

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

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

Billy Atwell ([00:07](#)):

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Billy Atwell ([00:54](#)):

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Bishop Burbidge ([01:29](#)):

I'm doing well, Billy. Hope all of our listeners are doing well. Hope all our mothers had a happy Mother's Day and all our families and faithful throughout the Diocese continue to rejoice and experience the blessings of this Easter season.

Billy Atwell ([01:44](#)):

Absolutely. We've got a lot to get into; this is a dense podcast, but I think it's going to be a great one. Starting off with the Supreme Court. From all the experts you hear on the news and media, I have not heard anyone say that they've ever heard of a leaked opinion from the Supreme Court yet in history. And yet that's what happened last week. The abortion industry has been in a little bit of a tailspin that, if true, the ruling might indicate that Roe v. Wade could be dismantled. That would send it back to the states. Before we get deeper into the issue, what was your reaction to the fact that there was a leak at all, no matter what was written in the draft?

Bishop Burbidge ([02:17](#)):

Sure. That's a grave concern. I'm sure our listeners have that same concern. The leak violated literally a process that should be based on honesty, trust and confidentiality. That is at the heart of our judicial system. And I, along with countless other pro-life Americans, wait patiently in prayer for the final ruling and continue to hope the justices will acknowledge that our constitution does not recognize any right to kill an unborn child in the womb, but to see that leak, there's just that violation of trust is just such a grave, grave, concern, especially people who are entrusted with such responsibility.

Billy Atwell (03:05):

Absolutely. I think a lot of people felt that way on both sides of the aisle. And since the draft was leaked, many abortion advocates have been struggling to maintain civility, and that's to put it lightly. It got bad enough that a radical abortion advocacy group encouraged people to protest inside Catholic Masses and disrupt the liturgy. To some degree that seems to have been ignored, but there have definitely been demonstrations and so on around the country, even vandalism. And they also gathered outside the homes of some of the Supreme Court justices, particularly some of the Catholic ones. And one question that we got on social media about the protest that were going to happen to parishes and via email as well was whether or not we were ready for this. Had the Diocese prepared for this kind of scenario? What would be your answer to that question?

Bishop Burbidge (03:52):

Yeah. Before answering that question, just again, what a grave injustice that those threats were all over social media, and we confirmed that they were credible threats. And so we were very concerned about our parishes and the freedom of the faithful to worship freely and peacefully in their home parishes and churches. And so we took necessary precautions that are so critical for us to do when such knowledge comes to our attention. And I would like to thank the law enforcement officials throughout our diocese-

Billy Atwell (04:37):

Absolutely.

Bishop Burbidge (04:37):

in the various counties and communities who also were there to assist us in protecting people. I want to just say a word of profound thanks to the faithful of this diocese. I heard from our pastors that our Catholics, they knew, they sold the social media too. They knew that on Sunday, Mother's Day-

Billy Atwell (05:02):

I know.

Bishop Burbidge (05:03):

That there were these grave threats and that there could be disruption at parishes, but they came out in countless number. They did not allow this to keep them home. They came on the fourth Sunday of Easter, Good Shepherd Sunday, Mother's Day, to Mass, particularly grateful to those who came to the church where I was, in St. John, in Leesburg, my schedule's public, so people knew that was a potential target for disruption. And the church was packed, people were joyful and same here at the cathedral and at the churches where parishioners, where we have Supreme Court justices. And I just say to the faithful that perhaps they're approaching this as a wonderful, not a wonderful, but an opportunity to realize that to be faithful in this day and age, to be true to the gospel of life, takes courage.

Billy Atwell (06:05):

Yeah.

Bishop Burbidge (06:05):

And it's not going to get any easier, but it's not different than what the Lord said about if you're going to follow me, you better be willing to take up your cross and have courage to know that I'll be with you

always. And we saw that on Sunday. And and just the fact that justice's homes would be targeted like that. These are individuals on whatever side the issue is, or the justice. These are individuals who give their life and service to our nation and to the protection of the constitution. They're human beings. They have families, some have young children.

