

BENE DICTUS



P7
ALPHA KITCHEN TEAM

P11.....
GREGORIAN PRAYER NIGHT



SAINT BENEDICT PARISH

45 Radcliffe Drive
Halifax, Nova Scotia
902-443-0725

SUNDAY MASS

Saturday: 4pm
Sunday: 9am, 11:15am, 6pm

WEEKDAY MASS

Monday to Friday 9am

CONFESSIONS

Saturday: 3 - 3:45pm
Wednesday: 9:45 - 10:30am

Bene Dictus is your monthly newsletter available in print or in your email inbox.

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME!

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March 2018

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SAINT BENEDICT PARISH CLERGY

Pastor, Fr. Simon Lobo, CC

Permanent Deacon, Dcn. David Viscount

Associate Pastor, Fr. Jim O'Connor

Intern Priest, Fr. Matthew Keshwah

Episcopal Vicar for Parish Renewal, Fr. James Mallon



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FATHER SIMON SAYS...

GRATITUDE UPON GRATITUDE



It's hard to believe everything that has happened in a very short period of time. There are so many people who I'd like to thank for helping with the launch of my book, *Divine Renovation*

Apprentice. It was an honour to have my parents and a few friends visiting for the weekend.

Thanks to everyone who went out of their way to make some of my loved ones truly feel loved and welcomed at our parish. I am humbled by the number of people who bought books AND who already read it cover to cover. If you are interested, you can buy copies at the glass display case after Mass for \$20 cash.

I give thanks to God for the Parish Mission and for all of the blessings that we were able to receive through our guest speaker, Jim Murphy. Thanks to those who joined us, and thanks to those who worked behind the scenes to make the sessions run smoothly.

Finally, I want to take a moment to honour and thank my entire staff and, in a particular way, my brother priests. You may not realize this, but if you don't see one of them at a weekend Mass at Saint Benedict, it is likely that they are generously serving another community in the Archdiocese. Thank you, Fr. Jim, for your kindness, and your huge heart for people. Thank you, Fr. Matthew, for courageously sharing some of what you've learned with the Archdiocese of Ottawa. It is wonderful to know that we are able to have an impact beyond our walls.



FATHER SIMON SAYS **continued**

CULTURE OF WORSHIP

At Saint Benedict, we value quality and diverse styles of music. Most importantly, we want everyone to be able to participate in worship in a way that helps them connect with God's heart. Over the last few years, we've grown in the ways that we worship God through contemporary praise at Praise & Worship Nights.

It has been my dream that there would be a similar event outside of Mass to help people to pray with a more traditional style of worship. I am excited to announce that on Saturday, March 17th, at 7:30pm, we will have a Gregorian Prayer Night in the Church. Peter Togni and the 11:15am Choir will lead us, and Fr. James Mallon will speak. I would encourage everyone – from any of the Masses – to join us for this evening of prayer.

DIVINE RENOVATION = SAINT BENEDICT PARISH'S MEGAPHONE TO THE WORLD

Sometimes I forget about the huge impact that our parish in Clayton Park is having around the world. I think back to the surreal experience of the DR16 conference. Delegates came from as far as Australia. While the plenary sessions and the workshops were inspiring, the most positive feedback came from the interactions that our guests had with our parish volunteers. Our love and hospitality spoke louder than any of the sessions.

Once again, we are gearing up to host hundreds of people from around the world for the DR18 conference this coming June. Fr. James will be preaching about this on the weekend of March 3rd-4th. I would encourage us to be generous again, committing to serve at DR18. The experience of serving at DR16 brought us together as a unified parish.

You can commit to serve in person the weekend that Fr. James is preaching, or you can go to the DR website to register to serve: divinerenovation.net/dr18-volunteer/

PILGRIMS ON A JOURNEY

We are a few weeks into Lent. For some, the initial fervour of taking on or giving up things has started to wear off. This is natural. This is human. This is part of Lent. However, now is a great moment to renew our resolve to go for it!

If you haven't signed up to start or join a Discipleship Group, it's not too late. Please go to our website (saintbenedict.ca/groups) and fill out the online form.

My hope is that as we grow through this season – especially through the Lectio: Prayer series – we will be in a much deeper place by the end of Lent. Please also pray for me, as it will be my first time going through Holy Week and the Triduum as pastor here.

FIRST RESPONDERS



Susan LeRue
Bene Dictus Team

Saint Benedict Parish has an Emergency First Responders Ministry which began in 2012.

