You formed my inmost being; you knit me in my mother's womb. I praise you, because I am wonderfully made; wonderful are your works! My very self you know. — Ps 139:13-14

Why do we do this, especially on such a cold day? First, our Catholic faith teaches us that all life is precious from conception to natural death. Second, abortion, which ends the life of a child in the womb, was made legal in this country on Jan. 22, 1973.

I was born just a few years before Roe vs. Wade, the US Supreme Court Decision that made abortion legal throughout all nine months of pregnancy. I was born to teenage parents who were only 16 years old when I was conceived. My birth mother was very traumatized, especially since my conception was not consensual.

At the age of two months, I was adopted by my wonderful parents through New Hampshire Catholic Charities. My brother, who also is adopted, and I are very grateful to God that we were given the gift of life. I thank God that abortion was not a legal option when my brother and I were conceived.

Here in Vermont, our state has many policies that do not support the gift of life. As Burlington Bishop Christopher Coyne stated in announcing this year's diocesan theme, “The Call to Discipleship,” “To be a disciple is to embrace the fullness of faith in the Church and its teachings.” As Catholics, who firmly believe in the sanctity of all human life, we are called to share this faith with others. And what a beautiful way to share our faith by praying together at a Mass for life. And for those who are able, what a beautiful witness it is to prayerfully walk from the church to the Statehouse to show our love for life.

In conclusion, I invite you, as a fellow Catholic and disciple of Jesus, to the diocesan Respect Life Mass that will be celebrated by Bishop Coyne, followed by refreshments in the church hall. You are also invited to the Statehouse afterward for a short program, which also includes a free lunch.

—Jackie Becker is a parishioner and choir member at St. Luke Church in Fairfax.
UPCOMING EVENTS

01|26 SATURDAY
Annual Diocesan Respect Life Mass
St. Augustine Parish-Montpelier
9:30 am - 2:30 pm
Mass at 9:30 am with Bishop Coyne, followed by refreshments in the church hall. At 10:45 am attendees are invited prayerfully walk with Vermont Right to Life to the State House for a group photo on State House stairs. Vermont Right to Life will host a program inside the State House featuring prayer, announcements and guest speaker: Ann McElhinney. The event concludes with refreshments and ends by 2:30 pm.

02|02 SATURDAY
Blood Drive
St. Isidore, Montgomery • 9 am - 2 pm
Hosted by St. Isidore Parish and sponsored by Montgomery Emergency Services. Local raffles with prizes.
To schedule an appointment, go to www.redcrossblood.org or call 1-800-RED CROSS. New donors are needed. Please consider giving the gift of life. Walk-ins are welcome!

02|02 SATURDAY
Youth Ministry Training — Youth Ministry Institute
Sacred Heart St. Francis de Sales, Bennington
9 am - 3 pm
This Youth Ministry Institute will be a comprehensive day immersion on key concepts in Youth Ministry, including: Youth Ministry 101, Ministry in the Style of St. John Bosco, Contemporary Moral Issues, Theology of the Body, Interactive Youth Ministry.
For MORE INFO: and to RSVP; wgavin@vermontcatholic.org

02|05 TUESDAY
Seven Themes of Catholic Social Teaching
St. John Vianney, S. Burlington • 7 - 8 pm
Theme # 4 is “Call to Family, Community, and Participation: Dorothy Day and Loving Those You Don’t Like.” Dorothy Day’s life as a Catholic was, more than anything, informed by her understanding of the Church as the united Body of Christ, and of the spiritual obligation to one another which that entails. Through her writings we will look at the struggles and the rewards of living in Christian Community.

02|09 SATURDAY
Padre Pio Devotions
Holy Family, Essex Junction • 8 - 10 am
The Padre Pio Prayer Group meets the second Saturday of each month. Rosary starts at 8am followed by Mass, special Intentions for the intercession of Saint Padre Pio, and then learning about Padre Pio’s life, ministry and spiritual gifts will follow in the parish hall after Mass.

02|10 SUNDAY
Winter Rally 2019
St. John, St. Johnsbury, 10:30 am
St. Monica, Barre, 4 pm
Attention all teens and parents! Join us for our Winter Rally at 2 locations again this February. We will be joined by national speaker and musician Taylor Schroll, Father Jon Schnobrich and the Franciscan Sisters of the Renewal. Come grow in faith, love and discover your mission in God’s plan of love!

Catholic Town Meetings
with Bishop Coyne
All meetings held 6 – 7:30 p.m.
Tuesday, January 22
Holy Family
4 Prospect St., Essex Junction
Wednesday, January 23
St. Theresa
44 East St., Orleans
Monday, January 28
Sacred Heart
238 Main St., Bennington
Tuesday, January 29
Christ the King
66 South Main St., Rutland
Thursday, January 31
St. John Vianney
160 Hinesburg Rd., S. Burlington

CATECHESIS ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR
Diocese: Office of Evangelization and Catechesis
DIOCESE OF BURLINGTON
CAREERS

Deadline for applications is March 1.

Permanent Diaconate Formation classes to begin in August.
Learn how to apply at:
vermontcatholic.org/vermont/permanent-diaconate-formation-classes-to-begin