Billy Atwell (06:49):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Bishop Burbidge (06:50):

And for any of them to be put through this is just so unfair and just so un-American and un-Christian for sure. And I have assured our Supreme Court justices of my prayers and the prayers of the faithful of this diocese that God will bless them, watch over them and protect them as they continue to serve honorably.

Billy Atwell (07:14):

Yeah. And our parishes, a lot of them, have security ministry programs in place. And that's, again, this is your BLA at work because we have professionals in the area of security that train our pastors and our schools, so that they're prepared for these kinds of situations. And while there weren't any disturbances on diocesan properties this past weekend, there was a pregnancy center in Manassas that was vandalized. Protestors blocked the entrance of the Basilica of Old St. Patrick in New York and chanted, "Thank God for abortion." In Madison, Wisconsin, police are investigating arson in a situation that many are calling a hate crime at the office of the Wisconsin Family Action. And in that case, a Molotov cocktail was actually thrown into the building and that a separate fire was set, causing damage. And then painting on the side of the building, "If abortions aren't safe, then you aren't either." These are really escalating, radical acts of violence.

Bishop Burbidge (08:09):

It's frightening.

Billy Atwell (08:09):

What is your reaction when you see this?

Bishop Burbidge (08:11):

Well, thanks for mentioning our risk management program in the office, which as you said, is supported by the generosity of our people. We did reach out to all the pastors prior to this weekend to encourage them to review their protocols with their staff and their team, and also to make that contact with the local law enforcement. Our pastors have handled this weekend and-

Billy Atwell (08:35):

Yeah.

Bishop Burbidge (08:35):

We're going to have to be prudent in the future-

Billy Atwell (08:36):

Yeah.

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

With the same type of security. What you just mentioned, you've heard me talk on this podcast many, many times about the consequences of incivility and division. The reason is that when people allow their emotions to boil over and don't have that ability or desire to cope with disagreement, they turn to radical and even violent behavior as we're seeing. And this reaction is so unfortunate and sad and somewhat predictable when controversial issues are removed from the public square and being able to carry it out in a civil way.

Billy Atwell ([09:19](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Bishop Burbidge ([09:20](#)):

And so, it's not surprising, but totally unacceptable. It is a time for all of us, dear friends, to pray for peace within our communities and within our nation. And also for all those involved in law enforcement. But I always think of the March for Life, and thousands and thousands of people come to March for Life. And how do we march? We march peacefully, we march serenely, we march prayerfully, we march even within unity. And because we have the truth.

Billy Atwell ([10:03](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Bishop Burbidge ([10:03](#)):

See, that's the truth. These are the gifts that the truth brings to you. And so when you don't have the truth and you're of the mind that the unborn should not be protected and can be murdered, and you're of the mind that if you disagree with even someone in the highest court, you have the right to do anything you want, you're not going to be peaceful. And you're going to reflect the anger and the hatred that we have seen on the television. It's sad to see.

Billy Atwell ([10:39](#)):

Very much.

Bishop Burbidge ([10:39](#)):

And you just have to pray, pray God, that those hearts would be transformed. We can disagree, but let's be consistent when we say we are supposed to respect and love one another.

Billy Atwell ([10:53](#)):

Yeah.

Bishop Burbidge ([10:53](#)):

Let's be consistent. That goes for both sides of any issue and of the aisle.

Billy Atwell ([10:59](#)):

And it makes sense that if you dehumanize a child in the womb, you're going to dehumanize Supreme Court justices, people you disagree with and turn to violent behavior. Abortion is a violent act. If people be supportive of abortion, you'll be supportive of all kinds of violence and hatred.

Bishop Burbidge ([11:14](#)):

Well, of course. If you don't get it right from the beginning, you're not-

Billy Atwell ([11:17](#)):

Yeah.

Bishop Burbidge ([11:20](#)):

going to be consistent. See, that's a beautiful thing about Jesus and the gospel of life. It's a beautiful aspect of our Catholic faith. We're consistent.

Billy Atwell ([11:31](#)):

That's true.

Bishop Burbidge ([11:32](#)):

All of life is sacred. The unborn, the disabled, the poor, those in need. Everyone's our brother and sister, and we're consistent with that just like Jesus was.

