You speak to us in dreams. Sometimes it is the only occasion you find us still and quiet. Quiet enough to hear your voice. Quiet enough to grab our attention. You whisper to us throughout the day, reminding us you are present and that you delight in us. But we cannot hear you.

So you come to us in our sleep, the liminal space between this world and the one where your glory dwells. Is this why sometimes it is only rest that will comfort us? When we have run our bodies and our minds ragged until we collapse? In sleep, we find ourselves in your arms.

Wendell Berry said, “Sleep is the prayer the body prays.” Is this why sometimes our first waking thoughts are prayer? Connecting the two worlds together?

You spoke to Joseph through a dream. Betrothed to Mary, he discovered she was pregnant. He knew he could not go through with the wedding, but he loved her and was kind. He decided to end it quietly.

He did not want to expose her shame. To do so, meant Mary would have been judged publicly — and then stoned. A frightening position to think of our dear mother in, the mother of our Lord.

You spoke to Joseph through a dream. Just like his namesake so many years before, the one who’s dream raised him to the house of kings. Joseph, son of Jacob. Living in the house of Pharaoh, Joseph could save your people when famine ravaged the country and Israel was out of food.

Joseph knew you through his dreams and saw that the harm his brothers inflicted on him, you meant for good. He had come to his royal position for a time such as this, to save your people, your remnant, again.

But this Joseph, the carpenter, the one who would raise your Son here on earth, you spoke to him through an angel in a dream. The angel said, “Do not be afraid to take Mary into your home.”

The child within her was conceived through the Holy Spirit. The same Spirit who spoke through the prophets, saying, “Behold, the virgin shall be with child and bear a son.” The angel told Joseph that this child “will save his people from their sins” and “they shall name him Emmanuel.” Emmanuel, “God is with us.” God came down from heaven to be with us. To remind us that you love us, that you delight in your children. That you want to be with us. You are with us in our dreams, in our breath and in the Eucharist that saves us from the famine that ravages our own hearts, keeping us from you.

And Joseph woke from his sleep, rested and sure of you. He did as you commanded and took Mary into his home. In his rest, he saw your truth, that they were placed in a lowly position for a time such as this. Joseph listened and was able to be part of your story for eternity.

As we ponder the mystery of Emmanuel, God with us, speak to us in our sleep, O Lord.

May our bodies pray the prayers we cannot speak during the day. May our restless souls rest in you. May we hear your words — and listen. May we be certain that you are here with us.

Connect your worlds together in our sleep so that we may find you more clearly in our waking hours.

— Shemaiah Gonzalez, Catholic News Service
UPCOMING EVENTS

12\02 MONDAY
Love and Mercy: St. Faustina Movie Screening
Palace 9 Cinemas, South Burlington • 7 pm
There will be a one time showing of Love and Mercy, a new movie which sheds light on the life and vision of St. Faustina.

12\03 TUESDAY
Knights of Columbus Annual Christmas Party
St. Mark, Burlington • 6 - 8:30 pm
Prayer service and lighting of the Christmas tree with a potluck. The celebration is open to all families and friends.

12\05 THURSDAY
A Day of the Eucharist
St. Thomas, Underhill Center • 8 am - 8 pm
This day of Eucharistic adoration will begin with Holy Mass at 8 am. At the beginning of each hour we will pray various Catholic devotions throughout the day.
FOR MORE INFO: Parish office (802) 899-4632.

12\07 SATURDAY
Our Lady of Fatima Devotions
Holy Family, Essex Junction • 8 - 9:30 am
First Saturday of every month, come to Our Lady of Fatima Devotions. Rosary and reconciliation begin at 8 am and Mass at 8:30.

12\06, 08, 15
Christmas Concert Series
All in one concert, 17 Christmas and seasonal carols will be presented in a community sing-a-long with organist and music director, Dr. William Tortolano, professor emeritus of fine arts and music at St. Michael’s College. The program will be presented at three churches of acoustical, and historic interest:
Friday, 12\06 - Blessed Sacrament, Stowe • 7:30 pm
Sunday, 12\08 - Immaculate Conception, St. Albans • 3 pm
Sunday, 12\15 - St. Michael’s College, Colchester • 3 pm
The concerts are free and open to the public. A free will donation will be accepted.

12\07 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 Walk-ins are welcome!

12\07 SATURDAY
Marriage Preparation Retreat
St. Peter, Vergennes • 10 am - 5:30 pm
Come take a break from wedding preparation and spend time in prayer, sharing and fellowship with your fiance and other engaged couples. Lunch and materials will be provided — prior Registration is required.

12\08 SUNDAY
Basket Raffle
St. Raphael, Poulthney • 11 am - 3 pm
Admission and 1 sheet of 25 tickets is $5. Additional ticket sheets are $2 each. There were be special item raffles and 50/50 raffles. Lunch concession will be provided. This fundraising event is one of many to benefit our capital project for replacing our church’s roof.

12\08 SUNDAY
Annual “Messiah Sing”
Our Lady of the Snows, Woodstock • 4 - 6 pm
Our parish’s contribution to Woodstock’s Wassail Weekend. There will be a professional orchestra and soloists; but anyone who wishes to sign may join the chorus. Just bring a libretto. The event is open to the public, and is a truly enjoyable Advent tradition.

12\11 WEDNESDAY
Vermont Catholic Professionals Christmas Social
Holy Family Parish Hall, Essex Jct. • 6 - 8 pm
Join VCP for a Christmas Social with guest speaker Mary Beth Pinard, Executive Director of Vermont Catholic Charities.
Donations will be collected for Vermont Catholic Charities’ Advent Appeal. Beverages to be provided — please bring a dish to share.

CRAFT FAIR & MARKET DIRECTORY

- Christmas Bazaar
  All Saints Dorion Hall, Richford
  9 am - 2 pm

- St. Paul’s Christmas Bazaar
  Town Hall, Orwell
  9 am - 2 pm

- Christmas Bazaar and Craft Fair
  St. Patrick, Fairfield
  9 am - 3 pm

- Old Fashioned Christmas Bazaar
  St. Frances Cabrini, West Pawlet
  10 am - 2 pm

- Christmas Bazaars (two)
  - St. Rose of Lima, South Hero
    9 am - 3 pm
  - St. Joseph, Grand Isle
    9 am - 3 pm

- Old Fashioned Christmas Bazaar
  St. Frances Cabrini, West Pawlet
  10 am - 2 pm

- Christmas Fair
  Bishop Marshall School, Morrisville
  9 am - 3 pm

- Christmas Bazaar
  St. Anthony, Bethel
  9 am - 2 pm

- Christmas Bazaar
  St. Jude, Hinesburg
  9 am - 3 pm

DIOCESE OF BURLINGTON CAREERS

- Diocese: Respect Life Coordinator
- Diocese: Senior Accountant
- Diocese: Technical Accountant
- Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Williston:
  - Administrator: Residential Care Positions
- Our Lady of the Angels Parish, Randolph:
  - Administrator: Residential Care Positions
- Our Lady of Seven Dolors, Fair Haven:
  - Organist or Keyboardist/Choir Director
- St. Joseph Residential Care Home, Burlington:
  - LPN
- Vermont Catholic Charities: Counselor

For More Info: vermontcatholic.org/careers