

# NEWS FROM The Inland See

November 28 – December 4, 2020

FOR THE DIOCESE OF BURLINGTON



Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, as in all wisdom you teach and admonish one another, singing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or in deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him” (Col 3:16-17).

There are certain patterns to our public prayer. You may have noticed that at Mass and the other liturgies of the Church, the prayer is almost always directed to God the Father, through the Son, in the power of the Holy Spirit. There are also patterns in the content of the prayers. Normally, we begin by offering praise and thanksgiving to God, acknowledging what He has done and what He continues to do, and then asking in intercessory prayer for more of His blessings to be poured forth upon us. Notice it is out of the act of thanksgiving that we then ask for God’s intervention and help. This starting point places us in the right relationship to God: It is from Him that all blessing flow. May His name be praised!

The starting point is very important in many parts of our lives. For example, in meetings in which a proposal is made for something new or to try something different I always ask people to start with, “What is good about this proposal? How can we make it work?” We then move into the question, “What are some of the concerns you have or challenges you see in this proposal?” I have found that the positive starting point leads to a whole different conversation than when we allow the conversation to go negative right away.

So it is in our prayers, in our words, in our actions, in our gatherings and in our lives. We certainly find ourselves in a time of significant challenges: the world-wide catastrophe caused by the Covid-19 virus, the resultant downturn in the economy, the loss of jobs and benefits, the polarization within our country that has brought about significant divisions in our midst, the continuing struggle against the sin of racism, the reality of global warming and climate change and, finally, the “throw-away” culture that treats human life as a commodity and not as gift from God lived as brothers and sisters. If these challenges are the place where we “start” in our lives we can certainly find ourselves in a real “rabbit hole” of negativity. But if we begin instead with an “attitude of gratitude” coming out of a place of thanksgiving, then we have a sure foundation from which we can confront these challenges.

This year more than ever we need Thanksgiving Day to focus on the blessings we have even in the midst of the crises we face. While the Covid-19 pandemic has certainly curtailed how we celebrate this day, it has not curtailed the reasons we celebrate.

Praise God from whom all blessings flow!



Sincerely Yours in Christ,

The Most Reverend Christopher J. Coyne  
Bishop of Burlington



## Christ Our Hope Campaign Update

A portion of the funds raised through the *Christ Our Hope: Building a Vibrant Church* campaign supports these types of ministries through the faith formation fund established in the Vermont Catholic Community Foundation. This will ensure stable income for vital faith formation ministries, especially in times of crisis. To learn more about the campaign or make a gift online visit: [www.christourhopevt.org](http://www.christourhopevt.org).

27%

As of November 18: \$2,712,990

Goal: \$10,000,000



One of the ways the domestic church — the church at home — can celebrate the Advent Season is by creating and praying with an Advent wreath. Below, please find instructions on how to create an Advent wreath, along with a prayer of blessing, and short prayers for each week of Advent that can be said when lighting the candles. The instructions on how to create an Advent wreath is just but one example; there are many ways to create a wreath using a variety of material and you might have a favorite way you can use. As always, if you use real candles, be very careful and make sure you never leave a burning candle unattended.

## DIY Advent Wreath

### Materials:

- 4 battery operated votives
- Mini door wreath (or silk green picks and small plate)
- Ribbon\* or Washi tape — purple and pink

\*Tape or glue gun if using Ribbon

### Directions:

1. Begin by cutting a length of ribbon to wrap around each votive. Cut to fit and secure to the candle with glue.
2. Continue wrapping the votives in ribbon, creating 3 purple candles and 1 pink candle
3. You can now start applying the candles to the wreath. Place a dime sized amount of glue under the candles BUT NOT OVER THE ON/OFF SWITCH. You need to be able to access this. Just apply glue to the opposite end. Then, press them to the wreath. Hold in place firmly until they have attached well. Or — place your candles on a plate, arranging the green picks as you would like.
4. You can now use your Advent wreath for kids! Just slip your finger underneath to flip the switch on the candle. You can light one week at a time and enjoy all four candles lit up on Christmas Day!

## Blessing of the Advent Wreath

To be said before lighting the first candle on the First Sunday of Advent. After the blessing is said, light the first candle, then say the prayer for the first Week of Advent.

Lord God,  
Your Church joyfully awaits the coming of its Savior, who enlightens our hearts and dispels the darkness of ignorance and sin. Pour forth your blessings upon us as we light the candles of this wreath; may their light reflect the splendor of Christ, who is Lord, for ever and ever. Amen.

## Advent Wreath Candle Lighting Prayer — Week 1

(Begins on November 28)

Christ our Light,  
Shine in our lives with hope and promise.  
Give us right vision so that we remain attentive to this holy season.  
Remind us to look for you in small acts of kindness and love.  
We await your coming with wonder.  
Amen.

## Advent Wreath Candle Lighting Prayer — Week 2

(Begins on December 5)

Christ our Hope,  
Illuminate our hearts with your grace.  
Enlarge our vision so that we recognize our kinship with all the people of the world.  
Help us to give to others in ways that meet their deepest needs.  
We await your coming with gratitude.  
Amen.

## Advent Wreath Candle Lighting Prayer — Week 3

(Begins on December 5)

Christ our Joy,  
Brighten our homes with your presence.  
Clarify our vision so that we might see you in the people we cherish.  
Make every holiday activity an opportunity to spread your light and love.  
We await your coming with delight.  
Amen.

## Advent Wreath Candle Lighting Prayer — Week 4

(Begins on December 19)

Christ our Peace,  
Grow brightly in each moment.  
Enlighten our vision so that we see beyond the trappings of the holidays.  
Relieve us, if just for a moment, of our worries and stress.  
We await your coming with serenity.  
Amen.

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ROMAN CATHOLIC  
DIOCESE OF BURLINGTON

To see more events or to submit your event to the diocesan calendar:  
[vermontcatholic.org/events](http://vermontcatholic.org/events)