NOVEMBER 2019

# BENEDICTUS

PHOTO: NATHAN RAE

p. 7 ..... WEDDING MILESTONES

p. 11 ..... BIG HEARTS, LITTLE CHURCH

**SAINT BENEDICT PARISH**
45 Radcliffe Drive
Halifax, Nova Scotia
902-443-0725
*saintbenedict.ca*

**SUNDAY MASS**
Saturday: 4pm
Sunday: 9am, 11:15am, 6pm

**WEEKDAY MASS**
Monday to Friday: 9am

**CONFESSIONS**
Saturday: 3 - 3:45pm
Thursday: 9:45 - 10:30am

## INTERESTED IN BECOMING A MEMBER?

Visit the Welcome Centre in the foyer after Mass for more information!

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*The Bene Dictus is your monthly magazine featuring stories about how Saint Benedict Parish forms disciples who joyfully live out the mission of Jesus Christ. It is available in print or in your email inbox.*

*The next issue of the Bene Dictus will be released on the weekend of December 7th/ 8th.*

*On the cover:*
*Couples renew their wedding vows. See page 7 for the story.*

## SAINT BENEDICT PARISH CLERGY

Pastor: Fr. Simon Lobo, CC

Associate Pastor: Fr. Alex Colautti, CC

Permanent Deacon: Deacon David Viscount

Episcopal Vicar for Parish Renewal: Fr. James Mallon

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# FATHER SIMON SAYS...

**Fr. Simon Lobo, CC**
**Pastor**

## GOD GIVES THE GROWTH

As we look to our parish vision of being a '**healthy and growing faith community**,' I am blessed to say that we have experienced a significant degree of health over the last few years. We are now shifting gears from focusing solely on health to also being a parish committed to doing whatever is necessary to allow for growth. We need to remove any structural barriers to allow the Holy Spirit to operate more freely in our lives. I think of the words of St. Paul, "I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth... For we are God's servants, working together; you are God's field, God's building," (1 Corinthians 3:6, 9).

## LITURGICAL MINISTRY COME & SEE

It is our responsibility to offer our very best to God, and so we need to work together to support our weekend worship – our Sunday Masses. We want to continue to increase the overall experience of welcome and prayer at our Masses.

In order for this to happen, we are going to need dozens and dozens of people to step up to serve in ministries that are connected to our weekend worship. We have a few hundred parishioners already serving, and to those faithful, I want to extend a huge "THANK YOU!" Still, we will need many more to offer a bit of their time and gifts to help out.

**To make it as easy as possible for parishioners to find out more about how they can serve, we will be hosting a 'Liturgical Ministry Come & See' after each of the Masses on the weekend of November 16th-17th**. About a dozen ministries will be

continued on next page

featured, which you can read about on page 9. Key ministry leaders, staff, and clergy will be in the auditorium after each of the Masses to help you find a place where your gifts can best be used to serve the building up of God's Kingdom.

### THE CONTEMPLATIVE MASS

In a particular way, we are looking for parishioners to commit to serving in various capacities at the brand new 'Contemplative Mass' at 4pm on Sunday. Staff and key leaders have been working behind the scenes to prepare for this awesome new Mass experience. Fr. Alex has said that the more our world grows secular and noisy, the more people will be drawn to a place where they can be nourished with silence, peaceful prayer, and music. For a sneak peek of this experience, Fr. Alex and I are hoping to chant, in English, a short portion of the Eucharistic Prayer. This will help all of us enter into the supernatural mystery of Jesus becoming present on the altar in the Sacrament of His Body and Blood.

### EXCITING STAFF UPDATES

As you might have read in the Overview a couple of weeks ago, we are delighted to welcome Noreen Smith to our staff team. A few interesting facts about Noreen: she has been singing in Peter Togni's 11:15am Mass choir for some time, she was fully initiated as a Catholic at our Easter Vigil in the Spring of 2018, and she is always smiling and full of the joy of the Spirit. Also, she drives a motorcycle, so you don't want to mess with her. She has taken the role of Office Manager as a halftime position. For this reason, our office hours will be from 9:45am until 1pm, Monday to Friday. Thank you for your patience and understanding as this is a slightly shorter window than before.