Billy Atwell ([11:44](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

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

And so if you don't get it right from the beginning, then you see this kind of behavior and actually people just acting so irrationally.

Billy Atwell ([11:54](#)):

Yeah.

Bishop Burbidge ([11:55](#)):

And it's, pray God, again, for the peace that only he can give. There's the great Gospel reading today, always gave me a little hope, because I watched the news late last night, I went to bed a little restless seeing all this going on, but was reminded today that Jesus says, "Whoever believes in me, walks in the light." And that's what we do. We try our best to obey God's commands, to uphold the gospel of life, to love and respect all persons without exception. That allows us to walk in the light, not the darkness, not the evil that we're seeing all around us, especially attacks against churches, sacred places of worships and homes of Supreme Court justices.

Billy Atwell ([12:41](#)):

Absolutely. And I know when we have such stress and incivility in society, people will come up to you when you're at these parish visits and say, "What can we do to help? What should we be doing?" And

the US bishops just announced an opportunity, an effort that could provide that answer. Would you share with us what that is?

Bishop Burbidge ([12:58](#)):

Right. In the midst of the current tensions, my brother bishops and I are inviting everyone in our country to join in fasting and praying the Rosary on this Friday, May the 13th, the Memorial of Our Lady of Fatima, provincially. We're praying for our nation, for the integrity of our judicial system and that all branches of government be dedicated to seeking the common good, protecting the dignity and rights of the human person from conception to natural death. We're praying on Friday and fasting for this intention for the overturning of Roe versus Wade, and Planned Parenthood versus Casey, and the Supreme Court's final decision in Dobbs versus Jackson.

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

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Bishop Burbidge ([13:38](#)):

We're praying for the conversion of the hearts and minds of those who advocate for abortion and for a new commitment to building an America where children are welcomed, cherished, and cared for. Where mothers and fathers are encouraged and strengthened, and where marriage and the family are recognized and supported as true foundations of a healthy and flourishing and peaceful society. We're praying for our Blessed Mother's intercession and guidance as the Church continues to walk with mothers and families in need and continues to promote alternatives to abortion and seeks to create a culture of life. And let's remind people what the Catholic Church does and has always done for life, and especially for mothers. We do everything to assist mothers in crisis pregnancies. We provide housing, beautiful support systems for single moms. We certainly have always been involved in adoption, trying to...these children who are welcome to the world, to give them a stable and happy and holy family in which to live. We have our Project Gabriel for moms who can't afford the basic necessities for their children, whether it be food or diapers or clothing or whatever.

Billy Atwell ([14:54](#)):

Even medical care with the Mother of Mercy Clinic.

Bishop Burbidge ([14:56](#)):

The Mercy Medical Clinic.

Billy Atwell ([14:56](#)):

Ultrasounds.

Bishop Burbidge ([14:57](#)):

And this is for mothers of all faiths.

Billy Atwell ([15:00](#)):

Oh yeah.

Bishop Burbidge ([15:00](#)):

Ultrasound and care, the clinics that provide that. And Project Rachel, which is the moms who chose abortion and who have suffered so greatly and are in need of healing and who through the Catholic church, mothers and fathers who participated in abortion, find the healing and the love and the mercy of God. I do ask all of the faithful to please fast, do some fasting on Friday and also pray the Rosary, if you can, as a family. I'm going to have a great chance on, again, this is providential, but I'll be with all the homeschool families, or at least all the homeschool families are invited to be with me at Mass at Holy Trinity in Gainesville, 10:00 a.m. for Mass. And then with this request for my brother bishops, we will, after Mass, this is news that I'm conveying out to the homeschool families.

Billy Atwell ([16:03](#)):

Breaking news. Here we go.

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

Breaking news. We're going to say, after Mass, friends, we're going to, as we gather as homeschool families, we're going to pray the Rosary together. And I'm going to ask families to lead each decade of the Rosary.

Billy Atwell ([16:15](#)):

Oh, that's wonderful. That'll be a beautiful witness for sure.