Presently this ministry has 18 trained members. Working in teams of two, they serve as Emergency First Responders at every weekend Mass and other special events, such as the Divine Renovation Conference and parish missions. All volunteers are trained in Level 1 First Aid, CPR, and are also familiar with the protocol for fire regulations.

I spent some time with two of these volunteers recently, Mariette and Joe Young. They have served with this ministry for three years. I asked them if medical experience is a requirement for this ministry, and they both answered, "Definitely not!" No health care background is necessary, just a willingness to help people. Mariette shares that Saint Benedict Parish provides a first aid training course through St. John Ambulance for anyone that is feeling called to this ministry.

Mariette is a former nurse with years of service in many areas of healthcare, and Joe is a former firefighter. Joe has had first responder experience throughout his career, dealing with medical emergencies and assisting paramedics at accidents.

Mariette and Joe both felt that this ministry was a good fit for them. There was a comfort level in knowing that this ministry was something that they had, in some ways, dealt with in both their careers. Joe says they work well together as a team, it helps that they are a married couple, too! Although they have had to assist parishioners at times, they say that a quiet day is a good day.

Thank you Mariette and Joe, and thank you to all who volunteer in this important ministry. We appreciate your presence, your dedication and your service to our Parishioners this way.

There is a need for more Emergency First Responders at Saint Benedict Parish. If you feel called to this Ministry, please contact Bev Brown at gluetenfreegal.brown94@gmail.com, or phone 902-489-8336.

*Mariette &
Joe Young*



DIVINE RENOVATION: LONDON



Mia Ryan
Bene Dictus Team

It was so refreshing and exciting to interview Fr. James Mackay when he visited Saint Benedict Parish in January with Jordan Kelly, his Director of Pastoral Ministries from the Parish of Our Lady of Walsingham in Royal Docks, East London, UK.

Tell us about your parish.

Our parish is very diverse with parishioners from a variety of backgrounds and cultures. Our parish is in one of the poorest areas of London and there is a big divide between rich and poor.

How has Divine Renovation impacted your parish?

Divine Renovation has really awakened the Holy Spirit in our parish, and so many people's lives are being changed in spectacular ways. We have run four Alphas and we have seen people go from 'quiet like a mouse' figures to these awesome Christians who are charging forward. For example, one parishioner, Nicola, was initially very reserved and was not showing her talents.

Now she is totally on fire with her faith. She is doing phenomenal work in leading connect groups in our parish. Another example is the fruit that we are seeing from our first Youth Alpha. It is so exciting that this Youth Alpha is being run by the young people who received the Holy Spirit at the last Alpha. There are so many other stories just like these in our parish where people are using their talents and skills for something that they believe in, which is bringing other people to life.

Fr. James Mackay, how has Divine Renovation impacted your priesthood?

Divine Renovation has really woken me up to my Christianity. It has brought such a joy to my faith and it has changed everything.

So what is the dream for your parish?

Any plan we have for our church is not going to be big enough for what God wants! However, the ten year dream is that everyone in our parish, I mean all 50,000 people that live in our parish area, experience the love of God and respond to His love. I wish every street and every household will have some real connection to a living relationship with God.



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KENNETH'S ALPHA EXPERIENCE



Kendra Chisholm
Bene Dictus Team

Kenneth has been a parishioner at Saint Benedict for just over a year, and he agreed to share how he got connected to the parish and how he has grown.

Can you share a bit about yourself, and your faith background?

My name is Kenneth Brennan, I'm 20 years old, and I grew up in Toronto. I was born and raised Catholic, but it was the 'going to Church every Sunday, followed by brunch' kind of Catholic. That was the extent of my faith life. I joined the Navy after High School and moved to Halifax in October 2016.

How did you come to Saint Benedict Parish?

In a way, I ended up at Saint Benedict by accident. During my first week in Nova Scotia, I was eyeballing a Catholic parish closer to my apartment, but that Saturday night I was hanging out with friends and we stayed up late watching movies. The next morning, they mentioned that there was a Catholic Church right across the street. I hadn't been to Mass in a while, and I had already been thinking about 'starting new', so I decided to go. And it changed my life!

What was your general impression when you came to mass, and what made you return?

It was crazy, it was actually a 'Name Tag Sunday' and I thought, "What is this?". I continued to be caught off-guard by other aspects, like prayer partners, and how upbeat



*Kenneth
Brennan*

the music was. I talked to Father Simon on my way out, and he invited me to the New Parishioner Event, which happened to be the following Saturday. Soon afterward, I asked Fr. Simon if I could take part in the RCIA program, because I wanted to learn more about my faith. He suggested taking Alpha, since I was already Catholic.