After a short time off, Bill Scollard is back in action. We are constantly trying to adjust and tweak to get the right people serving in their areas of giftedness. Since we have been making innovations to our Groups a top priority, I have asked Bill to be the point leader overseeing both Connect Groups and Discipleship Groups. As a top priority, he will be focusing his attention on helping to close the Back Door by engaging those who will be graduating from Alpha at the end of this season. Catherine Gould will be working with Bill as the go-to person for resources and content for small group faith studies. One of our parishioners with a lot of experience in this area is Eric Myatt, who will also be volunteering some of this time to be part of the team, bringing expertise on mentoring group leaders from his work with Catholic Christian Outreach.

Finally, I am excited to announce that with this new shift from health to growth, we have asked Tanya Noye to bring her gifts in supporting me on the Parish Leadership Team (previously known as the Senior Leadership Team).

### PRAYERS FOR OUR DEARLY DEPARTED

November is a special month dedicated to pray for the souls of our loved ones who have died. Thanks to the Funeral Team who work so faithfully and who organized our All Souls Mass on November 2nd. The Book of Remembrance will be in the foyer throughout this month, so feel free to add names to the book and we will pray for them.

# A MESSY CHURCH

**Aurea Sadi**
**Ora Ministry**

*This reflection is on next Sunday's Gospel, Luke 21:5-19.*

New Friend: "What is the most challenging thing about working with people in the Church?"

Me: "The most challenging thing about working with people in the Church is... working with people in the Church!"

A few years ago a new friend and I were having lunch with some fellow missionary disciples when he asked me the question above. Without hesitation, I gave him my response. I am not a fast talker or a quick thinker, so the speed of my reply took me by surprise almost as much as the frankness of my reply surprised him. Because of that, this exchange has stuck with me. I was reminded of it when I read this gospel from Luke. The life of a follower of Christ in Jesus' time does not sound like it promises much fun. It sounds pretty messy. Two thousand years later and I can still relate. Our Church is messy because we humans are involved.

My answer remains true today as it did that day at lunch. People are hard to work with! We are all so uniquely and incredibly made by the Father that there are bound to be differences. It is especially hard to work with people when you're challenging them on matters of faith, which are ultimately matters of the heart. As I walk with people in my ministry, there are people who don't like what I have to say. Or more often than not, when they challenge me, I have no idea what to say. In those moments I desperately pray to the Holy Spirit to bring me the right words and the courage to speak them – just as Jesus advised his disciples. We humans are a lot of work!

Sometimes I feel like I can hear or see God's reactions to my humanness - lots of guffaws, giggles, grrrs, I am sure. And definitely: "Good grief, Aurea!" with some eye rolls thrown in for good measure. Our humanity brings about actions that can cause grief, complications, and hurt. Yet our humanity also brings us joy, happiness, and love. Often we talk about our faith as being both/and; that is, our faith is not black and white. There is the grey space, an ambiguous space in the middle of those two extremes. For me that is where God works – in the ambiguity – to show us both goodness and wickedness, life and death, love and hate, joy and suffering. We need both, for in knowing one emotion we can recognize and know the other. Pope Francis is often quoted as wanting a messy Church. Luke describes a messy Church. And, well, we currently live in a messy Church... that we created. As humans we can't clean up the mess on our own: we're called to live in it and, more importantly, through it, with God's help, so as to not continue to create a mess. And by our endurance we will indeed gain our souls.

*Aurea is a contributor to Ora, where you can read reflections for the weekend Mass readings. Go to* ***oraministry.weebly.com*** *to read more.*

# STAFF PROFILE

**Matt Vaughan**
**Communications Coordinator**

*Each month we'll be featuring a profile on one of the Saint Benedict Parish staff members so parishioners can get to know them a little better and get a better sense of what they do at the parish. This month, we're featuring Chris Yetman.*

**What's your job at the parish?**
CHRIS: I am the parish's Finance Manager.

**What staff team are you on?**
I am on the Mission Support Team.

**What does your job entail? What's a typical week look like for you?**
I manage all parish financial matters, including year-end tax receipting, as well overseeing the responsible ministry protocol (police checks). A typical week involves paying suppliers, handling payroll, tracking of all funds coming into the parish, maintaining the parish accounts and accounting software, managing budgets, weekly deposits, preparing all financial statements for the Archdiocese, preparing all financial statements for the Finance Council, and a myriad of other tasks too numerous to mention.

