

The Inland See

NEWS FROM

August 6–12, 2022

FOR THE DIOCESE OF BURLINGTON



Why go to Mass? **‘First of all, to worship God’**

For better or for worse, in our age the Church finds herself in a posture of severe self-examination. We see around us everywhere in the Western world a decline in participation in the sacramental life of the Church and the personal affiliation of the majority of people under 50 is the famous “none.” Anyone reading this who has participated in a parish council meeting in the last 30 years or our own Diocesan Synod knows the inevitable topic: Why are so many simply drifting away from faith and the Sunday Mass entirely?

There are any number of answers to this, many of them true as far as they go: Changing social norms and expectations that are hostile to the faith, material prosperity, which makes faith seem superfluous, scandal within the Church, and on and on. The noxious brew of apostasy has many ingredients.

And while we should never see any program, catchphrase or approach at outreach to our fallen-away brothers and sisters as the “magic bullet” or “the next best thing that will save the Church,” whatever sincere and devout attempts to reconcile our neighbor with the Church should be encouraged. For ourselves — faithfully clinging to the barque of Peter even amidst these tempestuous times — let us be clear and without doubt what we are principally about.

When I was in seminary, I came across a book in the library called “Parish Priest” by French priest Father Eugène Masure.

The author immediately made a point in the book that struck this reader squarely between the eyes. Right at the beginning he asks the question: “For what purpose, firstly and above all, does a parish exist?”

Father Masure distills it perfectly: Every parish exists to be the place where a specific community is brought into the worship of the all-holy, triune God. The parish, and all its ancillary activity, centers around the worship of God. Period. And of course, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is the locus of this worship. But it should also encompass every short visit we make to the church, every meeting that takes place there; the religious education and all the spiritual and corporal works of mercy performed by its congregation are meant to redound in union with the Mass to the worship and glory of God.

Then-Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger (Pope Benedict XVI) knew this reality when he wrote, “The Church stands or falls with the liturgy. The true celebration of the sacred liturgy is at the center of any renewal of the Church” (my emphasis).

Father Daniel Cardó, commenting on this line from Cardinal Ratzinger, said, “The key point here is the priority of God and, therefore, the problem of faith. Believers, and the world, need a real encounter with God.”

Too often we fall into the trap of thinking the Church is a company or a business in need of better marketing and publicity, as if that would solve the problem of people drifting away. What I fear we too often underestimate is the real depth of the crisis of our time: that the vast majority of people leaving the faith of their fathers is not because of any perception of how “welcoming” the Church is, but because they simply find belief itself impossible. There are too many obstacles in the way to an encounter with the living God. They no longer believe, and so in honesty they no longer participate in the life of the Church.

Taking our cue from Cardinal Ratzinger, we would do well to truly examine whether our parish liturgies reflect the reality that we are there, first of all, to worship God. Is the whole work of the Sunday Mass like a clear window through which we can see that something wholly unworldly and transcendent is happening? Or does it distract and feel like a mere expression of ourselves and our littleness?

People are spiritually starving in our world today. People need something from our parishes that they cannot get anywhere else or from any other activity: an encounter with God that leads to worship. That’s what our parishes are for.

— *Father Steven Marchand is administrator of St. Peter Parish in Vergennes and St. Ambrose Parish in Bristol.*

This article was first published in the Summer issue of *Vermont Catholic* magazine, made through the generosity of the Bishop’s Appeal and the goodwill and prayers of the faithful in the Diocese of Burlington..

Upcoming Events



08|09 – 11|08 TUESDAYS
The Creed Professed:
a seminar on Part I of the U. S. Catholic Catechism for Adults
 via Zoom • 7 – 8 pm

This bi-weekly Zoom seminar is being offered as part of the Diocesan “Year of Communion: Unity in Creed, Worship and Life.” The first session was held on May 10. For information and to register: studythecreed@gmail.com

- Aug 9, Session 7: *The Good News: God Has Sent His Son*
- Aug 23, Session 8: *The Saving Death and Resurrection of Christ*
- Sep 13, Session 9: *Receive the Holy Spirit (Jn 20:22)*
- Sep 27, Session 10: *The Church: Reflecting the Light of Christ*
- Oct 11, Session 11: *The Four Marks of the Church*
- Oct 25, Session 12: *Mary: The Church's First and Most Perfect Member*
- Nov 8, Session 13: *Our Eternal Destiny*



08|10, 17, 24, 31 WEDS
Summer Reflection Series
at Saint Anne's Shrine
St. Anne's Shrine, Isle LaMotte
 11:15 am

We hope you can join us for the 11:15 am Mass followed by the presentation. Lunch is available in the cafeteria after the presentation, except for July 27 when you can bring your own picnic lunch. Please call or email us with any questions at (802) 928.3362 or sas@sse.org.

