

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

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

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

Welcome to the Walk Humbly podcast. I'm Billy Atwell, Chief Communications Officer for the Diocese, and your co-host. If you're listening to this podcast and you're benefiting from the generosity of those who have given to the Bishop's Lenten Appeal, the BLA supports many ministries throughout the Dioceses, but that includes the communications office. So for those who have made a gift to the BLA, thank you for making this possible.

Billy Atwell ([00:30](#)):

If you haven't, please rate this podcast and write a review wherever you're listening to it. And if you're listening on YouTube, please subscribe and ring the notifications bell. You can sign up for our e-newsletter at [arlingtondiocese.org](http://arlingtondiocese.org), and you can follow Bishop Burbidge on Twitter @bishopburbidge, where every day you can get a short reflection on the gospel of that day. You can also follow the Diocese on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Send your questions for Bishop Burbidge to [info@arlingtondiocese.org](mailto:info@arlingtondiocese.org). Again, that's [info@arlingtondiocese.org](mailto:info@arlingtondiocese.org).

Billy Atwell ([00:59](#)):

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

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

I'm doing well, Billy, thank you so much. Great to be with you and our listeners.

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

Definitely. So we got some big news this week. The quality standards program for the National Association of Free and Charitable Clinics gave Catholic Charities a gold rating. This is a big deal in that world with the Mother of Mercy Clinic. We just found out today mostly, but it was awarded just earlier this week. What's your reaction to that?

Bishop Burbidge ([01:23](#)):

Yes. I just learned about it right before we started this podcast. It's great news, and it's important to note that it's a national award. What the award is and what it reveals is not only is the Mother of Mercy Clinic exceptional in its faithfulness to the church's teaching and the gospel of life, but it is also an exceptional medical clinic and the care that it provides, the high quality care, especially to our brothers and sisters in need, who would not be able to receive this care otherwise.

Bishop Burbidge ([01:58](#)):

So it was a great week because I was actually at the clinic this week to bless the new chapel inside of the clinic. And we did live stream that on Facebook so others could see. But I mean, how many medical clinics have its own chapel with Jesus present? The blessed sacrament is present. I celebrated mass in that chapel, so we at that clinic can encourage the people who come with sufferings and crosses and burdens, not only to receive care, but you're more than welcome, because the doors are open to anyone who comes in the clinic to just be with the Lord and unite them to his sufferings. Because we know that from them, he will turn them to glory.

Bishop Burbidge ([02:48](#)):

And it's important how God has worked through that clinic. As many of our listeners know, the building that the Mother of Mercy Clinic operates now used to be an abortion clinic where so many of our faithful prayed outside for many, many years. And the room that is now the chapel, think about this, was the room where women would recover after having the abortion.

Billy Atwell ([03:15](#)):

Isn't that amazing?

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

Imagine the emotions that were in that room. But now God's transformative love and compassion are alive in what was once that recovery room, is now that room, that sacred place that houses the tabernacle [crosstalk 00:00:03:32].

Billy Atwell ([03:33](#)):

Yeah. I mean, you couldn't script that better. It's an amazing story. It really is.

Bishop Burbidge ([03:37](#)):

Absolutely beautiful.

Billy Atwell ([03:38](#)):

If you want to learn more about Catholic charities, if you want to learn more about that clinic or how you can help in various ways go to [ccda.net](http://ccda.net) where you can find out all that good information.

Bishop Burbidge ([03:48](#)):

I'm glad you mentioned that, because the clinic can do so much good work because of volunteers in the healthcare medical professionals and through some generous benefactors, right from the beginning, who had that determination, "We're going to get this done," Generous benefactors and those who continue to support it. So thanks for mentioning the contact.

Billy Atwell ([04:07](#)):

Absolutely. Last week you ordained five men to the priesthood. In the midst of everything we're dealing with, this was a bright light for a lot of people, and this was actually the most watched livestream we've ever had in the diocese. And for good reason, obviously. What was the experience like for you?

Bishop Burbidge ([04:22](#)):

It's always one of the greatest joys as a Bishop through the imposition of hands and the prayer of ordination, you give birth to five new priests sent forth in service. And we are so blessed in this diocese with our new five priests, Father Guillermo Gonzalez and Father Peter [McShirley 00:04:43], Father, Joseph Moschetto and Father Charles Pavlick, and James Waakles, they are going to go to their new parishes with lots of zeal and lots of energy. And I told them good because we have lots of work for them.