**What did you do before you worked at Saint Benedict Parish?**
I spent 33 years in the Consumer Packaged Goods industry in sales and sales management for companies such as Windsor Salt, Kodak, and Abbott Nutrition.

**What do you like most about working at Saint Benedict Parish?**
Just the fact that I get to work for my Church, and I get to support the mission, brings me tremendous joy and peace. I also appreciate that the staff work as a team and are all in for the greater good of serving God.

**Do you have a favourite memory from your time working here?**
The DR16 and DR18 conferences were fantastic events, they made me realize just how special Saint Benedict Parish is, both from a parishioner's perspective, as well as a staff member's perspective. At times I have to pinch myself to think that I work at a place that I love, and not many people get to say that.

**What do you like to outside of work?**
My wife and I like to hike, I work in my garden when my knees allow me to, and during the colder months, I am passionate about curling. I also love to relax with a good glass of red wine.

# PITCHING & ROLLING

**John Rae**
**Bene Dictus Team**

In Genesis chapter 6, God supplies Noah every detail of the ark: how high, how wide, even what kind of wood to use. He is given a pretty comprehensive blueprint. Yet two details are conspicuously absent. There is nothing in the specs about a sail or a rudder! Noah is asked to trust that God would provide the propulsion and the steering, when and as required. Talk about launching out in faith.

I once took the night ferry from North Sydney, NS to Port aux Basques, NL. That night we got caught in the boundary between a high-pressure weather system from the Northwest and a low-pressure system from the Southeast. This clash of the forces of nature created what is technically known as a 'confused sea state,' where the waves pound in from all directions, at random heights and irregular intervals, and it is a profoundly challenging environment and can cause structural fatigue in the vessel. Some of the fellows on board, lifelong fishermen, were seasick that night. All we could do was hang on, have faith in the skill of the naval architect who had designed the vessel, and hope that we would get through what was a truly sickening situation.

In our personal lives and in the life of the Church we can find ourselves in a 'confused spiritual state' where powerful forces, beyond our control, have us pitching and rolling and threatening our equilibrium. Structural fatigue seems to be an imminent possibility. At one level on his voyage, Noah was at the mercy of the elemental forces. I'm sure he experienced a 'confused sea state' or two, but he was also the beneficiary of a larger mercy that functioned at a higher orbit. God did provide the momentum and steering that landed Noah on firm ground, at Mount Ararat, he just needed to have faith in the providence of God even as he, like my fishermen friends, was throwing up over the gunwale.

Hebrews 11:7 tells us that because of his perseverance, "Noah… became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith." We need to pray for the gift of that perseverance.

# WEDDING MILESTONES

**Taya Vaci**
**Bene Dictus Team**

At the Saturday, October 26th Mass, 20 couples celebrated milestone anniversaries here at Saint Benedict. The milestones ranged from 30 to 65 years of marriage. Each of the couples were called to the altar and given the opportunity to renew their wedding vows with Fr. Simon presiding.

It was a beautiful experience to witness these couples recommit their vows after decades together. Some moments generated laugher, especially when some of the wives spoke during the "husbands, repeat after me" parts. Some moments were tender, seeing couples with tears of great joy in their eyes. Chuckles traveled through the pews when Father Simon asked the couples to "turn to face the spouse you'll exchange these vows with," and everyone turned to their appropriate partner!

To hear the couple's vows to each other after all their years together was an incredible testament to God's divine grace. We applaud these couples for setting an example of honouring God through their commitment and love.

Congratulations to each of you on your remarkable milestones!

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# MINISTRIES: COME & SEE

**Susan LeRue**
**Bene Dictus Team**

*With the upcoming changes to Mass times in January 2020, anticipating the necessary adjustments in scheduling for ministries, plus the ongoing invitation for new members to serve, there will be a* ***Come & See for Liturgical Ministries on the weekend of November 17th****. It will be held in the Auditorium and will specifically focus on the ministries that enhance our weekend worship. I spoke to Dinah Simmons, who works on with all things Worship & Sacraments at Saint Benedict.*

DINAH SIMMONS: The Saint Benedict Parish vision statement calls all parishioners to 'worship, grow, serve, connect, and give' as we live out our discipleship.

