

SEPTEMBER



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WHY ALPHA?



p. 9.....
SBP KIDS FAQs



SAINT BENEDICT PARISH

45 Radcliffe Drive
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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

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Participants listen to a talk at a recent Alpha.

Next issue of Bene Dictus: October 13th/14th

SAINT BENEDICT PARISH CLERGY

Pastor: Fr. Simon Lobo, CC

Associate Pastor: Fr. Alex Colautti, CC

Episcopal Vicar for Parish Renewal: Fr. James Mallon

Permanent Deacon: Deacon David Viscount



www.takosushiramen.ca





FATHER SIMON SAYS...



Fr. Simon Lobo, CC
Pastor

HEALING THE WOUNDS

On Tuesday, August 21st, about 140 people gathered in the parish hall to continue the conversation on the clergy sexual abuse crisis that I had spoken about in my homily the weekend before. Many opinions were expressed. I am so grateful that we could come together as a community and listen to one another respectfully. Special thanks to those who shared so vulnerably from their own experience as victims of abuse.

Pope Francis wrote a letter in response to the crisis and quoted St. Paul: "If one member suffers, all suffer together." (1 Corinthians 12:26). He wrote these words as part of his teaching on the Body of Christ, how all the members of the body matter and are interconnected. Please join me in praying and offering acts of penance (such as fasting from food or things that we enjoy) as a way of showing our solidarity with the members of the body who are hurting the most.

THE ADJUSTMENT BUREAU

Over the last 12 months, the Divine Renovation Ministry has experienced explosive growth with the number of staff members and parishes that they are helping globally. They needed more room than we were able to offer in our church basement. Chalice, the child sponsorship charity based in Bedford, has made an arrangement with Divine Renovation and has offered them office space in their building. We are happy that Divine Renovation will still be nearby as we plan to maintain a strong relationship between the parish and this ministry.

continued on next page
saintbenedict.ca **2**



FATHER SIMON SAYS *continued*

One of the ways we hope to do this is through Rob McDowell. The leadership teams of both organizations have been in conversation and, based on his giftedness, it seems like the right time for Rob to move over to the Divine Renovation team on a 3/4 time basis. Rob will be at the parish for the other 1/4 time as a member of the Senior Leadership Team, focusing on strategy and continuing to help lay the foundations for our preaching series.

We've also decided to restructure our teams, combining the Operations Team (administration, finance, and facilities) with the Communications Team (communication and audiovisual). We've asked Kate Robinson to lead this new joint team, and I have every confidence that she will apply her amazing gifts to this challenging role.

YOUTH MINISTRY

This summer, we began the process of hiring a new youth minister. Bill Scollard and Fr. Alex led the search and tapped into some outside HR expertise. As we announced a couple of weeks ago in the Overview, Corey Robinson has been hired to lead our youth ministry, starting off on a half-time basis. Corey brings years of experience coaching teen athletes and working with troubled youth. He has been investing in young people at our parish for years.

His first order of business was to call together a 'Youth Ministry Think Tank' to dream and strategize about how to help teenagers enter into a relationship with Jesus and bring their friends with them. This think tank included parents and invested parishioners.

TASTE & SEE... SEE & HEAR

Every summer the Finance Council does a midyear budget review. As a result of the incredible generosity of our parishioners – seriously, thank you! – and the responsible stewardship of these resources by the staff and ministry leaders, we find ourselves in a healthy situation. Recently, the projectors in the church have been getting progressively dimmer, making it hard to see the slides. These projectors, it turns out, were designed to be used in a dark room without any ambient light. Without question, they need to be replaced.

We also explored ways to improve the sound quality in the church. Week after week, parishioners complain that they can't hear. The sound quality and clarity varies drastically depending on where you're sitting in the church. Apparently, the original system was sub-par for the size and needs of our space. It seems like a good time to make some significant improvements to our sound system.

I brought these possibilities before the Finance Council, and they were unanimously in favour of making these investments in our church. We should be able to recover some of the costs by selling some of the existing speakers. The best news is that we won't need to do a capital campaign. Everything is covered in our budget reforecast and we are still left with a little margin! We look forward to making these AV improvements sometime this Fall. 🙏

RESPONSIBLE MINISTRY



Matt Vaughan
Communications Coordinator


Chris Yetman is Finance Manager at Saint Benedict Parish and the Responsible Ministry

Coordinator. Responsible Ministry is the policy the Archdiocese has put in place to foster a safe environment for all those who interact with the Catholic Church in our region. In light of recent events, I asked Chris to elaborate on this policy.

