In each of the 36 years since I was ordained, I have crafted an Easter homily and written numerous Easter messages for the parish or diocesan bulletins and digital outlets. I still have a number of these messages on my computer. I suppose in crafting this message, I could have gone back and gleaned something to say from what I had written in the past. There is quite a bit of material there, and it might not be the worst idea I've had in a while to recycle it and use it as a source once again. One could say I was even being a little intellectually “green.” Seemed like a plan.

However, I began to reconsider this “plan” once I opened up the Easter Scriptures. All of what I had written in the past was based, of course, on the resurrection accounts from the four Gospels. Rather than read and reuse what I had said about these Gospel passages, shouldn’t I go and get right to the source itself and read not what I had written in the past but what the Gospel writers under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit had written in the past? Seems like the better plan.

I don’t know about you but every time I sit down in study and prayer with Scripture, a passage that I may have read or heard numerous times always presents me with something new: a new detail I missed before, a phrase that I hear differently, an insight that emerges that I hadn’t pondered before. All of this is attached to the truth that Scripture is the “living Word of God.” You and I do not read Scripture in a vacuum. It is always read or proclaimed within the concrete circumstances of our lives.

It is “living” not just because we are living, breathing human beings but because it is alive with the power of the Holy Spirit in this moment and place in history. Think about how different it is to sit in a church in Vermont and hear the Easter Gospels proclaimed versus our sitting in the wreckage of a church in an outskirt of Kyiv in Ukraine on Easter Sunday morn for the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. Surely the hope of the Easter truth would be heard in an oh-so different way.

The living Word of God is announcement of salvation that then leads to an enactment of that salvation in the Church’s liturgy and the life of the faithful of the Church, the Body of Christ. It is alive now! It is powerful now! It is transformative now! And it calls us “out of darkness into a His marvelous light” (I Peter 2:9).

As disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, let us embrace the truth that “Christ has died, Christ is Risen, Christ will come again,” each in our own life’s circumstance, spreading the Good News to His praise and glory forever.

And that is the best plan!

Happy Easter,

The Most Reverend Christopher J. Coyne
Bishop of Burlington

Affirming A Culture of Life

There are people who acknowledge the humanity of the child in the womb, but still say “if it is unwanted, the child would be better off not being born….”

Really? Have we the right to make such a decision, once the child is in being? What path do we go down, when we presume to decide that another person’s life is not worth living? Especially the life of a child in the womb, who has infinite unknown potential and possibilities. Yes, the child is unexpected and a “surprise,” and not according to our timing, but does that give us a right to end the child’s life? Is the unborn child not also a “child of God?”

God can do wonders in a person’s life, even one with “poor life prospects.” Let us trust God, and give life a chance!

Affirm life and vote “NO” to Article 22.
Upcoming Events

04|20 WEDNESDAY
Vermont Catholic Professionals Virtual Meeting
via Zoom • 8 - 9 am
‘Happiness Engineer’ Michael Hagan, former manager of religious education and catechesis for the Diocese of Burlington, will be the speaker at the next virtual meeting of Vermont Catholic Professionals. He currently works remotely from Vermont for Flocknote, a communications-first Church software company. During his presentation, he will talk about Church teaching related to technology and some of his experiences at Flocknote. He will encourage the Vermont Catholic professionals in attendance to consider ways they can be of service to their parish in the realm of technology. FOR MORE INFO: vermontcatholic.org/vcp.

04|20, 05|04 WEDNESDAYS
Practicing the Presence of God
via Zoom • 7 - 8 pm
Practicing the Presence of God . . . a 6 week Diocesan wide zoom exploration of this spiritual classic by Brother Lawrence. For information, mercycarpe@protonmail.com. Meets: April 20, May 4, 18, June 1, 15 & 29.

04|23, 30 SATURDAYS
SoulCore
Blessed Sacrament, Stowe • 3 - 4 pm
SoulCore is an invitation to nourish body, mind and soul through prayer and functional movement. Workout can be modified to suit ability and comfort level; the prayers are the main focus. Freewill donation. Suggested items: mat, water, weights (optional, 1-3 lbs popular).

04|24 SUNDAY
Divine Mercy Sunday Devotions
St. Anthony, Burlington • 1:30 - 3:00 pm
Join us for Adoration — Exposition and Benediction, Reconciliation (Confessions), silent prayer, Rosary, concluding with praying the Divine Mercy Chaplet with the Knights of Columbus. Special invitation to Catholics and individuals who have been absent from the Church and want to receive the Grace of His Mercy in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Jesus is there waiting for you in the confessional.

04|24 SUNDAY
Divine Mercy Sunday Devotions
Holy Family, Essex Junction • 12 - 4 pm
Exposition and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament will begin following the 11 am Mass. Confessions will be heard beginning at 2pm and the Divine Mercy Chaplet will be sung at 3 pm followed by Benediction. If you require additional information, please call (802) 870-5331.