Below I have listed all the ministries I could think of that are connected to our Sunday experience. I oversee some of these ministries; others are overseen by other staff team members. I'd be happy to tell you more about any of the ministries I oversee, or direct you to someone who can tell you more about the others!

Everyone is invited to the Come & See, whether you are currently involved in ministry, or would like to find out more about how to become involved.

**Altar Servers**
Serving on the altar is a front-and-centre ministry that calls for self-confidence and attention to detail, as well as a reverent and prayerful attitude. Altar servers can be adults or children in grade 3 or older. They are required to arrive at least 15 minutes before Mass and serve once or twice a month. Training is provided. Servers assist the celebrant, helping to ensure a smooth flow and prayerful atmosphere during Mass.

**Communion to the Homebound**
Those bringing communion to parishioners who are homebound or in nursing homes come forward after communion to receive consecrated hosts and leave immediately to perform their ministry. Most ministers provide this service weekly, some on weekends, and some on weekdays. Training is provided and a police check is necessary.

**Prayer Ministry**
After every weekend Mass, teams of prayer ministers are available so that parishioners may come forward to be prayed over. This is a team of faith-filled, compassionate people, surrendered to the Holy Spirit, and trained to offer brief prayers for the needs of those who come forward. They usually serve once a month.

## Emergency First Aid Responders

Saint Benedict Parish is blessed to have First Aid Responders at each of our Weekend Masses who are trained by St. John Ambulance to be efficient in CPR, Level A or C, First Aid, and AED (automatic external defibrillator).

## Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

Lay men and women join with the clergy in distributing the Body and Blood of Christ to the faithful. This is a ministry of great reverence and prayerfulness. It also requires self-confidence and dexterity. Training is provided and ministers usually serve about once a month.

## Collection Security

Financial responsibility is an important aspect of our parish's weekly Mass celebrations. At each weekend Mass, team members are present to ensure that the collection is properly secured. A screening and police check is necessary, and training is provided.

## Hospitality

The team greets everyone as they arrive for Mass, collect the offertory, help folks find a seat when things get crowded, and hand out the Bene Dictus each month. In addition, they coordinate Name Tag Sunday and introduce new guests to the Welcome Centre. Each Mass has a team of nine, so every weekend parishioners are there to provide genuine, friendly, and helpful hospitality.

## Lectors

Proclaiming the Word of God requires a deep love for Scripture and an ability to proclaim it reverently, so that the listening assembly may receive it as God's Word. Training is mandatory. Lectors serve about once a month, and may be required to serve at different Mass times. At present, we have a waiting list.

## Mass Coordinators

Mass Coordinators open and lock up the church. They are detail-oriented people who work efficiently to check off every item on their list, ensuring that everything is ready for Mass. During Mass they are alert to any needs, and after Mass they ensure that all is in order. Training is provided. Mass Coordinators serve once or twice a month and the time commitment is about 2½ hours (including Mass).

*If you feel called to serve, there is certainly no shortage of ways to show gratitude to God by sharing your special gifts! You can also find out more about these and other non-liturgical Ministries by visiting* ***saintbenedict.ca/serve***.


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# BIG HEARTS, LITTLE CHURCH

**Matt Kerrigan**
**Bene Dictus Team**

Have you ever wondered why our youngest and smallest parishioners bound up the aisle toward the altar during the offertory at Mass? Sometimes a bigger brother or sister will bring up a younger sibling by the hand. There can even be a little skipping or dance step in it. It seems to me there is always joy. The children are on their way to the Little Church.

On the left side of the altar, there is a small wooden replica of Saint Benedict Parish. There is a slot in the top of it. The money that passes through that slot significantly changes the lives of children far away in developing countries.

The Little Church goes back to the early roots of Saint Benedict. The three parishes that came together to become Saint Benedict all had Little Churches. They developed a heart for giving, and it has continued with great energy here. I had an opportunity to talk with Dinah Simmons, who works with Worship & Sacraments at the parish and has been involved with the Little Church since the very beginning.