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

But it really was a great joy and it was unique in that the safety protocols and guidelines that we are following in all our parishes were in place. With this social distancing in light of 50% maximum capacity, we were limited to about 225, 250 guests, but it was a good size congregation. And I thought it was going to be a little awkward in that kind of setting with people of course wearing masks and all those things, but God just broke through all that. And it was just such a beautiful and joyful celebration and the same realities that happen at any other ordination occurred. The handing on of the ministerial priesthood of Jesus Christ was accomplished.

Billy Atwell ([05:52](#)):

No, it was a beautiful, beautiful ceremony. And if anyone wants to watch it, you can go to our YouTube channel and take a look. I spoke with a couple of the newly ordained priest just after their ordination, asked them what it was like living at a rectory during COVID-19 over this time. And they said it was good to have downtime to speak with the pastor of the parish where they were and get some expertise from them, some wisdom from a pastor who has been a priest for a long time. When a priest is ordained, he obviously doesn't have all the skills he needs yet. He has the spiritual gifts of ordination, but there's a lot to learn. Marriages are the same way. But what role do more seasoned priest play in the life of a newly ordained priest?

Bishop Burbidge ([06:30](#)):

Right, so many of them, of course, just by their example, help to inspire and encourage. When young priests see, look at this priest, he's been a priest for 40, 50 years and he has the zeal and the energy and joy of a newly ordained... Wow, this is the life to which God has called me. So I think sometimes just by the example, but the church encourages bishops when they assign priests newly ordained to do so, not just according to the size of the parish, but actually in reference to the pastor. Is this someone that is known for just being a good mentor, someone who's able to be a good teacher and has the patience of working with someone brand new?

Bishop Burbidge ([07:14](#)):

And all five of our priests are going to such pastors who will be a great help to them. And certainly, as you mentioned, just as in marriage, it's a lifelong process. The formation, what you learn and how you apply what you learn, how you correct the mistakes, it never ends. And as Bishop, it's part of my responsibility to play a key role, especially in the ongoing formation of our men, one to five years ordained. So that particular group has the great joy of meeting with me at least four times a year.

Billy Atwell ([07:53](#)):

That's very good. I'm sure that it is helpful for them though, as it would be for anyone. All right Bishop, most of Virginia has been in phase two for about a week now, we've been going through this process as we hear from the governor about what's next. And Northern Virginia and the city of Richmond are joining phase two, starting today actually. We have a guest who's going to help us understand a little bit more of what this phase and next phases might look like for us in the diocese.

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

Yeah, that's right. Today, as our guest on the podcast, we have Ward Jones to join us. Ward is our new chief operations officer here in the diocese. And he adds such great expertise and experience to the great team I have around me, assisting me every day in carrying out and responding to the needs of our diocese. Another great reminder that in our central offices, I mean, most of the people who are part of

the team assisting me in the offices are the people with the expertise in certain areas. Whether it be finances or human resources and all mostly laity who give and share these gifts with them, with the church. And so I'm so thankful for the wonderful team I have around me.

Bishop Burbidge ([09:12](#)):

And Ward has brought a great energy to our department, and I think he made it a point to get out to see every one of our pastors within his, what was it? First 60 days?

Ward Jones ([09:23](#)):

100 days.

Bishop Burbidge ([09:24](#)):

100 days. So thank you for doing that Ward. But Ward comes with us a tremendous background, having served as a crisis planner for the state department, an intelligence officer in the Marine Corps, an IT consultant, and prior to joining the diocese as a consultant in strategic planning, project management and leadership for a Fortune 500 company. So Ward, thanks so much for joining us today.

Ward Jones ([09:47](#)):

Thank you, Bishop.

Billy Atwell ([09:49](#)):

So Ward, Bishop commissioned a reintegration working group that is made up of educators, pastors, public health experts and so on to help discern ways to reopen the diocese. Talk a little bit about what those meetings have been like, what's been discussed and so on.

Ward Jones ([10:03](#)):

Sure. Well, the reintegration working group was the Bishop's idea. It's proven to be an excellent idea, and it's been helpful as we plan through the many facets of the reopening that we are facing. So the diocese is a community. It doesn't just have the house of worship, it also has church offices, schools, recreational activities, food service, and social gatherings. And so what the working group has been working on every week is systematically reviewing the sector guidelines that were provided by the Commonwealth, and then interpreting those for these various facets.

