The twofold theme for this year’s Respect Life Month pairs the oft-repeated reassurance from Scripture, “Be Not Afraid,” with the words of Jesus at the Ascension, “Behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:20) The following meditation from the USCCB explains why:

When battered by life’s storms, or immersed in a dense fog of suffering and uncertainty, we may feel alone and unequipped to handle the circumstances. Yet with words that echo through thousands of years into the corners of our hearts, the Lord says to us, “Do not fear: I am with you” (Isaiah 41:10).

He speaks these words not as one who merely observes our pain, but as one who experienced immense suffering. And the very wounds that bear witness to his suffering indicate the essence of our identity and worth: we are loved by God.

Reflecting on the healed wounds of the Risen Christ, we see that even our most difficult trials can be the place where God manifests his victory. He makes all things beautiful. He makes all things new. He is always with us. Jesus promised this when he gave the disciples the same mission he gives to each of us: Go.

Go be my hands and feet to a world enslaved by fear. Go to the woman who is unexpectedly pregnant and fears the future. Go to your friend who fears reprisal at work because he takes a stand for the protection of human life. Go to your aging parent in failing health who fears being a burden. And go to others, too, for their support.

We don’t need to have everything figured out. We can simply follow the guidance of Our Blessed Mother, the first disciple: “Do whatever he tells you” (John 2:5).

Walk with each other. Do not be afraid to embrace God’s gift of life. Whatever storms or trials we face, we are not alone. He is with us.

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Upcoming Diocesan-Wide Events

October is Respect Life Month
“Be Not Afraid” Catholic parishes throughout Vermont will offer prayer, public education and pastoral care initiatives in recognition of Respect Life Month, whose theme this year is Be Not Afraid. Check your parish bulletin to find out how you can participate!

Sunday, October 1
Respect Life Sunday Masses will be offered in recognition of the sanctity of all human life.

Saturday, October 21
Day of Hope
Location: Burlington area
9 am - 4 pm
The Day of Hope is a one-day retreat designed to help women hurting from past abortions experience the personal love of Christ and find hope for healing. The retreat offers a loving and confidential environment with a committed team of 5-6 members including trained Diocesan Staff, a professional counselor, a priest and a woman who has experience post-abortion healing. All team members are committed to absolute confidentiality. For more information, write respectlife@vermontcatholic.org or call (802) 658-6110 x1131. Hosted by the Project Rachel Ministry.
UPCOMING EVENTS

09|30
Essex Catholics for Haiti Fundraiser: Live Music and Dancing
Holy Family-St. Lawrence Center, Essex Jct.
7-10 pm
Bonnie and Ron Tucker will play music from the ‘50s, ‘60s and ‘70s and teach square dancing. Desserts and beverages offered. Suggested donations are $10 per person.

09|30
Life Chain in Burlington and Newport on Respect Life Sunday
Main Street at South Union, Burlington
2-3 pm
Life Chain is a one-hour, inter-faith, silent witness, calling for support for the mission of the Homes.

10|01
Notre Dame Information Session
Rice Memorial High School, S. Burlington
2 pm
The University of Notre Dame Undergraduate Admissions Office will be hosting an information session for interested students and their families.
FOR MORE INFO: and to register, https://enrollment.nd.edu/register/Burlington_100117

10|01
Monthly Healing Service
St. Joseph Co-Cathedral, Burlington
3 pm
Monthly Healing Service within the context of Eucharistic Adoration.

10|02
The Gospel of the Patron Saint of Publishers
Holy Family Parish Center, Essex Junction
7-8 pm
Reflections on the Gospel of John by Rev. Richard Berube, S.S.E.

10|05, 12, 19, 26, 11|02
Unlocking the Mystery of the Bible
Our Lady of Seven Dolors, Fair Haven
6:30-7:30 pm
"Unlocking The Mystery Of The Bible," an eight-part study featuring Jeff Cavins. First three sessions were held on Sept. 14, 21 & 28. Cost of $20 includes a session overview, talk notes, discussion questions and Bible timeline chart.
FOR MORE INFO: Paul Turnley, ptturnley@aol.com, (802) 645-0955; Rosie Doran, Rosemarieadoran@yahoo.com, (802) 265-8635; or Father Vincent Odoemenam (802) 265-3135.

10|05
Theology on Tap
Wildflower Inn, Lyndonville
7-8:15 pm
Join fellow Catholic young adults, aged 21-35, to learn about our faith at Theology on Tap in the Northeast Kingdom. This month, Bill Gavin, from the Diocese will be speaking on “The Catholic Church and the Foundations of Science and Western Civilization.”
FOR MORE INFO: Corpus Christi Parish (802) 748-8129
frcurtismiller@gmail.com

10|06
Catholic Daughters of America Fall Rummage Sale
Holy Family Parish Center, Essex Junction
9 am - 5 pm
Stop by and check us out — we have a little something for everyone: Men, Women, & Children's Clothing as well as a Linens & Things Room. Drop-Off Day: Thursday, Oct. 5, 9am - 5pm. Sale Day: Friday, Oct. 6, 9am - 5 pm. Bag Day: Saturday, Oct. 7, 9 am 1 pm.
FOR MORE INFO: Brooke Conger (802) 878-5879

10|06
A Knight to Remember: Rice Party Under the Stars
Rice Memorial High School, S. Burlington
7-10 pm
This casual evening under a tent at Rice will kick-off our year-long Centennial celebration. A Knight to Remember will feature the humor of Second City's Andrew Knox '05, Rice trivia, heavy appetizers, adult beverages, dancing and much more. $30/person. RSVP at rmhs vt.org/riceturns100.

10|07
Fatima Centennial Vermont Tour for Peace: Sign of the Cross
St. Joseph Co-Cathedral, Burlington
9-11 am
This is the final event of 7, held at various locations across Vermont, for the preparation for Sin and Conversion of Sinners. Coordinated by the Diocese of Burlington and the WAF-Our Lady's Blue Army Vermont.

The Diocese of Burlington
CAREERS

• Administrative Assistant
• Development Donor Systems Specialist
• PT Administrative Assistant / Medical Billing Specialist
• Rice Memorial High School — Substitute Teacher Positions
• Rice Memorial High School — Assistant Coach, Boys’ Prep Hockey

FOR MORE INFO:
vermontcatholic.org/careers

2017 BISHOP'S ANNUAL APPEAL REPORT

DID YOU KNOW that every year the Bishop’s Annual Appeal provides financial support to Vermont Catholic Charities to provide: residential care to approximately 200 residents; emergency aid for 1,814 people (1,082 adults and 732 children); counseling for 146 clients (2,812 counseling sessions) and prison ministry visits to 80 inmates per week. Catholic Charities’ four residential care homes also receive annual in-kind support from the Diocese totaling $1.35 million to care for one of the highest percentage of Medicaid residents in the state.