It has been more than 2,100 years since the disciples first found the empty tomb, more than 2,100 years since they first encountered the Risen Christ in the upper room, more than 2,100 years since they saw Him ascend into heaven. It has been more than 2,000 years since those eyewitnesses to Christ’s death and resurrection died. They were witnesses of what they had seen to those who followed, the second and third generations of Christians. These later generations, like us today, did not know Christ in the flesh. Yet they believed just as we believe today. Chesterton in the quote above says that, “Faith means believing the unbelievable.” It is truly unbelievable that Christ rose from the dead, for no one else has since then. And yet we do believe, not simply because of the words of Scripture or any historical evidence that testify to the fact of Jesus’ resurrection, but because of the witness of others and the promptings of divine grace present in each human person. For this, we are truly blessed: “Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed” (Jn 20:29).

During those 2,100 years or more, the Church has commemorated the life, death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ in the weekly celebration of the Eucharist on the first day of the week and in the yearly celebration of Easter morning. In His life, Jesus Christ taught us what it means to “love the unlovable.” In His death on the Cross, He “pardoned the unpardonable,” not just the sins of those who were crucifying Him — “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do” — or were crucified with him — “Today, you will be with me in paradise” — but the sins of all humankind.

That encounter with boundless love and forgiveness did not end when the resurrected Christ left this world. Whenever the Church gathers to celebrate the Eucharist, we truly encounter the one who loves us, the one who pardons us and the one who wishes only to draw us to Himself. This is not a matter of faith. It is a matter of truth. Still, it takes faith to accept this truth, to believe in the unbelievable and to profess that faith. “I know that my Redeemer lives! What comfort this sweet sentence gives!”

As it has been for more than 2,100 years, the Church has been a beacon of hope “when everything seems hopeless.” Some may think that the present culture and moment of history have moved beyond the Church and its faith. But I think not. I believe that the preaching of salvation centered in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, which is a Gospel of joy and of Good News, is one that the world desperately needs now more than ever. Why? Because it is a message of hope to a world that many consider hopeless.

Happy Easter.

Yours in Christ,

The Most Reverend Christopher J. Coyne
Bishop of Burlington
$15 General Admission; $12 Student/Senior. Buy tickets at
Friday 7 pm, Saturday at 2 pm and 7 pm, Sunday at 2 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!

Helping our Brothers and Sisters in the Caribbean
Through the Storm is an initiative organized by Most
Reverend Peter A. Libasci, Bishop of Manchester, to support
victims of Hurricanes Irma and Maria in Puerto Rico and the
U.S. Virgin Islands. Through the Storm will be a statewide
day of prayer and will culminate in a Mass and a benefit
reception with Most Reverend Roberto Octavio González
Nieves, O.F.M., Archbishop of San Juan, Puerto Rico, and Most
Reverend Herbert A. Bevard, Bishop of St. Thomas in the
Virgin Islands attending.

FOR MORE INFO: https://www.catholicnh.org/
throughthestorm/

Rice Memorial High School Spring Musical “Anything Goes”
Black Box Theater, Burlington
Rice Memorial High School’s Music and Theater Department
will present Cole Porter’s beloved musical, four show times:
Thursday, April 19, 2018  •  3:00 pm & 6:30 pm
Thursday, April 26, 2018  •  3:00 pm & 6:30 pm
Public $15 General Admission; $12 Student/Senior. Buy tickets at
Rice 11–12 weekdays, or via email: lynam@rmhsvt.org.

Knights of Columbus Bingo
All Saints’ Parish Hall, Richmond  •  11:30 am
Doors will open at 11:30 am, games start at
1pm. Refreshments and pull tickets will be available.

Birthright of Burlington Open House
289 College Street, Burlington  •  12 - 4 pm
Tour our space, meet our volunteers, learn about our mission
and services to pregnant women. Light refreshments.

FOR MORE INFO: (802) 865-0056 or birthrightvt.com

Prevention Vermont Catholic Advance Directives — How and Why
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.

Contact: respectlife@vermontcatholic.org

In Vermont. Panel: TJ Donovan, VT State Attorney; Mark
Redmond, Director of Spectrum Youth and Family Services;
and Dr. Stephen Leffler, UVM Chief Medical Officer. Facilitator:
Dr. John Reuwer, Emergency Medical Physician and Adjunct
Professor of Peace and Justice, St. Michael’s College. A
portion of the Hungry Heart, a prize winning documentary
film by Bess O’Brien, will be shown.

Fr. Harlow will celebrate Mass as part of his
Masses of Thanksgiving in honor of his Silver Jubilee.

FOR MORE INFO: (802) 865-0056 or birthrightvt.com