What was your experience of Alpha?

At first, I felt a bit like an outsider, but by the second night I became good friends with one guy, Matt, in my group. We connected really quickly. After the second night was done, I had an experience of God that I didn't fully understand. There was this feeling that I can't describe, but it was a kind of confirmation that what I was doing was good. The best thing I got out of Alpha has been the friendships that I've made – friendships where I know I can openly discuss my faith. If I hadn't met the friends I did in Alpha, I would mostly be hanging out with the guys from work, who are not always the best influences. I'm 100% convinced that if I hadn't gone to Saint Benedict Parish I wouldn't be going to Church today.

ALPHA KITCHEN TEAM



Peter Mallette
Bene Dictus Team

The Winter Alpha taking place on Friday nights at Saint Benedict Parish is one for the record books.

A whopping 175 people are registered, making it the biggest Winter Alpha to date. Doug Doiron coordinates a team of close to a dozen volunteers whose job it is to feed everyone.

How did you become the Alpha Kitchen Team Coordinator?

I spent 33 years in the military as a cook. When I retired as a Master Corporal, I needed something to occupy my time. When I started attending Saint Benedict, I noticed the brand new kitchen and offered my services to Father James. It was around the time of the very first Alpha course. Father James asked me to help out in the kitchen and I've been involved ever since.

Did you always want to be cook?

Yes. My dad was a military chef too. Growing up, I have memories of him cooking and going to work in uniform every day, and that sparked an interest in me as a kid. At one point in his military career, my father was an instructor at the Liaison Culinary College in Barrie, Ontario. I later attended that culinary school as a student. I came from a family of five, I was the only one who followed in my father's footsteps.

How do you decide the Alpha menu?

I have about eight signature dishes. Some of the favourites include chicken à la king, pulled pork, and pasta. We also offer a vegetarian option every week, which I find challenging and fun.

Do you get much feedback?

We sure do. People are very quick to tell me what they like and don't like, and the feedback is very inspiring. It's one of the main reasons I keep cooking for Alpha. What I like is when people stop me in the mall or the grocery store and people thank me. They don't know my name, but that doesn't matter. What matters is that they enjoy the food. It's not unusual for people to come back for seconds. Some come back for a third helping.

Sorry, but I have to ask. What don't they like?

(Laughter) Beans & wieners. We've taken it off the menu.

Do you have any trouble attracting volunteers?

No. We have a team of about twelve. Each meal requires nine people; a cook, three servers, two runners, two beverage servers and one dish washer. We have a lot of fun setting up in the afternoon. It's a great social outing. Sometimes we sing. We've been known to dance. We always have a team prayer before everyone arrives. We give thanks to God and ask the Holy Spirit to bless the team leaders and everyone that takes the Alpha course. We also have three volunteers who have been with us from the very beginning; Sue and Jerry LeRue, and Allan Brown. Jerry helps me buy the food each week. We shop at the local Cash and Carry. We never compromise on quality, but we're always looking to keep costs as low as we can.

What do you do with the leftovers?

None of the food is wasted. The leftovers are sent to Hope Cottage on Brunswick Street. They feed more than 200 people every day.

What impact is this experience having on your faith?

I was raised Catholic, but when I joined the military, I let go of my faith. Since retiring, and becoming the Alpha Kitchen Coordinator I've rediscovered my faith and it's been wonderful. Once the meal is served and the dishes are cleared, the entire kitchen team gets to listen to the Alpha testimonials and that strengthens my faith.

You know, there are times when I come home after a long day in the kitchen and wonder how much longer I can do this, but the Holy Spirit somehow gives me the strength and the ability to carry on and keep making it happen, and as long as I enjoy it, I'm going to keep doing it.





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PACT: FIRST COMMUNION



**Sarah, Nikki, & Aslyn
Jr. Bene Dictus Team**

PACT, or Preparing And Celebrating Together, is a wonderful program for kids at Saint Benedict Parish who are getting ready for First Reconciliation and First Communion.

Together with their families, kids attend a series of fun retreats where there's singing, dancing, praying, crafting, snacking and learning.

During our time in PACT, we learned about the importance of reconciliation. We may run away from God but when we come back to Him, God always has a big celebration for us! After our first reconciliation, we felt closer to God and washed from all our sins.

In our First Communion retreats, we learned about the gift that Jesus gave us through receiving Him in communion. When we receive the Holy Eucharist, Jesus lives in our hearts.

