

The Inland See

News from the Roman Catholic Diocese of Burlington



January 17-23, 2026

For the Diocese and for the whole world Vermont's Discalced Carmelites

Secreted away off of a dirt road in Lowell, the Carmel of Saint Joseph is easy to miss if one isn't looking for it.

The Discalced Carmelites have had a presence in Vermont since 1946; initially based in Barre, they relocated to their current monastery in Lowell. Today, the Carmelites of Vermont are experiencing a quiet, gradual revival, continuing the mission they began in the state almost 80 years ago.

"The charism of the Discalced Carmelites, first and foremost, is to pray for the Church"

explained Sister Diane of Jesus. "That was the original goal of our founder, Saint Teresa of Avila, and that's the mission we carry out today as well." Visibly, the Discalced Carmelites differ from the ancient Carmelites by either going barefoot or wearing only simple sandals — hence the use of the word "discalced," a portmanteau of the Latin words "dis" (without) and "calceus" (shoe).

"We were actually the first order of nuns in the United States" Sister Diane said. "We first established a community in a town called Port Tobacco, of all things, in Maryland." The order's first community in the fledgling republic was established in 1790; today, there are 60 Carmelite monasteries in the United States, across almost every state.

Life in the monastery follows a rhythm which remains relatively unchanged since the days of the order's founding. The nuns begin each day with Eucharistic Adoration, beginning at 6:30 a.m.; the Liturgy of the Hours, daily Mass, and private prayer and study punctuate the day, with periodic "breaks" for work, until the Great Silence commences in the evening. The monastery's chapel is adorned with icons, written in Byzantine style, which were all created by one of the sisters. "The creation of an icon is itself an act of prayer" explained Sister Marie Susanne of the Eucharist; "There's a very specific process which has to be undertaken, a very specific way it's done ... People think it must be horrible for an artist to limit themselves so severely, but really, it frees the artist to imbue the piece with more meaning. There's nothing accidental in these pieces ... the



Sisters Diane of Jesus and Marie Susanne of the Eucharist in the monastery's chapel. — Evan Wing photo

position of the hands, the expression of the eyes, even how the head is tilted, it's all designed to teach and tell a story." The other work of note the nuns perform is the weaving of vestments for priests. "We pray for all of the priests of our diocese, and for our bishop" said Sister Diane; "That is our most important work, always. But this physical work is a way we can support them concretely, as well."

The way of Carmel is, by the sisters' own admission, a narrow path; though vocations are once again growing after years of

decline, they make it clear that theirs is not a numbers game. "We never set out to be the biggest or the grandest" Sister Diane said. "We are most comfortable with between, I'd say, five and 10 sisters living here. We have six right now, a tremendous blessing, and a few women discerning." The nuns currently at the Carmel of Saint Joseph came to the order by many paths — some, like Sister Marie Susanne, discerned a calling early and clearly. "I remember one evening, as I was discerning (religious life), I firmly believe I received an interlocution, a voice asked me, 'Is this truly what you want?' I knew in that moment my answer had to be 'Yes.'" Others, such as Sister Diane herself, came the long way around; "I had, from a secular point of view, everything a young woman could ask for. And yet, I couldn't escape the feeling I wasn't where I was supposed to be." The common thread between every nun's story is the sense of a call that could, at a certain point, no longer be denied or avoided. "It's easy to focus on all the things we have to give up" Sister Marie Susanne said. "What I want people to know is what we've gained. We are brides of Christ — nothing can compare to that!"

As the Diocese of Burlington heads into its Year of Vocations, the Discalced Carmelites prepare to continue their mission as they have always done; quiet, even hidden at times, but persistent and efficacious. "In our prayer, in our work, in everything we do," Sister Diane said in conclusion, "we offer everything we have for the diocese and for the whole world."

VTC • Evan Wing

Diocesan Event Calendar • vermontcatholic.org/events



01|19 – 02|24 MONDAYS OR TUESDAYS

The Genius of Tolkien

Immaculate Heart of Mary, Williston •

Jan. 19 – Feb. 23 • Mondays at 6:30 pm

St. John Vianney, South Burlington •

Jan. 20 – Feb. 24 • Tuesdays at 1 pm

Just in time for the re-release of the Lord of the Rings film trilogy in theaters! Using a series from the FORMED platform, we will uncover biblical connections to Tolkien's characters, offering a unique lens on human experiences. Each session will begin with a short video, followed by discussion.



