



The Serra Club of Arlington
Minutes for Tuesday 03 January 2023 | Luncheon Meeting
The Portofino Restaurant | Arlington, Virginia



Guest Speaker

The Most Reverend Michael F. Burbidge - installed as Bishop of Arlington on Dec. 6, 2016, at the Cathedral of St. Thomas More. As the fourth bishop of the Diocese, Bishop Burbidge shepherds more than 460,000 registered Catholics in 70 parishes and 6 missions.

GUEST SPEAKER – THE MOST REV. MICHAEL F. BURBIDGE, BISHOP OF ARLINGTON DIOCESE, VA

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Since its founding in 1974, the Catholic Diocese of Arlington has burgeoned, becoming one of the 50 largest dioceses in the United States. Bishop Burbidge has embraced the opportunities that accompany such growth, particularly those that support families and aid the poor, the vulnerable and the needy. In May 2017, the fifth Marian Home was dedicated in Fairfax, which provides housing for individuals with intellectual disabilities. In December 2017, the Mother of Mercy Free Medical Clinic opened in Manassas, serving an estimated 8,000 uninsured individuals in the area. In addition to these, Bishop Burbidge has expanded ministry for the faithful, celebrating the first diocesan Mass for homeschool families and offering conferences and retreats focused on spiritual growth and marriage and family life.

Bishop Burbidge was ordained to the priesthood in 1984. In 1992, he was named as administrative secretary to the Archbishop of Philadelphia and appointed Rector of St. Charles Borromeo Seminary in 1999. In 2002, he was ordained an auxiliary bishop in his hometown of Philadelphia, where he oversaw the Office of the Vicar for Clergy and the Office of Communications. Prior to being appointed Bishop of the Diocese of Arlington in 2016 by Pope Francis, he was the Bishop of Raleigh for a decade.

Bishop Burbidge holds a bachelor's degree in philosophy and a master's in theology from Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary, a master's in education administration from Villanova University, and a doctorate in education from Immaculata College. He is the Chairman of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Pro-Life Committee, a vital role as the Church continues to identify and implement new and effective ways to spread the Good News. In addition, he serves on the Boards of The Catholic University of America, Mount Saint Mary's Seminary, and Catholic Distance University.

Highlights: Bishop Burbidge's talk covered three areas of interest: Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, the current seminarians, and the 6th edition of the Priestly Formation for future seminarians.

- Bishop Burbidge paid tribute to Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI as one of the greatest theologians whose writings are easy to read and offer intellectual and pastoral clarity. Benedict's first encyclical, *Deus caritas est* (God is Love), focuses on God's place within all love. The love of God and neighbor are inseparable. The bishop suggested one of our New Year's resolutions be that we deepen our relationship with God.

- There are currently forty-eight seminarians who are helping each other be the best seminarian they can be, and to form a close fraternity which many priests also enjoy. The millennials of the seminarians prefer to meet weekly in small groups of six or seven for discussion and prayer. The bishop says the number of seminarians is not as important as the quality of the people, and that he will never lower the bar. The St. Andrew dinners he started have been a great way to offer young men, interested in finding out about the priesthood, the opportunity to ask questions of priests in a casual and welcoming setting.
- The Sixth Edition of Priestly Formation, to commence in the fall of 2023, is divided into four stages:
 - **PROPAEDEUTIC** - twelve months of human and spiritual formation while studying catechism and Church history. The seminarians will be housed on the grounds of the Seton Shrine in Emmitsburg, and Father Dan Hanley will be the first Director of Propaedeutic.
 - **DISCIPLESHIP** – two years of philosophical studies.
 - **CONFIGURATION** – three to three and a half years of theological studies.
 - **VOCATIONAL SYNTHESIS** – the transitional deacon will spend six months in a parish prior to ordination. Ordinations of 2024 will most likely be moved to July.