Julia celebrated her first reconciliation and first communion at Saint Benedict. Her family shares their experience:

"I'm grateful to have had the chance to know Jesus better. It's very important to us. Our daughter can learn about the life of Jesus, she can better know the church and its importance in her life. I realize that this time in the church has strengthened our faith and has shown us that we are on the right path."

– Marcelo and Elaine de Lima



LENTEN PENITENTIAL DRAMA

TUESDAY MARCH 13TH, 7PM

DAY OF RECONCILIATION

WEDNESDAY MARCH 14TH, 9:30AM-5PM



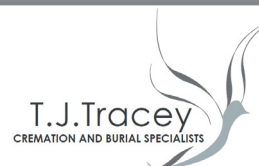
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GREGORIAN PRAYER NIGHT



Matt Vaughan
Communications Coordinator

In preparation for the upcoming Gregorian Prayer Night, Matt Vaughan spoke with Phil Marmen, the Music Ministry Coordinator, and Peter-Anthony Togni, the director of the Choir at the 11:15am Sunday Mass.

What is the Gregorian Prayer Night?

PHIL: The Gregorian Prayer Night is an evening of prayer with music where we can withdraw from the busyness of life and experience God in the beauty of music. We'll take advantage of the fact that it is outside the context of Mass to be immersed in the experience.

What does the name mean?

PHIL: Simply put, it means we will be praying with music rooted in Gregorian Chant-style music. Although it is technically simple chanting in unison, it has developed to include beautiful, sometimes complex pieces with many voices and harmonies.

PETER: The choir will be singing music that spans over a thousand years, much of it rooted in Gregorian chant, which is the central tradition of unaccompanied sacred song of the Roman Catholic church.

What should I expect to happen when I walk in that night?

PHIL: With the help of Fr. James Mallon, we will be guided through a meditative time of prayer with music. It is similar to Praise & Worship nights, in the sense that we will be praying with music, but the style of music and the style of prayer will be different.

Why are we having this night?

PHIL: We have a lot more liberty to explain and be immersed in the music outside the context of Mass where music can sometimes feel like more of a filler than a prayer. We've invested in helping people enter into prayer with contemporary music at the Praise & Worship nights, and this night aims to do the same with this different style of music. We feel it is as important to learn to praise God with a joyful sound as it is to quiet ourselves before him in contemplation, and Gregorian Chant lends itself better to contemplation than Praise & Worship music typically does. Contemplation is a type of prayer that does not typically come naturally to us, and we'd like to help bridge that gap.

Who is this night for?

PHIL: This night is for everyone! I really believe that it is possible for anyone to come to this night and encounter God.

PETER: Those who come have a chance to pray by listening and by singing, as there will be moments when we will all join in on the sacred chants, in some cases music that is over a thousand years old, heard and sung by millions over time, and a constant voice of the church in the world.

How can I enter into the night?

PHIL: Fr. James Mallon will help guide us through the evening by speaking into pieces before they are sung. Ultimately, you will enter into the night best by quieting yourself and letting the presence of God, present in the beauty of the music, fill your heart.

PETER: Shut off your mind and go with the flow of beauty!

The first Gregorian Prayer Night is on Saturday, March 17th, at 7:30pm. Come sing, pray, and meditate!

GREGORIAN PRAYER NIGHT

***SATURDAY,
MARCH 17TH,
7:30PM***

O sing to the Lord a new song...

HOLY WEEK



**HOLY THURSDAY
MASS - 7PM**



GOOD FRIDAY
CHILDREN'S SERVICE - 11AM
SERVICE - 3PM
STATIONS - 7PM



**HOLY SATURDAY
EASTER
VIGIL - 8PM**

CONFIRMATION



Peter Mallette
Bene Dictus Team

On the first Sunday of the New Year, fourteen young adults received the sacrament of confirmation at the 9am Mass. You may have noticed Adam Cole among the group. The 14 year old, grade 8 student was flanked by his two older brothers, Avery and Aidan (pictured on the right, with Adam in the middle), who acted as his sponsors. It was an emotionally-charged moment, especially for Adam's mother Kel Marie, who watched with tears in her eyes, alongside her husband, Art.

Why were you so emotional?

KEL MARIE: I cried my head off because I am a mother, and because of the power of the Holy Spirit in the church that morning. It felt like I was witnessing a rite of passage seeing my three boys standing together as young men in the eyes of God. It's what I committed to when I married my husband Art that we would raise our children in the church. It was a big 'life event' for our family and I am grateful I lived long enough to witness it.