Bishop Burbidge ([16:19](#)):

Yes.

Billy Atwell ([16:19](#)):

Bishop, some are saying that our president has made the situation worse and that he's not being strong enough in condemning the violence against Catholics and pro-lifers, and going further President Biden, he espouses the Catholic faith, but he has also supported abortion, sometimes to an even greater level since becoming president. Recently, his spokesperson failed to articulate any restrictions that the president would place on abortion, even in the very latest stages of pregnancy. And last year, his budget proposal sought to remove the restrictions on publicly funding abortion. With him professing the Catholic faith, I know this is complicated, but how should we proceed, how should we understand this situation with him being a high profile Catholic and yet also espousing things that we know are not true?

Bishop Burbidge ([17:02](#)):

Well in short, Billy, just because he is president doesn't mean he's right.

Billy Atwell ([17:07](#)):

Well, that's true.

Bishop Burbidge ([17:08](#)):

They're pretty clear about that. You can be the most powerful person in the world and profess any religious conviction you want. It does not mean you're right. This is especially true when you deny the most basic reality that the child in the womb deserves life and deserves to be protected. I find it very troubling that President Biden continues to contradict the most basic teachings of the faith he professes. It's a shame, it really is, both for the state, for his own soul. And also because he's missing

the opportunity to do good in his role that is unmatched, the ability he has to do good. And it's so sad to see him not doing that. Imagine if he chose to support women in need rather than encourage wider access to abortion.

Bishop Burbidge ([17:54](#)):

Imagine if he were to proclaim the truth that children in the womb should be treated as a gift, not a threat or a disease. For some reason, I don't know him, and so I'm unsure as to why he chooses to err on the most fundamental and self-evident truths. And this is causing great scandal when he announces both his faith and his pro-abortion position publicly. I pray that he will change his position, repent of the scandal and the damage that is being caused. We hear that beautiful reading on Sunday, Good Shepherd Sunday. And the Lord says that his flock, his people, they hear his voice and they follow his commands. Well, obviously in this situation, the president and other political leaders are not following his commands, but I was thinking. Maybe if we pray for anything, we pray that the president and all in position to lead and to make a positive difference, maybe that's where things are going off.

Bishop Burbidge ([19:00](#)):

Maybe they're listening to the voices of public opinion and majority in polls rather than the truth. So my prayer recently has been that, as busy as he is, as demanding as his job is, that the president and other elected officials would find time, because the door of our churches are open to everyone to find time to just go in church, just sit in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, be still, be quiet, and allow the voice of the Lord to speak to you. We know what that voice will say. We know what that voice will say to the president, to all of us. Protect my children, love me, respect one another, uphold the gospel of life. And so, as we always say to Catholics, the churches of our doors are open to you to simply be in the presence of the Lord, the one alone who can transform hearts, the one alone in the Sacrament of Penance who is willing to forgive our sins, no matter how great they may be and allow us to begin anew.

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

So we do pray. We pray for the president. We pray for all elected officials, that their hearts will be transformed to do what is good and holy and true. But you know what? It really begins by listening to the voice of the Good Shepherd, the one who shows us the path where we don't get lost in life, but the path that leads to life both now for eternity.

Billy Atwell ([20:33](#)):

That was wonderful. Thank you for that. Moving on to a happier topic.

Bishop Burbidge ([20:37](#)):

Okay, let's do that.

Billy Atwell ([20:38](#)):

I'm going to pull this up here for a second. We are in the midst of, and even approaching, graduation season. I know you do a lot of traveling to our high school graduations in this diocese and celebrate Mass with them and speak with the young people before they head off to college. As you reflect on what you're going to be saying and some of the comments you're going to offer to these high schoolers and their families, what are some of the thoughts that come to mind? I'm not asking for a total scoop.



Bishop Burbidge (21:02):

Yeah, yeah.

Billy Atwell (21:03):

But what comes to mind when you prepare for those interactions?

Bishop Burbidge (21:06):

Yeah. Well, first of all, congratulations!

Billy Atwell (21:09):

Yeah.

