



Serra Club of Arlington
Minutes for Tuesday 02 December 2025 | Luncheon Meeting
The Portofino Restaurant | Arlington, Virginia



GUEST SPEAKER - Most Reverend Michael F. Burbidge, Bishop of the Diocese of Arlington

Mary Petrino, President, introduced the guest speaker, the Most Reverend Michael F. Burbidge, the fourth Bishop of the Diocese of Arlington. She noted the Bishop had an anniversary coming up on December 6, the date he was installed as the Bishop of the Diocese.

Bishop Burbidge started his remarks by thanking the members of the Serra Club and acknowledged the Club as a real gift. He expressed his gratitude to the members for continuing to say 'yes' to being witnesses to our faith. Bishop Burbidge also complimented Father Noah in his new role as Director of Vocations for the Diocese.

His Excellency thanks the Lord for the number of seminarians the Diocese has. He noted, however, it is not the number of men in the seminary, but the quality of the men in the seminary that is most important. The seminarians may not be saints, but it is important that they desire to be.

Bishop Burbidge then went on to describe the five qualities he would like in seminarians. He also said these qualities are applicable to us and recommends we consider them in our Advent preparations.

1. *Transparency and trust:* There needs to be transparency and trust by the seminarians. In his experience from priest to bishop, the bishops did not often know the experiences of the seminarians and priests. He wants seminarians to be transparent and for the Bishop and Mother Church to really know them. He wants seminarians to share their strengths, weaknesses, and struggles with him and Father Noah. And he noted they need to take what they are going through to the Lord; "Here I am Lord".
2. *Humility:* Seminarians can be gifted and talented, but they need to be humble. They need to reflect they are nothing without God. They should have childlike qualities and use their talents in service to others.
3. *Joy:* Bishop Burbidge has noticed how much the Arlington seminarians and priests like to be with one another and the joy they have in their gatherings. His Excellency meets with the newly ordained priests (1st – 5th year) twice a year. Before one meeting, the Bishop paused before joining them, just to listen before joining the group. He took great delight in the laughter and joy amongst those brother priests.
4. *Perseverance:* Seminarians will go through ups and downs. They need the ability to pick themselves up with help from God, of course. They should have holy perseverance; to not give up and do it together with God.
5. *Goal oriented:* Men in formation need to focus on the goal of priesthood. Our goal, of course, is to get to heaven. To do so we all need to be vigilant and prepared. We should pray for one another fixed on our goal.

Concluding, Bishop Burbidge encouraged members and guests to take time to personally reflect on Advent and Christmas.