04|24 SUNDAY
Healing Service
St. John the Baptist, St. Johnsbury • 3 pm
Public healing service with Exposition/
Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament with Divine Mercy Chaplet. Father Harlow will pray over individuals seeking physical, mental and spiritual healings for healing and grace. Open to everyone.

05|01 SUNDAY
Organ Concert with Donald McMahon
Sacred Heart St. Francis de Sales, St., Bennington • 3 pm
Donald McMahon will perform an organ recital, featuring works by Cesar Franck, Denis Bedarz, Johann Sebastian Bach and an assortment of other selections that will showcase the versatility of the church’s massive pipe organ. The performance is free and open to the public.

05|07 SATURDAY
First Saturday Devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary
Holy Family, Essex Junction • 8 - 9:15 am
In these times, let us seriously consider one of the important messages from our Lady of Fatima — the First Saturday devotion for Reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. This would include attending five consecutive first Saturday masses, going to confession within eight days, receiving Holy Communion, and meditating on the mysteries of the Rosary for fifteen minutes. Please prayerfully consider this for 2022! The Saturday Vigil Mass (for Sunday) may be used for the First Saturday Devotion offered in reparation for offenses against the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

05|07 SUNDAY
Grief Support Group
Holy Family, Essex Junction • 8 - 10 am
Calling all Widows and Widowers . . . You are invited to join us for a support group, run by Catherine “Kate” King, UVM Mental Health Clinician (LCMHC) on the first Saturday of the month, at 8 am at Holy Family Parish. Kate has been a group therapist in the community for over 20 years and is a widow herself. Join us for prayer, discussion and peer support for working through grief. Please call Kate with questions at (802) 881-5973.

05|10 TUNDAYS
Seminar: The Creed Professed
via Zoom • 7 - 8:00 pm
Seminar based on Part I of the U. S. Catholic Catechism for Adults, as part of the diocese’s “Year of Communion: Unity in Creed, Worship and Life.” Sessions are bi-weekly by zoom from May 10 through November 8. Offered and coordinated by Deacon Gersauldo Schneider and Paul Turnley. REGISTER: studythecreed@gmail.com

05|21 SATURDAY
Ordination Mass
Cathedral of St. Joseph, Burlington • 10 am
The Diocese of Burlington joyfully celebrates the ordination of two men to Holy Orders as Deacons Brandon Schneider and Gregory Caldwell are ordained to the Priesthood of Jesus Christ by Bishop Christopher Coyne. All are invited to join us in the Cathedral for this solemn liturgy of Ordination. Both men will offer their first blessings in the church following Mass. A reception follows in the parish hall.

06|19 - 08|06
Totus Tuus
Vermont’s largest catholic summer program for kids returns, with 12 locations. FOR MORE INFO: and registration forms, visit vermontcatholic.org/totus tuus.
June 19 – 24 • Bennington and Waterbury
June 26 – July 1 • St. Albans and Barre
July 10 – 15 • S. Brottelebo and Stowe
July 17 – 23 S. Burlington and Vergennes
July 24 – 29 • Newport and Rutland
July 31 – August 5 • St. Johnsbury and Georgia

06|24 FRIDAY
Worldpriest Rosary Relay
Cathedral of St. Joseph, Burlington • 4 pm
The Annual Global Rosary Relay for the Sanctification of Priests will again take place on the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. This will be its thirteenth year, involving more prayer locations than ever, having grown from 24 single prayer locations in June 2003 its first year to 2,600 in 2020. Bishop Christopher J. Coyne will be leading the Rosary in Vermont. All are invited to attend either in person or via live-stream.

07|25, 26, 27 MON, TUES, WED
Quebec Pilgrimage
Join the K of C Council #297 in St. Albans for a pilgrimage to Quebec. Stops include Sainte-Anne-de-Beauport Shrine, Our Lady of the Cape Shrine in Trois-Rivières, St. Joseph’s Oratory in Montreal and St. Anne’s Shrine in Isle La Motte, Vermont. The cost includes all lodging, transportation and meals. Contact Bill Greenwood at (802) 527-0496 for more information.

07|29, 30, 31
Steubenville East Conference 2022
Springfield, MA
For rising 9th graders through graduating seniors. Cost: $300, includes conference, hotel lodging, meals & t-shirt FOR MORE INFO: vermontcatholic.org/event/steubenville-east-conference-2022/

A MESSAGE FROM THE
U.S. Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking
Ending Slavery is Everyone’s Work

April — Slavery is far from over as pimps and traffickers sell people and buyers continue to buy. It is a worldwide, criminal business of which we all need to work against.

U.S. Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking is a 501 c (3) organization, 2039 N Geyer Road, St. Louis, MO 63131 (sistersagainstrafficking.org)