Bishop Burbidge (21:10):

The high schools, I know our Catholic high schools, and I'm sure the high schools that our other students attend, are very demanding and there's a lot of work. It requires dedication and perseverance. I would say to high school students, when you get that diploma, be proud.

Billy Atwell (21:25):

Yeah.

Bishop Burbidge (21:25):

It reflects that you succeeded and I'm sure you worked hard and your parents deserve a lot of credit too. First of all, congratulations, and know that all you achieved was not on your own, it was with the help and grace of God. Be thankful, be thankful to your parents, be thankful to your educators, your teachers, those who served you throughout the years, and then take with you the virtues, the values that you've learned to the next stage in your life and see this as an exciting moment, because God has continued blessings ready for you and in store for you.

Bishop Burbidge (22:05):

But as you go, bring with your faith, bring your faith with you, or you're going to get consumed no matter what school or university you go to, because most of our students will be going to larger campuses. And unfortunately, on Catholic universities and colleges and non-Catholic universities and colleges, there are a lot of untruths there, there's a lot of temptations there. And if you don't go with God, if you don't let God walk with you, then it's going to be too overwhelming for you try to do by yourself. I usually, in our Catholic school graduations each year, I give them actually a crucifix to take with them. I said, please bring this with you, please pack this. First of all, I want you to remember how much God loves you, that you're not traveling alone, and that when things are challenging and difficult, just look to that crucifix, because from there, you will find the strength and grace you need to be that person that God's calling you to be.

Billy Atwell (23:08):

Wow. That's wonderful. Very powerful. Especially as they're preparing for such a big step. All right. We have a couple , questions from the faithful, but before we jump into that, just want to remind listeners, we have our ordination to the priesthood coming up on Saturday, June 4. It's at St. Thomas More

Cathedral at 11 a.m. You're welcome to attend in person. We will also be livestreaming it, however, at our YouTube channel, [youtube.com/arlingtondiocese](https://youtube.com/arlingtondiocese). Again, that's Saturday, June 4, at St. Thomas More Cathedral at 11. We've also got the Diocesan Family Festival coming up. This was called Arise last year, but we've rebranded it a bit. That's going to be June 11 from 4 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.; it's at the Warren County fairgrounds. It's going to start with a 4 p.m. vigil Mass followed by food and games, rides, inflatables. There's going to be Catholic vendors there selling all kinds of great stuff and more. Attendance is free, food is for purchase, but it costs nothing to come and enjoy all the games and the rides and all those good things.

Bishop Burbidge ([24:06](#)):

And I hope our families and individuals attend. The Holy Father has asked us to gather with families before the Synod with families or gathering with families, we're all gathering with families. We're going to do it as a diocese. And again, we're going to begin in the perfect way possible: with Mass.

Billy Atwell ([24:23](#)):

Yeah.

Bishop Burbidge ([24:23](#)):

And then it's going to be lots of fun. And the most important thing is, we'll be together-

Billy Atwell ([24:28](#)):

Exactly.

Bishop Burbidge ([24:29](#)):

Reminding us that we are a part of something bigger. We're a diocese in family. Though just if I could, just before we get to the questions, I know with that question before with dealing with politicians and things like that, just a reminder. I can assure the faithful, because I know I get asked this question a lot, then what are you telling these politicians? And I would just like to say, I mean, I'm not the president's bishop, I'm not the Bishop of Wilmington or Washington, but I am the bishop of politicians. And I think, like many of my other bishops. We don't broadcast this, but there are times that we have some very difficult conversations and we share with them what I just said and also speak to them what it means to be in communion with the Church and to be worthy. And I would say, I mean, again, we don't broadcast this, there have been occasions where scandal has been avoided because of those conversations, but that sometimes is best handled privately.

Billy Atwell ([25:36](#)):

Yeah.

Bishop Burbidge ([25:37](#)):

But we have to continue to be willing to engage and to challenge in the appropriate way. I just wanted to just get back to that.

Billy Atwell ([25:45](#)):

Perfect. Thank you. All right. The first question is, can you provide background on why bishops tend to wear their pectoral cross in the pocket of their shirt and not wear them down? Also, do bishops wear

only one pectoral cross throughout their episcopacy, I guess kind of like a ring. Is it the same pectoral cross or do you change them out?