"Our first sponsored child was Gorreth in Uganda. We learned about her from Herman Ssebazza, a parishioner from Uganda. Sister Mary Valentine, who works in an orphanage in Uganda, brought her to Herman's attention. Gorreth was taken in at the boarding school with the support of our parish. She completed her education, graduating last year, and is now working full-time.

"Gorreth was only the first child. Fr. James Mallon knew Ed and Barbara Dunsworth who had founded *Pathway to Progress* in Nicaragua, where we discovered Alexandra, who was the second child to benefit from the Little Church. We now sponsor three children from Uganda: Valentino, Joel, and Teddy. Without our help, education and a safe home environment would not be

possible for them. The children receive a formal education but also learn how to produce food in a place where food can be scarce.

"We also sponsor two children through Chalice. Chalice is a locally-based charity in Bedford founded by Fr. Pat Cosgrove. It has a global vision particularly focussed on the needs of children in developing countries. Through Chalice we support Prosper in Ghana and Fiella Mae in the Philippines.

"It is encouraging to see the children able to participate in the offertory in this special way. Even the children downstairs in children's ministry at SHINE and WOW get to contribute. In spite of the widespread generosity through the Little Church, we fall a little short of the amount required for our commitment to the five children we sponsor. The parish makes up the difference. I often see parishioners whose own children have long since grown up give something to children nearby to put in the Little Church. It is a very heartwarming part of Sunday Mass. As you watch the children visit the Little Church, say a prayer for the sponsored children throughout the world."

*Thank you, Dinah! For in-depth details of our family in the developing world, and to see what we can do together to help children living in poverty and oppression, please visit the bulletin board outside the Auditorium.*

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## at Saint Benedict Parish

**NOV 16 -** Men's Christian Fellowship Breakfast

**NOV 16-17 -** Liturgical Ministries Come & See

**NOV 19 -** Memorial Mass, 9am

**NOV 23 -** Praise & Worship Night, 7:30pm

**NOV 24 -** Christ The King Sunday

For full event details, be sure to subscribe to The Overview by visiting saintbenedict.ca and scrolling to the bottom of the page!

# Praise & Worship Night

## Saturday, November 23rd
## 7:30pm

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# PARISH STAFF TEAM

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**FOR GENERAL INQUIRIES**
Office@SaintBenedict.ca

If you are interested in the sacraments of baptism or marriage at Saint Benedict Parish, please note that in addition to preparation, we require that you get in touch with us a minimum of three months in advance of your hoped-for date for baptism and one year prior to your desired wedding date.

For information on baptisms, please email Carol: **baptisms@saintbenedict.ca**.

For information on weddings, please email Deacon David: **weddings@saintbenedict.ca**.

For information on preparation for the sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Communion, please email **PACT@saintbenedict.ca**.

For information on becoming Catholic, please email **RCIA@saintbenedict.ca**.

For funerals, or to be connected with our funeral ministry team, please call the parish office at **902-443-0725** and listen to the prompts.

## FINANCIAL UPDATE - SEPTEMBER 2019

| SUNDAY COLLECTIONS | RECEIVED | TOTAL | AVERAGE |
|---|---|---|---|
| ENVELOPES | 1,267 | $36,825 | $29.06 |
| PAR (PRE-AUTHORIZED REMITTANCE) | 431 | $62,345 | $144.65* |
| LOOSE | - | $6,641 | - |
| ONLINE | - | $786 | - |
| TOTAL | - | $106,597 | - |
| **PARISH DEBT REDUCTION** | **RECEIVED** | **TOTAL** | **AVERAGE** |
| ENVELOPES | 139 | $4,853 | $34.91 |
| PAR (PRE-AUTHORIZED REMITTANCE) | 53 | $3,212 | $60.60* |
| MORTGAGE BALANCE (AS OF MONTH END) | | | $399,783 |
| PRINCIPAL PAID (ON MORTGAGE) | | | $9,938 |
| INTEREST PAID (ON MORTGAGE) | | | $1,500 |
| TOTAL PAID (ON MORTGAGE) | | | $11,438 |

*NOTE: PAR average includes weekly, bi-weekly, and monthly withdrawals, which are totalled and divided by the number of givers.


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