**PREAMBLE**

*Almighty and ever-living God,*

*You continually guide and sustain your pilgrim Church, which you established as “the universal sacrament of salvation.”*

So begins the “Prayer for the Diocesan Synod,” a prayer which we as a Diocese have prayed for almost two years as we prepared for and met in a synod. These words remind us that as a pilgrim Church, “the Church is not a static reality … but is on a continual journey through history, towards that ultimate and marvelous end that is the Kingdom of Heaven” (Pope Francis). Therefore, wherever the Church is found and the Gospel is preached, its primary mission and message are the offer of eternal salvation found in and through Jesus Christ and His Church.

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him might not perish but might have eternal life” (John 3:16).

This citation from John’s Gospel is one that is very familiar to us. It is a basic summary statement of faith. Following upon Jesus’ admonition to “go … and make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:19), the missionary actions of the Church have been directed by the proclamation of Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the Savior of the World. Since its very beginning, the Church has been a missionary Church. This was true in the discovery of the “new world” of the Americas. Beginning with Jesuit missionaries to North America, for 350 years the Catholic faith has been present in the State of Vermont. Throughout those years, the Church has grown and evolved in different directions, from the height of its membership and physical presence in the state in the 1960’s, to the challenges that we face now as membership dwindles and parishes are closed or merged with other parishes. Much of this challenge is driven by changing demographics and cultural shifts, but the reality is that the Catholic Church is no longer part of the recognized cultural establishment of the state. We are now a missionary Church. While in the past the dynamic was to maintain the Church and carry out its mission within a mode of maintaining the status quo, the situations and circumstances we face today call for us to move “from maintenance to mission.” We must become a Church that goes out and spreads the Good News to all, including those who have left the Church and those who have never been a part of our Church.

*This is an excerpt from “Christ our Hope: Declaration of the 2018 Synod of the Diocese of Burlington,” which was promulgated by Burlington Bishop Christopher Coyne at the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Burlington, Vermont, on April 16, 2019. Read the full declaration at vermontcatholic.org/vermont/christ-our-hope.*
RSVP, questions, concerns: contact Dr. Marta Kokoszynska, kokomed@gmail.com. If you would like to learn more about the CMA please visit www.cathmed.org.

06|05 WEDNESDAY
VCC’s 2nd Annual Vermonters Helping Vermonters Event
St. Michael’s College
6:30 pm
Tickets $50 per person: https://www.vermontcatholic.org/event/2nd-annual-vermonters-helping-vermonters/

06|08 SATURDAY
Padre Pio Devotions
Holy Family, Essex Junction
8 - 10 am
Second Saturday of each month. Rosary starts at 8 am 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 Holy Family Parish Hall after Mass.

06|08 SATURDAY
K of C Bingo
All Saints Parish Hall, Richford
11:30 am - 5 pm
Doors open at 11:30 am, games start at 1 pm. Refreshments and pull tickets will be available.

06|09 SUNDAY
50th Anniversary of the Closing of Central Catholic
St. Mary, St. Albans
9:15 am - 12 pm
Please join us after the 9:15 Mass to remember our Catholic school that closed in 1969. Cake, coffee and reminiscing afterwards in the Parish Center. All alumni are welcomed!

05|21 TUESDAY
Installation of New Steeple
Cathedral of St. Joseph, Burlington
Come see the new steeple being installed!

05|23 THURSDAY
The Wild Goose Workshop
Our Lady of Seven Dolors, Fair Haven
6:30 - 7:30
The five parishes of Our Lady of Seven Dolors, St. Frances Cabrini, St. John the Baptist St. Paul and St. Matthew offer an informational introductory session to the Franciscan Series: The Wild Goose: Discovering a Deeper Relationship with the Holy Spirit by Fr. Dave Pivonka, TOR (https://thewildgooseisloose.com/resources). Challenge yourself to a more profound, life-giving relationship with the Holy Spirit, a journey into the very heart of our loving God. Come and sign up for this fourteen session greatest adventure of a lifetime.

05|24 FRIDAY
Open House at Saint Francis Xavier School
St. Francis Xavier School, Winooski
8:30 am - 1:30 pm
St. Francis serves students from preschool (age 3) to grade 8. Come tour our school, meet our administrators, and see our students in action. Walk-ins are welcome, but we encourage RSVPs by calling (802) 655-2600 or emailing info@sfxvt.org.

05|24, 25 FRIDAY & SATURDAY
Indoor Tag Sale
Saint Sylvester, Graniteville
8 am - 3 pm

06|01 SATURDAY
Our Lady of Fatima Devotions
Holy Family, Essex Junction
8 - 9:30 am
First Saturday of every month. Rosary and reconciliation begin at 8 am and Mass at 8:30.

06|01 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. New donors are needed. Please consider giving the gift of life. Walk-ins are welcome!

06|01 SATURDAY
Evening Prayer and Reception for Healthcare Professionals
The Cathedral of St. Joseph, Burlington
5:30 - 7:00
We invite all healthcare professionals and their families, to join us for evening prayer followed by a reception with Bishop Coyne. Come share in a night of prayer, fellowship and discuss the exciting opportunity of forming a guild of the Catholic Medical Association (CMA) here in Vermont.

Consider supporting these initiatives with a gift at bishopsappealvt.org.