Bishop Burbidge ([26:03](#)):

It's funny. I was just at Confirmation last night and the students were asking me about that same question about the cross that the bishops wear, the pectoral cross. Yeah. The cross I wear most frequently is the one given me by John Paul II. It's actually held by a saint.

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

Yeah.

Bishop Burbidge ([26:25](#)):

And there's many times I grabbed that cross throughout the day and ask for his powerful intercession. And I do feel it too.

Billy Atwell ([26:31](#)):

That makes it a relic then, right?

Bishop Burbidge ([26:32](#)):

Yeah.

Billy Atwell ([26:33](#)):

Wow.

Bishop Burbidge ([26:33](#)):

It's held by a saint. How you like that? I get a little nervous when I say to the kids, "Hey, a saint gave me this cross. What Saint you think gave to me? Once, a kid says St. Francis of Assisi? I'm like, okay, I'm not that old. I mean, I'm not that old, come on. And so for me personally, I'll give you the technical answer, but for me personally, when I put the cross on, I say a prayer every day, because it goes near my heart.

Billy Atwell ([27:01](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Bishop Burbidge ([27:01](#)):

And I just say, Lord, help me to keep you close to my heart to stay, so that I may proclaim your love to others. That's just a personal prayer.

Billy Atwell ([27:09](#)):

Oh wonderful.

Bishop Burbidge ([27:09](#)):

And it's a wonderful reminder, but it's mention in the ceremonial bishops that this is part of the vesture of bishops and the place in the cross is... "pectoral" comes from the Latin meaning "of the chest." Bishop always wears the pectoral cross near his chest in liturgical and non-liturgical celebrations. Some bishops

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have multiple crosses. I do. Most of them have been gifts given to me, either by brother bishops or by the diocese or archdiocese where bishops have served and have gone home to God. You sometimes wear their cross. I wear across that the priest gave the Bishop Keating-

Billy Atwell ([27:59](#)):

Oh wow.

Bishop Burbidge ([27:59](#)):

when he came here. That's just as a reminder of the history of the diocese.

Billy Atwell ([28:02](#)):

They're not buried with the petrol cross, I guess then, right?

Bishop Burbidge ([28:05](#)):

They are, but again, they may have multiple ones.

Billy Atwell ([28:07](#)):

Oh, they may have multiple. I see that.

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

Right. And yeah. Some bishops wear it outside where the cross is very visible.

Billy Atwell ([28:15](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Bishop Burbidge ([28:16](#)):

I usually wear mine across my heart-

Billy Atwell ([28:17](#)):

Yeah.

Bishop Burbidge ([28:17](#)):

and in my suit coat pocket-

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

Yeah.

Bishop Burbidge ([28:21](#)):

More as a practical reason, because it's not flopping around the whole time.

Billy Atwell ([28:24](#)):

Yes. Smacking into your laptop.

Bishop Burbidge ([28:25](#)):

Both are acceptable.

Billy Atwell ([28:27](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

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

I remember one nuncio, one of the representatives of the Holy Father, used to tell a funny story is that when he, because the other question is when you're celebrating Mass, whether you should wear it outside your vestment or inside. But technically, I'm almost positive, the answer is you're supposed to wear under the vestment.

Billy Atwell ([28:50](#)):

Okay.

Bishop Burbidge ([28:51](#)):

But this one, nuncio used to say, when he was vesting, all the bishops would be in his sacristy with him and everyone was kind of watching him, like, "I'll do what he does." And then, like he said, I would put it on the outside and they'd all put it on the outside. Then I would put inside and then they would all put it on the inside. He would have fun with that.

Billy Atwell ([29:11](#)):

When you're the nuncio, you can play some games like that.

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

You can play some games like that.

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

You can get away with it.

Bishop Burbidge ([29:16](#)):

But yeah. Thanks. That was a good question. Thanks.

Billy Atwell ([29:17](#)):

All right. The next question is we presume your deadline is approaching and preparing the synodal report that you'll send to Rome. Do you have any insights to share and was the process easier or harder than you anticipated?

