

The Inland See

News from the Roman Catholic Diocese of Burlington



December 13–19, 2025

U.S. Bishops issue a “Special Message” on immigration from Plenary Assembly in Baltimore

As pastors, we the bishops of the United States are bound to our people by ties of communion and compassion in Our Lord Jesus Christ. We are disturbed when we see among our people a climate of fear and anxiety around questions of profiling and immigration enforcement. We are saddened by the state of contemporary debate and the vilification of immigrants. We are concerned about the conditions in detention centers and the lack of access to pastoral care. We lament that some immigrants in the United States have arbitrarily lost their legal status. We are troubled by threats against the sanctity of houses of worship and the special nature of hospitals and schools. We are grieved when we meet parents who fear being detained when taking their children to school and when we try to console family members who have already been separated from their loved ones.

Despite obstacles and prejudices, generations of immigrants have made enormous contributions to the well-being of our nation. We as Catholic bishops love our country and pray for its peace and prosperity. For this very reason, we feel compelled now in this environment to raise our voices in defense of God-given human dignity.

Catholic teaching exhorts nations to recognize the fundamental dignity of all persons, including immigrants. We bishops advocate for a meaningful reform of our nation's immigration laws and procedures. Human dignity and national security are not in conflict. Both are possible if people of good will work together.

We recognize that nations have a responsibility to regulate their borders and establish a just and orderly immigration system for the sake of the common good. Without such processes, immigrants face the risk of trafficking and other forms of exploitation. Safe and legal pathways serve as an antidote to such risks.

The Church's teaching rests on the foundational concern for the human person, as created in the image and likeness of God



(Genesis 1:27). As pastors, we look to Sacred Scripture and the example of the Lord Himself, where we find the wisdom of God's compassion. The priority of the Lord, as the Prophets remind us, is for those who are most vulnerable: the widow, the orphan, the poor, and the stranger (Zechariah 7:10). In the Lord Jesus, we see the One who became poor for our sake (2 Corinthians 8:9), we see the Good Samaritan who lifts us from the dust (Luke 10:30–37), and we see the One who is found in the least of these (Matthew 25). The Church's concern for neighbor and our concern here for immigrants is a response to the Lord's command to love as He has loved us (John 13:34).

To our immigrant brothers and sisters, we stand with you in your suffering, since, when one member suffers, all suffer (cf. 1 Corinthians 12:26). You are not alone!

We note with gratitude that so many of our clergy, consecrated religious, and lay faithful already accompany and assist immigrants in meeting their basic human needs. We urge all people of good will to continue and expand such efforts.

We oppose the indiscriminate mass deportation of people. We pray for an end to dehumanizing rhetoric and violence, whether directed at immigrants or at law enforcement. We pray that the Lord may guide the leaders of our nation, and we are grateful for past and present opportunities to dialogue with public and elected officials. In this dialogue, we will continue to advocate for meaningful immigration reform.

As disciples of the Lord, we remain men and women of hope, and hope does not disappoint! (cf. Romans 5:5)

May the mantle of Our Lady of Guadalupe enfold us all in her maternal and loving care and draw us ever closer to the heart of Christ.

— *United States Conference of Catholic Bishops*



12|13, 14 SATURDAY & SUNDAY
**Advent Retreat: Discussion of
Bishop Robert Barron's
"An Introduction to Prayer"**

12|13 St. John the Evangelist, Northfield • 6:30 - 8 pm

12|14 St. Anthony, Bethel • 12:30 - 3 pm

This two-day retreat is offered at two locations, note above. An Introduction to Prayer is perfect for beginners and for those looking to further their spiritual life. It will inspire you to seek out more frequent conversation with God and spark deeper communion with Him. Potluck first, followed by discussion.



12|16, 23 TUESDAYS
What is the Catholic Worker?
Immaculate Heart of Mary, Williston
6 - 7 pm

A Catholic Worker House of Hospitality is an intentional community built upon the principles of Micah 6:8. We're working to bring the Catholic Worker to Vermont. Come join one of our meetings to learn more and see if it's something you'd want to be involved in!



12|18 THURSDAY
**Reflections on Marian
Consecration with Fr. Tim Naples**
St. John Vianney, S. Burlington
5:15 - 7:15 pm

This Advent, you're invited to join us for a three-part series with Fr. Tim Naples — Reflections on Marian Consecration: Total consecration and the example of St. Maximilian Kolbe. We will begin with a short video, followed by discussion. The

gathering will use a hybrid model; in person OR over Zoom.
FOR MORE INFO: Fr. Tim at tnaples@vermontcatholic.org.



12|20, 27, 01|03 SATURDAYS
SoulCore

St. Andrew Parish Hall, Waterbury • 9 am

Activate your mind, body, and soul: stretch, strengthen, and pray. SoulCore is an integrated faith and fitness class to the prayers of the rosary with a self-paced workout. Bring a mat and water. Suggested \$10.



12|21 SUNDAY
A Ukulele Christmas Musical
Sacred Heart St. Francis de Sales Bennington
2 - 4 pm

The Ukulele String Ensemble and the Woodwind Trio will hold a benefit performance for St. John's Food Shelf and HIS Pantry. Please join with us and sing along to many of your favorite Christmas carols and songs. Cookies and hot chocolate will be served after the performance. Food and monetary donations will be accepted at the door.



12|21 SUNDAY
Sing We Now Noel
St. Michael's College Chapel, Colchester
2 - 4 pm

Dr. William Tortolano, Professor Emeritus of Fine Arts/Music, will perform his 65th Christmas Concert. The program includes a wide selection of carols from many cultures. The audience is invited to sing. The concert is free and open to the public. Optional free will offering.



12|22 MONDAY
Cor Formation

St. John Vianney, S. Burlington • 6:30 - 7:30 pm

Cor Formation is an opportunity for men to grow closer to Jesus through prayer, formation, and fraternity. Snacks and beverages are provided. We meet in the church basement. Contact Mike Bullock, (802) 598-8179/mtn6@gmavt.net for more information.



01|03 SATURDAY
Free Community Dinner

St. John the Baptist, Enosburg Falls • 5 - 6:30 pm
Come enjoy a hot meal and fellowship!



01|04 SUNDAY
Eucharistic Healing Service

St. John the Evangelist, St. Johnsbury • 3 - 4:30 pm

Eucharistic Healing Service conducted by Father Lance Harlow, with Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament along with praying over by Father Harlow.



01|09 FRIDAY
Essex Community Dinner

Holy Family Parish Hall, Essex Junction
5:30 - 7:00 pm

Essex Community Dinners are provided in order to grow and promote our community! They are also intended to feed the lonely and needy among us. These meals are free to all but donations are appreciated to cover parish expenses. Take-out dinners are also available, starting at 6 pm, for those who still need to avoid crowds.



 **Vermont
Catholic
Charities**

2025 Advent Appeal



ROMAN CATHOLIC
DIOCESE OF BURLINGTON



How to Give:

Online:

vermontcatholic.org/giveonline

Call:

802.658.6110 x 1102

Mail:

Bishop's Annual Appeal
55 Joy Drive
South Burlington, VT 05403

