One of my favorite Simon & Garfunkel songs is the “59th Street Bridge Song,” and I think this golden oldie is a wonderful introduction for all of us to consider as we enter into the Advent season. The opening lyrics are: “Slow down, you move too fast; you’ve got to make the morning last!” If you’re like me, you just finished the rest of the first verse quietly to yourself.

Why do I think these lyrics are a wonderful introduction to Advent? Because for most of us as we approach the end of the year and look forward to Christmas and New Year’s, we find ourselves in a constant flurry of activities ranging from Christmas shopping, Christmas parties, Christmas concerts, vacation planning and a host of other things that make our lives anything but peaceful. While we approach some or all of these activities with enthusiasm, I believe all of us find the busy-ness of this time of year exhausting. We would like to slow down a bit and not feel as if we are hurtling down a hill without brakes.

This brings us to Advent. It is the Church’s way to invite us to slow down from the hustle and bustle of preparing for the secular side of the Christmas rush to remind us what God is asking us to prepare for at this time of year.

It is the Church’s tradition for us to celebrate Advent so as to prepare our hearts, not just for the celebration of Christ’s birth at Bethlehem but for His return in glory at the end of time. It is meant to be a time of prayerful reflection so we can ask if we are ready for His return. Are we prepared to be judged by Him who will come “to judge the living and the dead?” Have we grown in holiness during the liturgical year we have just completed? Are we more prayerful, compassionate, forgiving? Or are we still struggling to be like Christ?

Rather than find us “moving too fast” this time of year, let’s take the advice of Simon & Garfunkel and the instruction of our Church to slow down, quiet down, take time to pray and really prepare to welcome Jesus Christ, at Christmas, in our daily lives and when He returns.

— Msgr. John McDermott is vicar general for the Diocese of Burlington.

Matching Grant for Giving Tuesday, November 29

All gifts made online of $500 or more to the Bishop’s Annual Appeal on November 29, 2022, will be matched with $500 from a $10,000 matching grant given by the Vermont Catholic Community Foundation. The Bishop’s Appeal supports vital programs such as emergency aid for people in need. People like John, Donna and their three children who needed help with a security deposit for a new apartment and food because they were suddenly forced to move out of their apartment due to the poor condition of the building. Without the immediate financial assistance, they would have been homeless.

To make a gift visit: vermontcatholic.org/giveonline or scan the QR code.
**Upcoming Events**

**11|28, 12|05, 12, 19 MONDAYS**

Old Testament Scripture Study
St. John Vianney Parish Hall, S. Burlington
9:15 – 10:30 am

Brush up on your Bible Basics with an Old Testament Scripture Study. As we prepare our hearts for the celebration of the Nativity of Our Lord, we will look into all that led up to that glorious event, from the beginning of creation. This series is meant for us to practice our story line, and learn a little bit more about what we hear in the first reading every Sunday. For more info or to register: sjvgoodnews@gmail.com.

**11|29, 12|01 TUES & THURS**

Walking With Families:
Tackling the Tough Topics
Around Human Sexuality
Online • 7 – 8 pm

Please join us from 7 to 8 pm, for a presentation and time for questions. You can choose to attend any and all presentations. Learn more and register at: vermontcatholic.org/event/walking-with-families/

**12|01, 08, 15 THURSDAYS**

Weekly Bible Study
Immaculate Heart of Mary, Williston
7 pm

Every Thursday at 7 pm we will gather in the parish hall library to read and discuss the Gospel for the coming Sunday. All are welcome!

**12|01, 08, 15, 22 THURSDAYS**

Advent Study for Women
via Zoom • 7:30 - 9 pm

The Vermont Catholic Women’s Group is watching “Behold” an Advent series by Sr. Miriam Hiland. You can find the companion book on the AveMaria Press website. FOR MORE INFO: contact Carolina, caro3600@gmail.com.

**12|02, 03, 04 SAT, SUN**

The Best Christmas Bazaar Ever
St. Raphael Parish Hall, Poultney
Friday 3 – 7 pm, Saturday 10 am – 4 pm

Joint bazaar of the 7 Catholic Churches in western region of central Vermont. Basket Raffle, traditional raffle, quilt raffle, food tables, crafts, “Treasures” Religious items, vendors and stay for lunch or supper from our kitchen! Raffle drawings at 4 pm Saturday. FOR MORE INFO: camshaw22@gmail.com or call (518) 636-9012.

**12|03, 04 SATURDAY & SUNDAY**

Pierogi Making Workshop
St. John Vianney Parish Hall, S. Burlington
Saturday 9 am - 1 pm, Sunday 12 – 4 pm

St. John Vianney parish is offering a two-part pierogi making workshop, and the fruits of our labor will be donated to an ANEW Place dinner. Four teams will create 4 different pierogi fillings. Space is limited, because we can’t have too many cooks in the kitchen! Contact Connie in the office at sjvgoodnews@gmail.com if you’d like to help with organizing, or for more information.

**12|05, 12 MONDAYS**

From the Gospel of St. Matthew — Advent to Christmas
Holy Family Parish Hall, Essex Jct. • 7 – 8 pm

Join us for this two-part series with Rev. Richard Berube SSE PhD. All are welcome.

**12|11 SUNDAY**

Breakfast Buffet
St. Peter Parish Hall, Vergennes • 8 – 10 am

Omelets to order, scrambled eggs, french toast, bacon, sausage, fruit, plain and blueberry pancakes, maple syrup, sausage gravy on biscuits, corn bread, home fries, mini muffins, juice, milk, and coffee. $10 adults, $6 children 8 to 12yrs., $32 immediate family maximum. Sponsored by Vergennes Council Knights of Columbus.

**12|11 SUNDAY**

Sing We Now Noel
St. Michael’s College chapel, Colchester • 2 pm

Join us for this presentation by Dr. William Tortolano, emeritus professor and college organist, will present the 62nd annual festive concert with the classic two-manual, 14-stop Casavant pipe organ. The program is designed to cover a variety of musical compositions to encourage the audience to participate. Jerry Proulx, a St. Michael’s graduate, with extensive theater credentials, will sing the famous Italian carol, Tu Scendi Dalte Stelle, in Italian. A free-will offering gratefully.

**12|19 MONDAY**

The History of the Christmas Tree — from Luther to the present age
Holy Family Parish Hall, Essex Jct. • 7 – 8 pm

Join us for this presentation by Dr. Damian Costello, Ph. D. All are welcome.

**12|25 SUNDAY**

Free Christmas Dinner!
St. Anthony, Bethel
12:30 – 2:30 pm

Come enjoy a free, incredible, and scrumptious dinner cooked by Cathy Day and her crew.

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**BISHOP’S ANNUAL APPEAL**

2022
UNITY IN FAITH

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

![Bishop's Annual Appeal Graphic](image)

Actual: $1,900,399

Goal: 2,500,246

76%