's very right. As we have spoken about on podcasts, the young people often tell me that sometimes, in their circle of friends or in the schools they attend and especially in schools that do not embrace our Catholic faith or traditions, how much they feel alone, and then you go to this camp and say, "Wait a second. There are a lot of young people my age who share the same beliefs and convictions that I do," and that strengthens us. It's just a wonderful, longstanding tradition in our diocese. It's fully vibrant and alive.

Billy Atwell ([12:43](#)):

I'm sure they appreciate you being there and being present with them also.

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

Oh, they inspire me.

Billy Atwell ([12:47](#)):

All right. Bishop, the Holy Father recently issued an apostolic letter on the liturgy. With all the news going on in the country and the church, this didn't get a thorough review even by some Catholic media. There's a lot going on, but I'd like to dive into it a little bit. From a high level, what was the apostolic letter intended to do, and what are some of the major components contained within it that you think should stand out to people?

Bishop Burbidge ([13:08](#)):

Well, first of all, as many know, we are in a three-year preparation period for our 50th Jubilee. Year one, starting in November, we'll go to the end of October here on the Eucharist. Maybe the Holy Father knew what the Diocese of Arlington did and gave us this beautiful apostolic letter on the Eucharist and liturgy. Again, as I always encourage our listeners, just don't read the headlines. I would encourage. It's not long. It's a very easy to read document, so I would encourage. It's very easy to find on the Internet. The apostolic letter is titled, in English, On the Liturgical Formation of the People of God. Please read it if you can. It's a good summer reading.

Bishop Burbidge ([13:54](#)):

I would say, Bill, you asked what are the major points of the document, maybe three, I would say to rekindle our wonder and beauty of the truth of the Christian celebration, the holy sacrifice of the mass, rekindling that sense of wonder and awe. It's not something we just do because it's an obligation, but one we approach with the sense of wonder and awe, what it's taken. There's a sacrifice at that altar. The word of God is being proclaimed, and we are receiving the body and blood of Christ. It reminds us of the necessity of authentic liturgical formation. It goes back to unity within the Church. Authentic liturgical formation is a nice way of saying the Church gives us beautiful liturgies with rubrics and directives. I always say just do what the church asks us to do. We don't have to add all kinds of creative things. The Holy Father says don't become that in any way it requires your creativity or your personality.

Billy Atwell ([15:06](#)):

You don't have to be inventive.

Bishop Burbidge ([15:07](#)):

Yeah, just do what the Church asks in all Her beauty. It's a great, great celebration. When there's options, take the options that are there, but, if not, just follow what the Church does. For us, as a diocese, and this is what we try to do during year one of our preparation, I hope our people have a chance to see it on our social media, what is the mass? We have videos of the teaching mass. This is what happens at mass. This is what this means. If you have not had a chance to look at some of those videos, that's authentic liturgical formation, our own priests explaining that to people and to recognize the importance that it is from this liturgy that we are sent forth, strengthened and renewed to proclaim the Paschal mystery. Christ, by his cross and resurrection, has destroyed sin and even death itself. He's truly alive and is with us.

Bishop Burbidge ([16:09](#)):

It's always the reminder to me that the liturgy belongs to the Church. It doesn't belong to an individual. It doesn't belong to a group. It belongs to a church. I love this one aspect where he says every aspect of the celebration must be carefully tended to space, time, gestures, words, object, vestments, song and music. Every rubric, what the church tells us to do, must be observed. Hopefully, our pastors do so well in executing this desire of the Holy Father with the help of many people, whether they have their own liturgy committees or people involved in ministry, to do and to celebrate the mass with reverence, with the attention of what we're doing with joy and always for the glory of God, mindful of the sacrifice that takes place.

Billy Atwell ([17:14](#)):

Absolutely. There are two resources I want to highlight that are adjacent to this topic. The first, Zoey Maraist with the Arlington Catholic Herald produced a great piece called The Mass Explained basically. If you go to the Arlington Catholic Herald website, you can find it. It's a lot of the basics of what the mass is and the quotes from saints and the Holy Father and our own bishop really infusing what is the truth in the life of this mass within the church. I think it would be a great teaching resource for your children. If you're looking for some sort of summer project to keep them intellectually engaged, this would be a great thing. It's not too complicated. It's for all audiences. If you go there, you can learn more about that.

Bishop Burbidge ([17:53](#)):

That's a great reference, Billy.

