During the month of October, the Church asks us to reflect more deeply on the dignity of every human life. Here in Vermont, we grasp at the seasons that change and embrace the life that the natural environment provides for us; the warmth of summer to the respite of winter. We respect the seeds that grow into food and embrace the leaves that blaze and fall.

Our love for all good things must extend to the potential life nestled in the womb of a woman, our neighbor. Growing up on Lake Champlain surrounded by nature, I marveled at potential; what an apple held inside, an acorn, a fish egg and the whirling maple seed. Each could become something more and mighty — with a lineage.

We, as Catholics, are called to defend and protect those who are the most vulnerable from the beginning of life to its end. Our vocation is to be the salt of the Earth, to be light and to share the hope we have in Christ.

Thank you for all your continued efforts protecting the lives of the unborn, caring for the sick, the imprisoned, the poor, the dying and the elderly.

In Vermont today, human life and its potential for greatness are threatened to the extent of enshrining abortion in our constitution by the first-ever amendment (Proposal 5). This would be tragic. Yet, we are the Church, and Christ has always breathed life into the darkness of the world and will continue to. We pray that our hope in Christ’s resurrection will strengthen us in protecting human life.

This year’s theme for the Respect Life Program is “Christ Our Hope: In Every Season of Life.” St. Pope John Paul II wrote, “We need to bring the Gospel of life to the heart of every man and woman and to make it penetrate every part of society” (Evangelium Vitae”). We all can pray for a culture of life; share your stories of hope, be the one who brings the Gospel of life to your neighbor and watch as the ripple effect of our unity in prayer, action, joy and our hope in Christ alter the future of our families, communities and Church.

Prayer and hope will bring Vermont back to life, flourishing and full of potential.

Resources and ideas for building a culture that cherishes and protects human life can be found at respectlife.org. For more information and/or support contact me at meisenbarth@vermontcatholic.org.

— Maggie Eisenbarth is the respect life coordinator for the Diocese of Burlington.
**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**10/12 SATURDAY**
**Padre Pio Devotions**
Holy Family, Essex Jct. • 8 - 10 am
Rosary starts at 8 am followed by Mass.
Special Intents 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.

**10/13 SUNDAY**
**Columbus Day Buffet Breakfast**
St. Rose of Lima, South Hero
7:30 am – 11 am
Our hearty breakfast includes eggs, homemade baked beans, homemade corned beef hash, pancakes and french toast with Vermont maple syrup, sausage and ham, donuts, pastries, and fresh fruit. Adults: $8 Children under 12; $4 Immediate Family Maximum: $20.

**10/13 SUNDAY**
**St. Anne’s Shrine Annual Harvest Dinner**
St. Anne’s Shrine, Isle La Motte
12 - 3 pm
This long standing traditional Thanksgiving style turkey dinner includes apple and pumpkin pie for dessert. Join us for the last 10:30 am Mass of the 2019 Pilgrimage season and then treat your friends, family and yourself to a delicious meal. We hope you can make it!

**10/13 SUNDAY**
**St. Isidore Parish Turkey Dinner**
St. Isidore, Montgomery Center • 12 pm
Turkey, mashed potatoes, gravy, dressing, rolls, squash, green beans and cranberry sauce, pie and beverage. Proceeds to benefit St. Isidore’s Church.

**10/13 SUNDAY**
**Celebration in Honor of the Canonization of Cardinal Newman**
Holy Family Parish Hall, Essex Jct. • 4 - 7:30 pm
There will be a celebration including solemn chanted vespers, dinner and three presentations on the life and thought of Cardinal Newman, who will be canonized on Oct. 13. RSVP by Oct. 6 at vermontnewman@gmail.com.

**UPDATES**

**GOAL:** $2,700,987

**TOTAL COMMITTED:** $2,085,805

(as of September 23, 2019)

The Respect Life Ministries of the Diocese of Burlington promotes opportunities to reach out, educate, influence legislation and join others in prayers regarding important pro-life issues. Consider supporting this initiative with a gift at bishopsappealvt.org.