Bishop Burbidge ([29:28](#)):

It was a very- Yeah, when we first got that process to go have listening sessions throughout the Diocese and every parish, and here are some questions that we want you to consider, I wasn't quite sure what to expect.

Billy Atwell ([29:42](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Bishop Burbidge (29:43):

But my experiences have been wonderful. And I know most of our pastors have said the same. Number one, that people were very transparent. We ask them where has your parish, where has the diocese, the Church help you to encounter Christ? And a lot of times you hear so many, many, many good things. And there was a question about where has that been at church or parish, that's been an obstacle. People were transparent and speaking about their own experience or of loved ones. We heard some challenges too, always respectfully. And then we asked, well, how can we better evangelize and lead people to Christ?

Bishop Burbidge (30:19):

And we receive some really, really good ideas. And so, I've really found them to be engaging and inspiring. Actually, the paper is almost written because there were certain themes that were repeated. And that's what the Holy See wants to see is, what were those common themes that you were hearing? Every parish that had listening sessions have submitted to us their notes, especially the ones that I was not able to attend.

Billy Atwell (30:49):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Bishop Burbidge (30:49):

Every parish had a note taker. We have all the responses. We have in front of us everything that we have heard. Fr. Don Planty, his committee is organizing for all of that and helping me in drafting a 10-page report that has to be sent to the Holy See. That report will be shared once I submit it to the Nuncio in Holy See. That report will be shared with all the faithful of the Diocese.

Billy Atwell (31:13):

Right. Yeah.

Bishop Burbidge (31:14):

Okay. Everyone will see what we experienced and what we heard throughout these listening sessions.

Billy Atwell (31:19):

That's great. A shout out to Fr. Planty. He had organized this so well from the beginning, I think the pastors felt very supported and had clear guidance on what to do, how to do it, and then providing feedback and collecting that and kind analyzing it. He's been really impressive in this.

Bishop Burbidge (31:35):

And he really has done a great job. And so have, what was key to the listening sessions were the facilitators.

Billy Atwell (31:41):

That's right. Yeah.

Bishop Burbidge (31:41):

And that's a hard job.

Billy Atwell (31:42):

That is not easy.

Bishop Burbidge (31:43):

All right. Because your job is we got to keep people focused.

Billy Atwell (31:46):

Right.

Bishop Burbidge (31:46):

We got to keep them on topic.

Billy Atwell (31:48):

Yep.

Bishop Burbidge (31:48):

And we got to keep them three minutes... That's not an easy task.

Billy Atwell (31:51):

That might have been the hardest part.

Bishop Burbidge (31:52):

That's the hardest part. But we had some great facilitators and great note takers, but again, Father Planty and his committee, deep, deep, thanks to them.

Billy Atwell (32:02):

Bishop, we've engaged a number of deep topics and heavy topics here. Are there any final thoughts? And then if you would send us off with your blessing.

Bishop Burbidge (32:08):

No, it's just a wonderful time of year in the Church. I know many of our young people have received their First Holy Communion. Congratulations to all of them and their parents. I'll be, not this weekend, the following weekend, I'll have the great joy of giving my grandniece celebrating Mass for her First Holy Communion. Very much looking forward to that. We just honored our mothers and Mother's Day. In June, we're looking forward to graduations, ordinations of eight new priests, Father's Day, our family gathering. There's just so many joyful things happening in our midst. And it's important for us to see that, to see them, to see the goodness within our diocese, to see the generosity and sacrifices and faithfulness of so many people. Because if not, and all this darkness and evil that we've been talking about, it would get overwhelming.

Billy Atwell (33:06):

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Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Bishop Burbidge (33:07):

But the Lord says, I know, I'm the light. I've conquered a darkness. And when we look around every day, we see that light through so many people and so many great initiatives in this diocese. And the Lord just asks us to do our part each day. Just do your part to radiate my light to others with that conviction that he has...the risen Lord has conquered the darkness. Let's live in that faith, let's live in that joyful hope and let's 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](http://arlingtondiocese.org).