Billy Atwell ([17:54](#)):

Yeah, and it was approved by our Office of Divine Worship, so it's very appropriate. Just pencil in, we'll have more information for you down the road on this, but October 22nd is a Saturday this year, and we're going to be having a eucharistic symposium. Special guest will be Archbishop Chaput of Philadelphia. You probably know him, bishop, I'm guessing.

Bishop Burbidge ([18:13](#)):

I know him well.

Billy Atwell ([18:14](#)):

He's hard to get, so I'm sure that helped.

Bishop Burbidge ([18:16](#)):

Archbishop Charles Chaput, former bishop emeritus of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, former archbishop of Denver, great author. I'm sure many of our listeners have read his excellent books. It was a coup to be able to get Archbishop Chaput. He is a man in great demand, in fact, that he is going to be the homilist at the mass that day and also give us a talk. Whenever Archbishop Chaput speaks, there is substance. We're going to be getting news out there about registration and things like that. Billy just gave you all the save-the-day card. I think it's going to be in demand.

Billy Atwell ([18:54](#)):

October 22nd, pencil that in. You'll want to bring the family. It's going to be a great day at the cathedral. Bishop, on our last podcast, it was at work camp. It's been a little while since that podcast. A lot's happened in the world. The Supreme Court ruled on the Dobbs case which overturned Roe v. Wade and Planned Parenthood v. Casey. You issued a really good, thorough statement at the time. I was wondering. It's been a little while since then, so it's starting to settle in for people. What are your thoughts as we reflect out on this time period?

Bishop Burbidge ([19:23](#)):

Right. I see a couple of things. I said in a homily at a Respect Life mass just last week that our themes for the preparation of our Jubilee celebration are remember, rejoice and renew. Remember all these people, some of our listeners including, for 50 years who have prayed and sacrificed and fasted, attended the March for Life, prayed outside of abortion clinics.

Billy Atwell ([19:59](#)):

Worked at pregnancy centers, helped mothers in need.

Bishop Burbidge ([20:01](#)):

Yeah, remember them with such great affection and gratitude and rejoice in knowing that, sometimes, when we pray and we'd witness, we want to see immediate results, but it's always in God's time, but to rejoice that God continues to work miracles in our lives and to renew our commitments. See, the work is just beginning. I mean, the work is beginning. With Dobbs, there's no longer a federal constitutional right to abortion. The power, as it should have been and should have been originally, is restored to the people and their elected representatives to protect the dignity and rights of the human person from the moment of conception by enacting life-affirming laws in their states and in Congress.

Bishop Burbidge ([20:48](#)):

We have a lot of work to do. Everything we've been doing, we got to continue to do with greater intensity, just more so on the local level because, while some states have already implemented total or near-total limits on abortion, more than half the states and, sadly, including Virginia have few or no limits on Virginia... I mean on abortion.

Billy Atwell ([21:13](#)):

Yeah. It's really unbelievable.

Bishop Burbidge ([21:14](#)):

I mean, just to be specific here, by that, I mean, in the first trimester, no limits, even certain non-physicians may perform the abortion in Virginia. In the second and third trimester, no limits, except that the abortion must be performed in a hospital by a physician. Third trimester, the abortion must be performed in a hospital by a physician, and the physician and two consulting physicians must certify that the continuation of the pregnancy is likely to result in the death of the woman or impair... and this is where it gets... can be stretched to mean many things... the mental or physical health of the woman.

Bishop Burbidge ([21:55](#)):

Pray, fast, offer sacrifice for the conversion of mind and hearts. Advocate for pro-life laws by contacting your legislators and support those initiatives that ensure compassion and care and support for pre-born children, their mothers and families. That's, Billy, where I think we have to do a better job as a church and, really, as a diocese. I think, everyone, most people know our position on abortion. It's a horrific act that we totally oppose. It's horrific. We're very clear. I think everyone knows the Catholic Church's position on that, but I think what we need to do a better job in doing is showing that, in addition to that, we are so pro-life and what we do for mothers and families.

Bishop Burbidge ([22:52](#)):

I want our people to be able to talk to their friends and colleagues that we continue to accompany mothers and fathers experiencing crisis pregnancies, to provide adoption support which the Catholic Church has been known for years, providing homes for people who choose life for their children, homes for them if they're unable to do so themselves, to offer medical and emergency financial assistance to families in need, and to extend care and healing for those who have chosen abortion. We are with the mother. We are with the child every step of the way especially through our parishes, our diocese's initiatives and Catholic charities. We are pro-life. I think we have to do a better job, not bragging, not looking for a pat on the back, but letting people know that.