01|24, 02|21 SATURDAYS

St. Peter's Church Preservation Committee BINGO

St. Peter Parish Hall, Vergennes • 5 – 8 pm

Doors open at 5 pm and games start at 6 pm. This is a family friendly event. All cash prizes, 50/50 raffle. Refreshments sold. This event is sponsored by the St. Peter's Historic Preservation Committee to benefit the on-going restoration efforts for the bell tower and the church. Please join us!



01|25 SUNDAY

Healing Prayer Service

St. Anthony, Burlington • 2:30 – 4 pm

This event begins with the Rosary at 2:40 pm dedicated for families, communities, and world peace. Healing Prayers and blessing with St. Raphael oil from 3 – 4 pm. There will be Adoration, Confession, and praying the Divine Mercy Chaplet. Learning about the Saints and their Relics is an important part of the Catholic faith. Bring medals or rosaries to touch to the relics to create a third-class relic to bring home with you. This event is dedicated to those in need of physical and spiritual healing.



01|26, 02|02, 09 MONDAYS

SJV Book Group — Praying for Our Adult Sons and Daughters

St. John Vianney, S. Burlington • 9:30 – 11 am

Please join us for our book group on Praying for Our Adult Sons and Daughters: Placing them in the heart of God, meeting in the Fellowship Room of the Parish Center. Books will be \$10 each; sign up by January 4 to order yours. Learn more at: stjohnvianneyvt.org/sjv-book-group.



02|01 SUNDAY

Eucharistic Healing Service

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

Father Lance W. Harlow will conduct a Eucharistic Healing Service featuring Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament along with praying over by Father Harlow.



02|07 SATURDAY

Free Community Dinner

St. John the Baptist, Enosburg Falls • 5 – 6:30 pm

Come enjoy a hot meal and fellowship with us!



02|07 SATURDAY

St. Peter's Cemetery Association Bingo

St. Peter Parish Hall, Vergennes • 5 – 8 pm

Doors open at 5 pm, Bingo starts at 6 pm. This is a family

friendly event. All cash prizes, 50/50 raffle. Refreshments sold. This event is sponsored by St. Peter's Cemetery Committee to benefit the on-going efforts for cemetery improvements.



02|07 SATURDAY

Annual French Canadian Tourtiere Supper

Holy Rosary, Richmond • 5 – 6:30 pm

Join us for a delicious traditional French Canadian Tourtiere Supper including: Pea Soup, Tourtiere (meat) Pie, Mashed Potatoes, Green Beans and Desserts. Reservations suggested — online: KK1L.com/KnightsMeatPieDinner2026 or call/text Ron (470) 588-5515. Sit down or Take-Out available. \$17 per person. Hosted by the Knights of Columbus Council 4684.



02|11 WEDNESDAY

Relics Presentation: St. Bernadette and St. Catherine Laboure

Christ the King, Burlington • 6 – 7 pm

Join us on the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes for a presentation on the relics of St. Bernadette and St. Catherine Laboure by the diocesan archivist, Kathleen Messier.



02|13 FRIDAY

Essex Community Dinner

Holy Family Parish Hall, Essex Jct. • 5:30 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 6:00 pm, for those who still need to avoid crowds.



02|14 SATURDAY

St. Padre Pio Prayer Group

Holy Family, Essex Junction • 8 am

The Padre Pio group meets the second Saturday of each month, at Holy Family. We begin with the Rosary at 8 am followed by Mass at 8:30 am. Special Intentions for the intercession of Saint Padre Pio and then learning about Padre Pio's life, ministry, and spiritual gifts.



02|14 – 03|21 SATURDAYS

Grieving with Great Hope

St. Catherine of Siena, Shelburne • 10 am – 12 pm

Grieving With Great Hope is a bereavement program based on Catholic teachings, developed by Good Mourning Ministries (GMM) and presented on the FORMED website. The program consists of five weekly sessions. Each session will include watching a video, time for personal reflection, and small group sharing. All conversations are confidential and no one may share in discussion outside of session. This offering will be limited to 25 participants. Note that no new participants will be added after the second session.



03|13, 14, 15 FRI, SAT, SUN

Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend Experience

While faith is a powerful part of this process, the focus of the Marriage Encounter experience is on married life. For more information, email: wwmevt.camp@gmail.com.



HOW TO GIVE

Online:

vermontcatholic.org/donate

Call:

802.658.6110 x 1102

Mail:

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



Happy New Year!

Thank you for your generosity in 2025.