- August 10: Rev. David Cray, S.S.E.,
St. Lawrence the Martyr: Dying to Self
- August 17: Rev. Michael Carter, S.S.E.,
Presidents and Piety: Catholic Schools in America
- August 24: Monsignor Peter Routhier,
The Role of Saints in the Life of the Church
- August 31: Rev. Richard Myhalyk, S.S.E.,
How We See God: Our Spiritual Lens on Life



08|13 SATURDAY
Padre Pio Devotions
Holy Family, Essex Junction • 8 am
 Rosary at 8 am followed by Mass and an opportunity to learn more about Padre Pio.



08|13 SATURDAY
Amendment 22/Prop 5
Information Session
Saint Michael School, Brattleboro
 9:30 am - 12 pm

Speakers include: Deacon Pete Gummere M.S., M.A. Bioethicist, Diocese of Burlington; Annisa Lamberton, Spokesperson for Vermonters of Good Government; Carol Kauffman of Vermont Family Alliance; Mary Beerworth, Executive Director, Vermont Right to Life. **FOR MORE INFO: (802) 257-5101.**



08|14 SUNDAY
St. Mary's Church Brunch
St. Mary, Franklin • 9 am – 12:30 pm
 Adults: \$12; children: \$8; 6 & under: free.

All you can eat! Take-outs are available



09|17 SATURDAY
Vermont Catholic Daughters
Fall Retreat: The Rosary
Our Lady of the Angels, Randolph
 9 am – 2 pm

The Vermont Catholic Daughters Fall Retreat will be led by Father Brandon Schneider. There will be a series of short talks and Mass will be celebrated during the retreat. Father will be available for confessions. Snacks and lunch will be provided. We will be raising awareness of the need to support our seminarians. There is no fee for this event. However, you must pre-register by September 7, 2022. After that, there will be a late fee of \$10. Please register with Debbie at: dgbrown264@gmail.com



09|24, 25 SATURDAY & SUNDAY
Catechesis of the Good Shepherd
Level II Course for Adults
Saint Andrew, Waterbury

This Level II course builds upon the foundation of the Level I course and prepares catechists to work with 6-9 year old children. Complete dates: Sept 24-25, Nov 5-6, 2022, Jan 7-8, Mar 18-19 (tentative) 2023; May 13-14 (snow make-up date), June 19-25, 2023. Learn more about Catechesis of the Good Shepherd at www.cgsusa.org. **MORE INFO: Kathleen Cosentino, kcosenino@madrivert.com or (802) 233-3009.**



respect
LIFE
 DIOCESE OF BURLINGTON

AFFIRMING A CULTURE OF LIFE

Parishioner testimony:

“My life is different because 2 courageous women chose not to abort their children. One was the girlfriend of my brother. He wanted her to get an abortion, and drove her to the clinic. When they got there, she refused to enter. “I’m not going in there,” she said quietly. My brother yelled and shouted, but she stood fast. Angry but thwarted, he drove her home. They married, and had a beautiful daughter, Jenny, my first niece. I was only 12, and thrilled to be an uncle. Jenny turned out to be the glue that held them together, and became the older sister to 3 more siblings. I only learned this story years later, when Jenny herself was a mother, with 4 beautiful children.”

A MESSAGE FROM THE



U.S. Catholic Sisters
Against Human Trafficking
Ending Slavery Is Everyone's Work

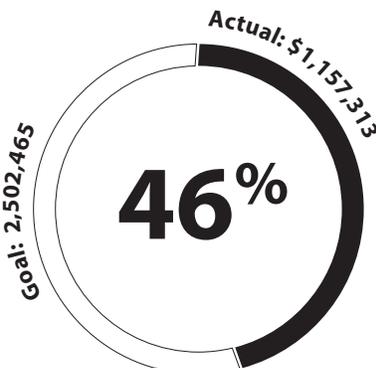
August — Are you aware of trafficking in your state? Do you know your state laws that protect victims? Invite a member of your state legislature to talk about laws or a state patrolman to share his/her experiences with trafficking.

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

BISHOP'S ANNUAL APPEAL



To learn more or make a gift
 online visit: bishopsappealvt.org



ROMAN CATHOLIC
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