Bishop Burbidge ([23:44](#)):

Bishop Knestout and I have had a chance to meet with significant leaders in the Commonwealth. We wanted them to know these are the services our Catholic Church provides. They were a bit surprised. They weren't aware of all that. They know what we're against, but they need to know what we're for.

Billy Atwell ([24:03](#)):

Yeah. Yeah, and it's something that's totally selfless on the part of the donors to the Church and the volunteers. They do this for others. They're not getting anything personally out of this right. It's totally in service to others, so I hope those elected officials receive that well.

Bishop Burbidge ([24:16](#)):

Even our own diocese's Home for Single Moms and Gabriel Projects where we provide basic necessities, like Project Rachel helping those healing from abortion.

Billy Atwell ([24:26](#)):

The Mother of Mercy Clinics with ultrasound machines that the Knight of Columbus helped us secure. There's amazing partnership in the Church to really support women.

Bishop Burbidge ([24:34](#)):

It goes on and on. Right?

Billy Atwell ([24:35](#)):

Absolutely. One thing I would encourage people, and you've heard me say this before, so I'm going to sound like a broken record here, [vacatholic.org](#). Jeff Caruso is the executive director of the Virginia Catholic Conference. He represents our two bishops here in Virginia on the front lines in the legislature, and those battles are going to only increase in the coming years.

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

Bishop, when you mentioned, in the second trimester, the changes that the abortion has to be performed in a hospital, that was considered a pro-life victory. That's how hard it has been in Virginia, but if you want to join those efforts, please go to [vacatholic.org](#). Sign up for the E-newsletter. Jeff is great about only sending it to you when it really matters. There's great resources there about diocesan-affiliated pregnancy centers and resources. There's a lot there, [vacatholic.org](#).

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

Bishop, the issue of a gender ideology is really heightened in the news right now. A district court judge in Tennessee temporarily barred the Biden administration from enforcing a policy that would require all states to allow men to compete in women's sports if the man believes that he is a woman. Also, the University of Pennsylvania nominated Lia Thomas, a biological male, to be NCAA Woman of the Year. The runner-up to Thomas in the NCAA championships said, "This is yet another slap in the face to women. First, a female national title and, now, nominated for the pinnacle award in collegiate athletics. The NCAA has made this award worthless."

Billy Atwell ([26:07](#)):

Transgenderism was not much of a public issue just a short while ago, and now it seems to be dominating news cycles. You've offered a wonderful teaching document on this. What do you make of this kind of news and the way it's just increased over time?

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

Right. Yeah. You're right in saying that the issue certainly has progressed quickly, more quickly than most people could keep up with. Certainly, I received a great deal of response from my letter on this issue, most of which was very positive and encouraging, some of which was not, but always reinforcing that this document was issued in love to speak the truth and that we will never ever tolerate, the respect that every person is owed as a child of God, no bullying, no harassment, anything like that, but we speak to truth and love. It progressed quickly, but I think what's happening is the more people think about the logical consequences of treating men and women the same as if there is no biological difference is less appealing to the average person.

Bishop Burbidge ([27:24](#)):

Whenever people respond to important issues emotionally rather than with logic and a foundation in natural law, you can expect outcomes that are unsustainable and contradictory. You can support women, advance causes that are good for women while also allowing biological males. You cannot support women and advance causes that are good for women while also allowing biological males to

compete against women in women sports. You cannot truly value women while giving the title woman of the year to a man. It defies logic, and I think most people appreciate the issue even if they support transgenderism overall.

Bishop Burbidge ([28:11](#)):

I was encouraged to hear a judge halted by the administration policy that would force states to allow men and women to enter restrooms whichever gender support they wish. I think the way we outlined clearly the logic, the natural law that is involved, must be involved, cannot be denied in talking about these issues while also talking about compassion and care and respect that we owe to every persons. If logic and natural law are ignored, then the outcomes are just going to keep going down a certain path where it really becomes... This is not sustainable. This is not what we meant it to be. I think the average person is beginning to see that.

Billy Atwell ([29:03](#)):

Yeah. I think also people are afraid to offer their voice because they'll be, like you said, bullied or mistreated in some way, but I think people are realizing not speaking up creates a lot more harm than what might otherwise occur, and so they're wanting to speak up. What I think is so great about the teaching document, the letter that you wrote on gender ideology, is that it lays out in layman's terms exactly what most of us think, but don't have the words to convey. You provided a very succinct format and you relied on really good experts and everything from biology, law, philosophy to help you in compiling that to make sure it was really precise.

