In his document “The Joy of Love,” Pope Francis focuses on the challenging realities of family life and considers how we can answer the call to holiness through the family. In one section, Pope Francis talks about how difficult it can be for couples to grow in a strong relationship with one another. He mentions that one of the challenges couples face is a lack of quality time together. One of his practical suggestions for couples, particularly young couples, is to intentionally plan free time together.

Becky and Patrick Walsh, parishioners of St. Francis Xavier in Winooski, live in Essex with their two daughters and both work full time. They talked with us about how important planning free time together is for their marriage and how they’ve prioritized this over the years. While their lives have changed significantly from their marriage during graduate school in Michigan and spontaneous adventures that didn’t require finding a babysitter, to life in Vermont with an infant and toddler and now a daughter swiftly approaching her pre-teen years, what hasn’t changed is the enjoyment they find in each other’s company and the importance they place on making sure they get this quality time together. Talking about a recent trip to Jeffersonville, Becky explains, “Twenty minutes from home was all we needed to again step out of the everyday and reconnect in a way that is refreshing to us as a couple and allows us to be prepared to dive back into the everyday work life of jobs and kids.”

To hear more about Becky and Patrick’s experience planning free time together and what tips and tricks have worked for them, check out the second video in the Year of the Family video series at facebook.com/dioburlington/videos.
UPCOMING EVENTS

02|27 TUESDAY
Vermont Catholic Advance Directives: How and Why
Father Lively Center, St. Johnsbury
6:30 pm
Bioethicist Deacon Pete Gummere will lead a discussion on the Vermont Catholic Advance Directive (VCAD) and distribute VCAD preparation packets at this presentation. The VCAD complies with Vermont’s Advance Directive Law as well as with Church teaching.
FORE MORE INFO: respectlife@vermontcatholic.org

03|03 SATURDAY
Array of Hope: Awakening Hearts Family Concert Event
St. Michael School, Brattleboro • 1 - 7 pm
The Array of Hope concert is a wide-ranging live concert experience that features multiple musical acts, motivational speakers and thought-provoking films. The Diocese of Burlington invites the WHOLE FAMILY for this vocation night with Father Jon Schnobrich and Bishop Coyne. Focused on ages 7–12 grade.

03|03 SATURDAY
Wintertastic Celebration and Auction
Mount Anthony Country Club, Bennington
6 pm
This is a benefit for the educational programs at The School of Sacred Heart St. Francis de Sales. Buy a table of eight for $225; individual tickets are $30. To donate or purchase tickets contact Kathy Murphy at 1kathy.murphy@gmail.com.

03|09, 23 FRIDAY
St. Ambrose 18th Annual Lenten Fish Fry
St. Ambrose Parish Hall
5 - 7 pm
Join us for “All You Can Eat” fish fry. Meal includes Fried or baked haddock, French fries, coleslaw, beverage & dessert. Adults $12.50, children nine and under $6, immediate family of five $37.

03|10 SATURDAY
Spaghetti Birthday Cake Dinner
St. Rose of Lima, South Hero • 5 pm

03|11 SUNDAY
K of C Breakfast
St. Peter’s, Vergennes
8 - 10 am
Come join us for a delicious breakfast of eggs, omelets (to order), hot cakes, French toast, sausage, bacon and more. Bring your family and friends!! Adults $8.50; Seniors over 60 $7.50 and Kids 6-12 yrs. $6. Children under 6 years old are free. Immediate families of five or more $28.

03|14 WEDNESDAY
Vermont Catholic Advance Directives: How and Why
Blessed Sacrament Parish Hall, Stowe
Two times: 1 pm and 6:15 pm
Bioethicist Deacon Pete Gummere will lead a discussion on the Vermont Catholic Advance Directive (VCAD) and distribute VCAD preparation packets at this presentation. The VCAD complies with Vermont’s Advance Directive Law as well as with Church teaching.
FORE MORE INFO: respectlife@vermontcatholic.org

03|14 WEDNESDAY
Mass of Thanksgiving
St. Charles, Bellows Falls • 7 pm
Fr. Lance Harlow will celebrate Mass as part of his Masses of Thanksgiving in honor of his Silver Jubilee of Priestly Ordination. Everyone is invited.

03|15 THURSDAY
Vermont Catholic Advance Directives: How and Why
St. Therese’s Church Parish Center Orleans
6:30 pm
Bioethicist Deacon Pete Gummere will lead a discussion on the Vermont Catholic Advance Directive (VCAD) and distribute VCAD preparation packets at this presentation. The VCAD complies with Vermont’s Advance Directive Law as well as with Church teaching.
FORE MORE INFO: respectlife@vermontcatholic.org

03|22 THURSDAY
Praise & Worship
Immaculate Heart of Mary, Williston
4 - 5 pm
Praise & Worship lead by Bill Gavin from the Diocese of Burlington, including adoration and confessions until 5 pm. A potluck meal will follow the event at Dorion Hall. Please come and join us in prayer, adoration and fellowship.

03|27 TUESDAY
Taize Prayer
Sacred Heart Saint Francis de Sales, Bennington • 7 pm
The parish choir will offer its annual Holy Week Service of Silent Prayer, Song, and Adoration of the Cross in the Tradition of Taize. Taize is a village in the hills of Eastern France that is home to an ecumenical community of religious Brothers who have dedicated their lives to prayer and works of charity. Taize compositions consists of litany-style melodies and refrains that become increasingly prayerful with each repetition.

04|06, 07, 08 FRIDAY – SUNDAY
Rachel’s Vineyard Retreat
Northern Vermont
This weekend retreat offers an opportunity for healing for hearts wounded by abortion. Men and women can express and release painful post-abortion emotions and begin the healing process in a supportive, confidential and non-judgmental environment.
FOR MORE INFO: to or register call (802) 658 4118.

04|03 TUESDAY
Sacred Relics of the Saints: Treasures of the Church
St. Augustine, Montpelier • 6 pm
Fr. Carlos Martins of the Companions of the Cross has a special ministry of bringing sacred relics to the faithful. He will talk about relics and then invite attendees to examine and venerate the 150+ relics that will be displayed. These relics are of famous saints as well as of relatively unknown saints, some modern and some very ancient. Join us!

04|14 SATURDAY
Mass of Thanksgiving
Immaculate Heart of Mary, Williston
7 pm
Fr. Harlow will celebrate Mass as part of his Masses of Thanksgiving in honor of his Silver Jubilee of Priestly Ordination. Everyone is invited.

04|20, 21, 22 FRIDAY – SUNDAY
Este Vir — Be a Man!
The Father/Son Retreat
Mary Theotokos Retreat Center, Newport
Retreat will include hiking and other outdoor adventures in the beautiful mountains of the Northeast Kingdom and Lake Willoughby, food, lodging, and talks by Father Jon Schnobrich. Registration deadline is April 10th.
FOR MORE INFO: or to register, kalderman@vermontcatholic.org, (802) 658-6110 x1130.

04|27, 28 FRIDAY & SATURDAY
New Evangelization Summit
Holy Cross, Colchester
Vermont will be hosting the Live-Streamed New Evangelization Summit out of Ottawa, Ontario, Canada joining thousands of others throughout North America. Summit will run 6:30–9pm on Friday and 8:30 am to 4:30 pm on Saturday. Hear speakers like Curtis Martin, Sr. Ann Shields, George Weigel, and Patrick Madrid. Cost is $40 per person and will cover materials, snacks and lunch on Saturday.
FOR MORE INFO: newevangelization.ca/ or contact Deacon Phil Lawson at (802) 658-6110 ext. 1460

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