Ward Jones ([10:37](#)):

And so some of the guidelines that the working group has presented to you, Bishop, for your approval have been guidelines for safely reopening the mass, guidelines for other sacraments, such as weddings, confessions, and anointing of the sick. Guidelines for what to do if a pastor finds a priest, or even an employee is sick. Guidelines for parish, activities and events, and lastly guidelines for our schools. So the reintegration working group is a mix of clergy and medical professionals, laities and employees. And their challenge is to try to write these guidelines in a way, how they would interpret or feel or hear as members of the diocese.

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

Yes. And the guidelines are available, Billy, on our website pages, and what has been produced has been very specific, very helpful to those various entities that you mentioned and other... I just want to

commend this Ward and Father Workman for leading this group and the experts who joined it. I mean, other dioceses have asked if we could share those resources with them. They're that well done. And as Ward said, what we are most concerned about is the health and safety of our parishioners and our staff. That's the highest concern for us and these guidelines are very, very, very meaningful and helpful in that way. And they work very hard. I mean, they meet every week and there's lots of debates and discussions, but well done. And I'm very grateful. What has been the most challenging part of the work for the working group. I check in with you every once in a while, before I get the final recommendations, but...

Ward Jones ([12:23](#)):

I think that the most challenging part is trying to navigate differences of opinion on some very heavy subjects. So for example, the face coverings. We get a lot of communication about the face coverings. There are many people that are passionate and well-reasoned on both sides of this. We hear from doctors and the CDC on their guidelines, and there is science to suggest that these are a good preventative measure. And there's science that suggests, well, maybe there's questions about their efficacy, but we hear both sides. And so you can imagine that on one side of the field, there's 10 doctors lined up with a position, on the other side of the field there's another 10 doctors lined up. And so the working group is trying to navigate that and there's equal opinions on both sides. But as you know, we have put a premium on what the advice of the Center for Disease Control and for the national public health service because of their expertise.

Ward Jones ([13:20](#)):

And so our position, your position, has not been a political one. It's been a position that's been based upon science and medicine and listening to experts in the field. So I would ask all the listeners is that if some feel that we've made an error, at least consider that we've made an error on the side of caution and prevention.

Billy Atwell ([13:40](#)):

Yeah, absolutely. And when you think about the CDC and the National Institute for Health, they're looking at enormous data sets too, which is very helpful because we can look at what's available to us, but that's always going to be a little bit limited. So we're entering phase two. What are some of the considerations, or what some of the work that the working group is going to be digging into as we look toward phase three, which they're anticipating two to four weeks out?

Ward Jones ([14:00](#)):

Right. So the White House originally put out its guidelines called Opening Up America Again. They were rather broad and they were broad on purpose so that individual states like our state could interpret those and they have. And so the Commonwealth has given us guidelines for phase two, as we know that limits occupancy up to 50% and limits gatherings of 50 or less. Our Commonwealth has not delivered guidelines for phase three yet, but if you use the White House guidelines as representative of where we're going, it's going to show a further loosening of occupancy, greater numbers for gatherings. And even in phase three, they contemplate movie theaters and sporting venues being open.

Ward Jones ([14:43](#)):

So Bishop, I mean, there's an opportunity there for you to watch your Philadelphia Eagles. It could be coming. I'm not promising that, but it could be coming. But that's where we're going. And I just want to

thank you Bishop, for your foresight in creating the working group. It's work, I think, has provided a thoughtful approach to the reopening. And we ask listeners to pray for you and pray for the working group, pray for charity, pray for prudence, as we try to navigate these recommendations and provide them to you.

Bishop Burbidge ([15:13](#)):

Thank you. And thanks for your leadership on that working group. And we were blessed to gather such a wide variety of experience and expertise on that group. And I extend my deep appreciation to all of them. Thanks Ward.

Billy Atwell ([15:31](#)):

Bishop, in your last podcast, you addressed the horrible and tragic situation regarding the killing of George Floyd and the violence and some of the writing that occurred afterward. Sadly, much of our country is still experiencing a lot of those after effects. You offered an alternative this past Monday when you celebrated a mass for the preservation of peace and justice, as well as a national rosary that was conducted via telephone. People called in from all over. Your homily from that mass is posted on our YouTube channel. But for those who haven't seen it or heard it, what was your core message there?