Billy Atwell ([29:44](#)):

We get in communications office emails from other diocese from around the world, people saying, "Can we translate this into Dutch? Can we translate this into other languages?" because it really hadn't been written in such a concise way. I encourage people to look this up. If you're feeling like you need to represent your faith on this issue, and I hope you do, go to arlingtondiocese.org and, in the search bar, put gender ideology. It's the first search result.

Bishop Burbidge ([30:09](#)):

Yeah. I know this issue impacts so many families within our diocese, and thoughts and prayers are with them as they navigate through these issues with loved ones. We never stop loving one another, but I know there are many challenges and difficulties that are involved with this issue. Again, thoughts and prayers with all families dealing with this.

Billy Atwell ([30:39](#)):

We have some questions from the faithful. The first is, since the overturning of Roe v. Wade, there have been many companies declaring their support for abortion and even going so far as saying they're going to assist their employees in getting abortions. What is your guidance to Catholics in the diocese regarding whether or not they should be giving their patronage to these companies? Is boycotting companies a personal choice or a moral imperative for Catholics? That comes from Jessica at St. Leo the Great in Fairfax.

Bishop Burbidge ([31:06](#)):

That's a great question from Jessica. I don't know how effective boycotts are in this day and age, but this is something people should discern for themselves. I know some parents have decided to stop supporting, for example, Disney for their aggressive position regarding gender ideology in children's programming. If you feel like God is calling you to start supporting a certain company, I would encourage you to have the strength of heart to carry through with companies that reflect the values and morals, but we have to be vigilant of, I think, companies that are just so blatant, so outright and very clear in their position and violate what we do. We have to discern. Is that something that we should in any way lend our support?

Bishop Burbidge ([32:03](#)):

Again, we're always praying that hearts and all are being transformed, but, yeah, certainly, for example, where you spend your money or if you make investments in stocks and all, hopefully, being vigilant. We have a very strict policy here in our diocese where, if we make investments, that there is a thorough project of really understanding who this company is and where their support is landing. If it violates the core principles and beliefs we have, then, no, even if it's going to be a great money-maker, that's not something we can do or would ever do.

Billy Atwell ([32:42](#)):

That's right, and I know that's reviewed on an annual basis because some of these mutual funds can change and, all of a sudden, you're like, "Wait a minute."

Bishop Burbidge ([32:46](#)):

Right, with the eyes of not just within here at the chancery, but with some professional eyes that help us.

Billy Atwell ([32:51](#)):

Yeah. That's wonderful. All right, Kyle from our Lady of Hope says, "I'm a recent college grad who has been tapped for the job of eighth grade CCD teacher." I love how he said that, "I've been tapped for the job. A lot of people start out in religious ed because someone says, 'I think you should do this.' My mother is currently a second grade teacher and talks of her kids admitting that they and their families don't typically go to mass. I was wondering how I should approach this upcoming CCD year with the fact that more and more are disaffiliated or lapsed in their faith. Do you have any suggestions to make for my inaugural year of teaching most impactful for the [inaudible 00:33:24] Monday?"

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

Yeah. Thank you. Thank you, Kyle, and many others throughout our diocese who are so generous in offering our services to teach in our religious education programs. We can't do it without you, so thank you. You have acknowledged challenges that we know are real both in our religious education formation programs even in our own schools, our Catholic schools. It is disheartening, concerning sometimes, to learn that the young people I confirm on a Wednesday are not even at church that following Sunday. We do have the policy here, and this is a big part of our strategic plan under evangelization information. We cannot keep doing things exactly the same way we've been doing them. I think what is at the heart of it is how can our religious education programs, our formation programs, the religion theology we teach in our schools? Certainly, it has to include conveying, handing on knowledge of our Catholic faith.

Bishop Burbidge ([34:37](#)):

Obviously, it's clear, if we're not touching hearts and not making disciples and helping our students to grow in their relationship with Christ, then we're going to see these kind of results of people not going to church on a regular basis. It is my hope as a diocese. In all of our listening sessions, this, what Kyle asked, has been asked many times. What can we do differently? We have a working group on this right now, and I am really impressed with some of the recommendations coming my way of how we can reinvigorate our education teaching information both of adults and of our young people.

