The twofold theme for this year’s Respect Life Month pairs the oft-repeated reassurance from Scripture, “Be Not Afraid,” with the words of Jesus at the Ascension, “Behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:20) The following meditation from the USCCB explains why:

When battered by life’s storms, or immersed in a dense fog of suffering and uncertainty, we may feel alone and unequipped to handle the circumstances. Yet with words that echo through thousands of years into the corners of our hearts, the Lord says to us, “Do not fear: I am with you” (Isaiah 41:10).

He speaks these words not as one who merely observes our pain, but as one who experienced immense suffering. And the very wounds that bear witness to his suffering indicate the essence of our identity and worth: we are loved by God.

Reflecting on the healed wounds of the Risen Christ, we see that even our most difficult trials can be the place where God manifests his victory. He makes all things beautiful. He makes all things new. He is always with us. Jesus promised this when he gave the disciples the same mission he gives to each of us: Go.

Go be my hands and feet to a world enslaved by fear. Go to the woman who is unexpectedly pregnant and fears the future. Go to your friend who fears reprisal at work because he takes a stand for the protection of human life. Go to your aging parent in failing health who fears being a burden. And go to others, too, for their support.

We don’t need to have everything figured out. We can simply follow the guidance of Our Blessed Mother, the first disciple: “Do whatever he tells you” (John 2:5).

Walk with each other. Do not be afraid to embrace God’s gift of life. Whatever storms or trials we face, we are not alone. He is with us.

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Featuring headliners Stars Go Dim, with their #1 hit “Walking Like Giants”; Mallary Hope; Judy McDonald, and Frank Palangi. Come ROCK the evening!! Tickets: are $25.00 each for general admission. For information, please see www.VTChristianMusic.com/rocktoberfest.

Saint Anne’s Shrine Annual Harvest Dinner: Sunday, October 8th, 12:00 to 3:00 pm. Serving turkey and all the trimmings! $11 adults; $6 12 and under (Canadian funds $14 adults; $9 for 12 and under) For more information, call 802.928.3362 or 802.928.3385. Mass will be celebrated at 10:30 a.m.

WorldWide Marriage Encounter: “The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.” Listen with your spouse for God’s message of love by attending a Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend. The next weekends are Oct 21-22, 2017 in Contoocook, NH and Mar 16-18, 2018 in Isle La Motte, VT. For more information, call Gary & Lynn Root at 802-456-8114 or visit them at https://wwmevt.org.

Food for Thought presentations: October 18th: Declining Demographics and its Impact on Religious Practice by Professor Art Woolf (UVM) and Professor Vince Bolduc (SMC); October 31st: The Early History of the Edmundite Community by Very Rev. Stephen Horner, S.S.E. All presentations are held at 12:00 Noon in the Vermont Room, Alliot Hall, 2nd Floor. Please RSVP to Laurie Sabens (lsabens@smcvt.edu) or call the Campus Ministry office at 654.2333.

Edmundite Campus Ministry Events (Continued)

Partners in Ministry: Thursday, October 12th, 5:30 pm, Vermont room (Alliot Hall). We will continue our discussion of Joan Chittister’s ‘Radical Spirit: 12 Ways to Live a Free and Authentic Life’. Contact Stephanie at 881-5131 for info. All are welcome for discussion and prayer with or without snack contribution.

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Prayer: Holy Michael the Archangel, be our protector: defend us in battle against the powers of evil and the pride of the devil, and after the trials of this life, lead us at last into heavenly Jerusalem to rejoice with all the new creation in the presence of God. Amen

Mark J. Fitzulich '97 Annual Red Cross Blood Drive: October 3rd; 12:00 am to 6:00 pm in the Roy Room of the Dion Family Center. We need volunteers to donate blood and to help staff the event. Sign up on the MOVE bulletin board and look out for tabling in Alliot.

Fall Serve-a-Thon: October 7th: Spend the morning (10 AM – 2 PM) doing community service with your peers in local organizations. Sign up on the MOVE bulletin board and meet in Alliot the morning of.

Senior Citizen Prom: October 28th; 4:00 to 7:00 pm in International Commons. Sign up to volunteer on the MOVE bulletin board. We need volunteers to come socialize with the seniors, dance, and have fun.

VITA is a group of students who are committed to ministering to other students through practicing our faith and leading many of the liturgical, retreat, and service programs. Student-led programs include:

- **Faith_LINK**: A large group that meets weekly and combines discussion, meditation, and more to help bridge the gap between our college and faith lives. Everyone is welcome to join us on Wednesdays, October 4th, 11th, and 18th; 8:00 to 9:00 pm in the Upper Room of the Chapel.

- **Dessert & the Divine**: Enjoy food and fellowship with other Christians! Wednesdays, October 4th, 11th, and 18th; 8:00 to 9:00 pm in the Upper Room of the Chapel. Please contact Anna Lester for more information at 654.2897 or alester@smcvt.edu.

**Faculty & Staff Programs**

Pontigny Society: Our second session will continue on Monday, October 9th at 12:00 noon. We will continue reading Pope Francis’ “Laudato Si’: On Care for our Common Home.” Held in the VT Room, Alliot Hall, lunch served. RSVP is required: All faculty and staff are welcome. Please RSVP to Fr. Marcel Rainville, SSE at 654.2848. To receive notices, please subscribe to the TPS mailing list on the portal page.

P.R.A.Y.E.R

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Holy Michael the Archangel, be our protector: defend us in battle against the powers of evil and the pride of the devil, and after the trials of this life, lead us at last into heavenly Jerusalem to rejoice with all the new creation in the presence of God. Amen
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