Bishop Burbidge ([16:00](#)):

Well first, I was honored to be joined at the mass by leaders throughout our diocese representing such great diversity, including groups through outer diocese, from the African American community. And by joining together a mass, we affirm that first and foremost, we are a people of faith and we approach any issue, especially an injustice, asking God for his help and for his mercy. So we prayed for Mr. Floyd, all grieving his death. We prayed for an end of all forms of injustice, including racism, discrimination, evil acts against a human person. And we asked the Holy Spirit at that mass to give us courage so that we can bring our voice and our faith and our moral convictions into the public arena. And we have to acknowledge that while the overwhelming majority of law enforcement officers are good and honorable, there are some that abuse that power as we tragically recently saw, and that must be addressed. And we have to call that out and say that cannot stand. Regardless of our race, we have an obligation to look inside our own hearts.

Bishop Burbidge ([17:12](#)):

And to think about times when maybe perhaps we acted unjustly, maybe in a subtle way or not such a subtle way to someone because of how they looked, or if we had a bias against someone or another race. We have to dig deep and look at, was there any moment in my life I have done that, or maybe failed to prevent that from happening to someone? We confess that to God, and we ask for forgiveness and healing. Racism at its core is a spiritual affliction, I believe, Billy. It occurs when someone denies the inherent human dignity of another person, simply because of the color of their skin. As is this case with other injustices, we must always help uphold that dignity of the human person.

Bishop Burbidge ([18:01](#)):

And so in that homily, I reflected on the beatitudes, I always encourage people to read the beatitudes because as followers of Jesus, it's just not enough for us to follow the 10 commandments. Jesus came and expanded those commandments and called us in the gospel of Matthew chapter 5, verses 1 to 12, to live the beatitudes. Where he says, "Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness for, they will be satisfied. And blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called children of God." So we

know that violence, looting and murders have occurred within some of the protests, and we also condemn such behavior. God calls us to action, but he does not call us to violence or hatred. So we must work productively toward action with peace in our hearts and we must be those peacemakers as we advocate strongly for justice, for equality, for all that is good and holy and right.

Billy Atwell ([19:02](#)):

And if you want to hear the full homily, go to our YouTube channel, just search for Arlington Diocese, and you can find it on there. We have a couple of questions from the faithful. So the first one is from a gentleman named Matt. He says, I haven't seen anything said about the requirement to receive communion during the Easter season known as the Easter Duty. I've seen that other dioceses have dispensed the requirement that the Bishop do so for the Arlington diocese.

Bishop Burbidge ([19:27](#)):

Yeah. Well, you hear that term a lot and some people don't know what that is, what is called the Easter Duty. So I'm grateful to Matt for raising that what is called Easter Duty is a combination of two requirements of Canon Law, not to get too technical here.

Billy Atwell ([19:42](#)):

Yeah. Here we go.

Bishop Burbidge ([19:44](#)):

But first they have to be initiated into the most Holy Eucharist. Each of the faithful is obliged to receive Holy Communion, at least once a year. And this precept must be fulfilled during the Easter season, unless it is fulfilled for just cause another time during the year. So I'm quoting a canon to you, 920, that's why I sounded all official there. And second after having reached the age of discretion, each member of the faithful was obliged to confess faithfully his or her grave sins at least once a year.

Bishop Burbidge ([20:15](#)):

Okay. So that's Easter Duty, and again, it must be fulfilled during the Easter season, unless otherwise noted. Canon Law makes an exception though for the faithful to fulfill the annual duty or receiving communion, confessing sins at a time other than Easter season for a just cause. So the current situation, obviously.

Billy Atwell ([20:37](#)):

It seems like it just cause.

Bishop Burbidge ([20:38](#)):

Provides a just cause for all the faithful impacted by these conditions to receive Holy Communion and confess their sins at another time. And so this allowance is actually given directly to the faithful by Canon Law and no additional dispensation is needed from the diocese and Bishop. We've made it clear throughout this whole pandemic, and even right now, that dispensation from the obligation to attending mass is still in place also. And I do want our faithful to know that, that we are gradually phasing in to return into our churches.

Bishop Burbidge ([21:13](#)):

If you are sick and not feeling well, certainly we ask that you for the good of others do not come to church. If you're at high risk to seriously consider if you're in those categories, not coming at this time. And please note dear friends, if you're just anxious and you're stressed about that, that's a valid reason for... Maybe participate in live stream and offering your spiritual Communion. So again, as we said earlier, it's the spiritual and physical wellbeing of our faithful and our parishioners that are our highest priorities at this time.