Bishop Burbidge ([35:21](#)):

Kyle, it comes back to, yes, teach the faith, but make sure that you're also making disciples. It's all about the relationship with Christ. If they don't have that leaving our schools, then they're not going to continue their practice of the faith.

Billy Atwell ([35:36](#)):

Very good. All right, Charles at St. James, this question you may have addressed a little bit before, but he says, "Now that Roe v. Wade has been overturned, is there a strategy on the part of the US bishops as the pro-life effort resumes?"

Bishop Burbidge ([35:48](#)):

Yeah, of course, we're going to continue to work with the Virginia Catholic Conference in providing some opportunities, some resources to do so. We will do the same thing in our diocese of ways that we can make our faith public in the arena especially as we deal with our elected officials, also offer witness and opportunities to pray. We've always done that, as I said in the beginning, but now we got to do so more with more intensity and on this local level, so stay tuned.

Billy Atwell ([36:20](#)):

I'm sure we'll create opportunity at the national level also.

Bishop Burbidge ([36:22](#)):

It's the same thing, I forgot to say, with the liturgical document that we talked about in the beginning. Again, we will be having workshops when the Holy Father's document and resources are available because we want to assist our people in these areas.

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

That's wonderful. Our last question, what can be done to harden the target of our schools and homeschool co-ops throughout the diocese to keep children and teachers safe from harm? This is from Christine, a parishioner here.

Bishop Burbidge ([36:51](#)):

Christina, that's a great question. It's on the hearts I'm sure of all of our parents. I know it's on my heart and it's on the hearts of our school administrators and teachers especially so sadly in light of the horrific events we have recently seen. I'm pleased to know that our diocese, dioceses throughout the country take this very, very, very seriously. We have a risk management office. We have a great staff, including former law enforcement officers, who help us to create procedures, policies and protocols that assist parishes and schools in the creation of security and ministry programs. We have a new video being

worked on now that will be available to our schools and families of what you do in certain situations like the one that we recently saw.

Bishop Burbidge ([37:43](#)):

Also, we audit our parishes and schools in a helpful way. We go out and say we take a look at the security system of the things they have in place to protect the church, protect the schools and students. We offer recommendations where recommendations are needed, and then we follow up to make sure that those things are in place which, of course, we will do most definitely before the beginning of the school new year. The most important thing is a close relationship with the local law enforcement. We have found as a diocese, wherever we have concern and we've expressed those concerns, they are there to help us. That close relationship the pastor has and principals have with the local law enforcement is very important.

Bishop Burbidge ([38:29](#)):

We consider everything, from the best use of cameras, single-access doors, ensuring exterior doors are locked behind people, use of landscaping, to make entry through windows more difficult, alarms, motion sensors. Everything you would do for your own home and for the protection of your own family, we must do for our own diocese and family. Each year, especially as things have been heightened in our country, we refresh what we do based on best practices, new research and best technology. As much as this is on the heart of every parent, of every school administrator, it's certainly on my heart and the colleagues here, and we're trying to support parishes in every way possible.

Billy Atwell ([39:14](#)):

Wonderful. Thank you for that. We went through a lot here. Any final thoughts? Any final messages for listeners, and then if you would send us off with your blessing?

Bishop Burbidge ([39:24](#)):

Again, I request everyone that there is still some remaining time left in these summer months. I know things don't slow down as when they used to in the summer, but if you can make that time to get some refreshment and renewal before we begin the rigors that begin in the fall with the startup of school and all the other responsibilities that come our way, I hope it is the time of rest, refreshment and renewal ,that you all have that time, quality time with your families.

Bishop Burbidge ([39:56](#)):

There are a lot of exciting things going on in our diocese. It's such a vibrant diocese. Many know that I ordained eight new priests in June. This coming Saturday, I get to ordain a Redemptorist priest who is the brother of two of our priests, Father Christopher and Father Stephen Vaccaro, whose brother will be ordained a priest for the Redemptorist at the National Basilica Shrine in Washington on Saturday. I have the great joy of ordaining him and then, the next month, to ordain a Missionhurst priest who is currently residing in our diocese.

Bishop Burbidge ([40:35](#)):

As I say, it's such a great joy as a bishop to ordain priests for service to the Lord and His Church. Please pray for all of our priests, our newly ordained, our priests who have been transferred and just recently

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began to do assignments. Know, dear friends, my prayers are with all of you, that we stay strong in our faith and joyful in our hope and that each and every day we walk humbly with our God.

Bishop Burbidge ([41:05](#)):

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.