What does confirmation mean to you Adam?

ADAM: It means I am closer to God. It means I am adult in God's eyes and I have to go to church on my own from now on, and not because my Mom makes me.

What does it mean to you to be your brother's confirmation sponsors?

AIDAN: For me, it means I am his sponsor in faith. I will help him with his faith, to keep it strong in that area of his life.

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EVERY: It means I have to keep an eye on Adam to make sure he doesn't go too far off the path. Aidan and I will be out of here in a couple of years so keeping in touch with Adam might be a bit of a challenge if we're not around as much.

AIDAN: But if Adam starts to wander off, we'll give him a friendly little nudge of encouragement to get him back on track.

Ronnie Lunn, our Youth Ministry Coordinator, says Confirmation is intended to unite people more firmly with Christ, increase the gifts of the Holy Spirit in us, and give us the strength of the Holy Spirit to spread and defend the faith as true witnesses of Christ.

"At Saint Benedict, we don't confirm at a grade level like other churches. We confirm teens that are prepared and desire it. We look for teens to have a relationship with Jesus, and to be active in our parish community. We expect teens to already have a connection to the parish when entering their confirmation year. The Experience, on Monday nights, is our starting point for teens that are outside the church, to draw them into a relationship with Jesus and the community at Saint Benedict."

CALENDAR OF IMPORTANT DATES MARCH 2018

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
4 SBP KIDS DR18 VOLUNTEER REQUESTS	5 THE EXPERIENCE	6 GYMTOKNIGHT	7 EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT	8	9 MEN'S GYM ALPHA STATIONS OF THE CROSS	10 ALPHA WEEKEND AWAY THE ENCOUNTER SKATING AT THE OVAL
11 SBP KIDS	12 THE EXPERIENCE	13 LENTEN PENITENTIAL DRAMA	14 LENTEN DAY OF RECONCILIATION	15	16 MEN'S GYM ALPHA STATIONS OF THE CROSS	17 GREGORIAN PRAYER NIGHT
18 NAME TAG SUNDAY SBP KIDS	19 THE EXPERIENCE	20 GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP	21 EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT	22	23 MEN'S GYM ALPHA STATIONS OF THE CROSS	24 NEW @SAINTBP
25 PALM SUNDAY SBP KIDS	26 THE EXPERIENCE	27	28 EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT	29 HOLY THURSDAY	30 GOOD FRIDAY MEN'S GYM STATIONS OF THE CROSS	31 EASTER VIGIL 

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the encounter is a group for those in grades 5 & 6.



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ChrisYetman@SaintBenedict.ca

FINANCIAL UPDATE - DECEMBER 2017

PARISH DEBT REDUCTION	REC'D	TOTAL	AVG/
ENVELOPES	179	\$7,298	\$40.77
PAR (PRE-AUTHORIZED REMITTANCE)	65	\$3,442	see note
MORTGAGE BALANCE (AS OF MONTH END)		\$602,546	
INTEREST PAID (ON MORTGAGE)		\$1,977	
PRINCIPAL PAID (ON MORTGAGE)		\$26,563	

Principal payments include principal portion of monthly mortgage payment plus additional principal payments made from Parish Debt funds received.

SUNDAY COLLECTIONS	REC'D	TOTAL	AVG/
ENVELOPES	1,625	\$56,492	\$34.76
PAR (PRE-AUTHORIZED REMITTANCE)	381	\$54,056	see note

Note: PAR options include weekly, bi-weekly and monthly withdrawals; therefore a 'weekly' average is unavailable.

FINANCIAL UPDATE - JANUARY 2018

PARISH DEBT REDUCTION	REC'D	TOTAL	AVG/
ENVELOPES	148	\$10,978	\$74.11
PAR (PRE-AUTHORIZED REMITTANCE)	65	\$3,377	see note
MORTGAGE BALANCE (AS OF MONTH END)		\$593,078	
INTEREST PAID (ON MORTGAGE)		\$1,970	
PRINCIPAL PAID (ON MORTGAGE)		\$9,468	

Principal payments include principal portion of monthly mortgage payment plus additional principal payments made from Parish Debt funds received.

SUNDAY COLLECTIONS	REC'D	TOTAL	AVG/
ENVELOPES	1,340	\$33,957	\$25.34
PAR (PRE-AUTHORIZED REMITTANCE)	380	\$50,850	see note

Note: PAR options include weekly, bi-weekly and monthly withdrawals; therefore a 'weekly' average is unavailable.



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