Billy Atwell ([21:46](#)):

All right, thanks, Matt for that question. Lee from Queen of Apostles says for those who have no support system, are victims of crime or aggression, or those who have lost everything during the pandemic, how can they avoid narcissism, victimhood, pessimism, et cetera, in order to share in the gifts of the Holy Spirit?

Bishop Burbidge ([22:04](#)):

Yeah. And Lee is correct that we know at this time, so many people are suffering. Some are lacking the basic necessities of life, with food being the greatest need at this time. That's why I'm so happy that many, many of our parishes are stepping up to make sure as our Catholic charities office continually does, to make sure that we're available to provide as many people as possible with the help and material resources they need, whether it be food or, or to get by another month with rent. I talk to a number of our pastors and just one the other day, and what is being accomplished in our parishes because of the generosity of others that allow us to help those in need. And that's one of the beautiful things we see at this time, that people want to do something good to help others. And it's happening locally friends, in our diocese and in our parishes. And in this time of need you avoid narcissism and victimhood and pessimism by being a person of prayer.

Bishop Burbidge ([23:16](#)):

Because then it's not only on you, you're saying, "God, I know I'm not alone. You are with me. And you tell me to call out to you in my time of need. And Lord, I'm handing it all over to you. This is what I'm feeling. This is what I'm experiencing. Give me the strength that I need." So again, by prayer, most of all, by not being embarrassed or to ask for help.

Bishop Burbidge ([23:45](#)):

I mean, many of the people who need help right now have never in their life asked for help. And I know that's it's difficult and awkward, but it's your time of need, you've been there for others now let us help you. So, turn to God, ask for the help you need, know that there are people there to respond. And prayer gets us out of that pessimism and self-referential thinking. That's the greatest help that we receive in prayer. I know that we pray for all those who are going through such difficult times at this moment. And so I do want to encourage people in such situations to contact our parish, to contact our Catholic charities office, to see what it is that we can do to help you. It's not all spiritual, it has to include the spiritual, but God uses us as instruments to help as people. Contact your parish, contact our Catholic charities office, and if there's anything we can do to help you, we stand ready to do so.

Billy Atwell ([24:45](#)):

Yeah, we're a community and a family of faith, we're here to support each other, especially those who are suffering. Bishop, any final thoughts? And if you would send us off with your blessing.



Bishop Burbidge ([24:53](#)):

As you mentioned earlier in the podcast, I had the great privilege of ordaining five priests last week. And tomorrow I will be ordaining four men to the diaconate. These are transitional deacons. In other words, God willing, this time next year, they will be our newest priests. So if they could keep those four men in their prayers. And I know dear friends that all of us are feeling great sadness and heavy hearts as we turn on the TV every day, and see such division and violence and unrest and turmoil in our world.

Bishop Burbidge ([25:32](#)):

It's breaking our hearts, all of our hearts. And yet we know that Jesus will heal and unite and renew us. We stay strong in our faith, in an our joyful hope. And for that we pray and ask for the grace to do our part every day to be an instrument of His justice and His peace. So let's renew ourselves to pray for our nation, to pray for all those who are suffering to pray for ourselves, and that God's blessings will come upon us in this hour of need. I know that this weekend we will also be celebrating Father's Day. I was actually born on Father's Day [crosstalk 00:26:20].

Billy Atwell ([26:21](#)):

Were you really?

Bishop Burbidge ([26:21](#)):

Yeah. I always reminded my dad-

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

[crosstalk 00:26:24] next weekend.

Bishop Burbidge ([26:24](#)):

Oh, it's next weekend? Okay.

Billy Atwell ([26:27](#)):

Our next podcast is after [crosstalk 00:26:29] Father's Day.

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

I was actually born on Father's Day.

Billy Atwell ([26:34](#)):

What a gift.

Bishop Burbidge ([26:35](#)):

I reminded my dad that every year, and he sometimes did not seem convinced of that. But I will not be talking to our fathers until after they celebrate Father's Day, but I do want to thank our dads who every day, try to live out that beautiful vocation of fatherhood, as you love and serve your spouse and your children. It's a beautiful gift to the church. It's a beautiful gift to our society. And so, as you prepare to celebrate Father's Day, I do extend to you my best wishes. And certainly all of us remember our dads, like my own, who has been called home to God, ever thankful for the witness and the gift that they have

been in our lives as we pray for their eternal peace. So let's continue to pray for one another dear friends, as together we walk humbly with our God.

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

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, inspirational content by subscribing to our newsletter at [arlingtondiocese.org](#).