For many years now, Saint Benedict Parish has had a stringent protocol in place to ensure that any and all who are over the age of 18 and serve in ministries that handle money and/or deal with vulnerable individuals, such as children and some adults, are fully cleared by one of our respective police organizations, that is, the Halifax Regional Police or the RCMP. Once someone offers to serve in any of these ministries, the ministry director

notifies our Responsible Ministry Coordinator who then directs the individual to complete a criminal record check and, depending on the ministry, a vulnerable sector check. Until these checks are received back in the office no one is permitted to serve in the ministry.

As per our insurance provider, all checks are good for a three year period. It should be noted that all parish staff, including clergy, must follow this same protocol. These checks are then shared with the Archdiocese and are recorded in a confidential database that allows for follow-up when the check is due to expire. As a rule, those serving are given a minimum of three months notice that their check is coming up for renewal.

If you'd like more information on Responsible Ministry, you can visit halifaxymouth.org/admin-services/responsible-ministry. 

"In recent days, a report was made public which detailed the experiences of at least a thousand survivors, victims of sexual abuse, the abuse of power and of conscience at the hands of priests over a period of approximately seventy years. Even though it can be said that most of these cases belong to the past, nonetheless as time goes on we have come to know the pain of many of the victims. We have realized that these wounds never disappear and that they require us forcefully to condemn these atrocities and join forces in uprooting this culture of death; these wounds never go away. The heart-wrenching pain of these victims, which cries out to heaven, was long ignored, kept quiet or silenced. But their outcry was more powerful than all the measures meant to silence it, or sought even to resolve it by decisions that increased its gravity by falling into complicity. The Lord heard that cry and once again showed us on which side he stands. Mary's song is not mistaken and continues quietly to echo throughout history. For the Lord remembers the promise he made to our fathers: "he has scattered the proud in their conceit; he has cast down the mighty from their thrones and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty" (Lk 1:51-53). We feel shame when we realize that our style of life has denied, and continues to deny, the words we recite."

- Pope Francis, August 20th, 2018

WHY ALPHA?

This month's cover highlights our new season of Alpha. Daytime and evening Alpha both launch on Friday, September 21st. If you'd like to register for Alpha, go to saintbenedict.ca/alpha. Here is a compilation of some Alpha stories from witnesses at Mass in the last year.

Arlene Sibley:

"I went to Alpha because I did have questions, and I felt something missing in my life. I had not attended church regularly, other than Christmas, weddings, and funerals, since my late twenties. At Alpha, I enjoyed a meal and met some wonderful people who have become family. Each week, I could not wait until Friday to see everyone. Something happens when you open up and share; you learn we all have stuff holding us down. I believe the Holy Spirit was holding me up, and giving me a fresh start."

Mark Saldanha:

"When I was 19, I was asked to be on the Alpha Team. I had never really done anything like that before, but I decided to say 'yes'. And by this point, I had already known that Alpha had changed the lives of my mom, my dad, my brother, and even my grandma. I had a crazy realization, some would even call it an

epiphany: I realized that somehow, someday, this world did not revolve around me."

Bill Scollard:

"I came back from the Alpha weekend away very different. It changed me. I experienced a peace and a calm that I never felt before, and it continues today. My life is 100% different. I'm a way better husband, father, son, brother, and friend. And for the first time in my life, I had real purpose, I understand why I'm here, and that's an incredible gift. Just for the chance of this happening, I'm asking you to give Alpha a try."

Robert McGregor:

"Alpha completely changed my life. I didn't know what to expect. I was hesitant to walk in the first night, but I walked in and sat at a table. I met some amazing people. My life did a complete 180. If you haven't done Alpha, just go give it a chance. If you go to one night, you might decide, 'This is for me.' If you do go to Alpha, I suggest the weekend away. I met the Holy Spirit. I was overcome with emotion; it was unexplainable. It's made me a better person. I'm no longer the selfish person I was." 🙏



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BEARING & PONDERING



John Rae
Bene Dictus Team


I recently completed a Diploma in the New Evangelization, and in one of the class lectures, given by Archbishop Anthony Mancini, he commented that evangelization, in the Catholic milieu, must be conducted in a 'Marian' style, where pondering becomes part of the process.

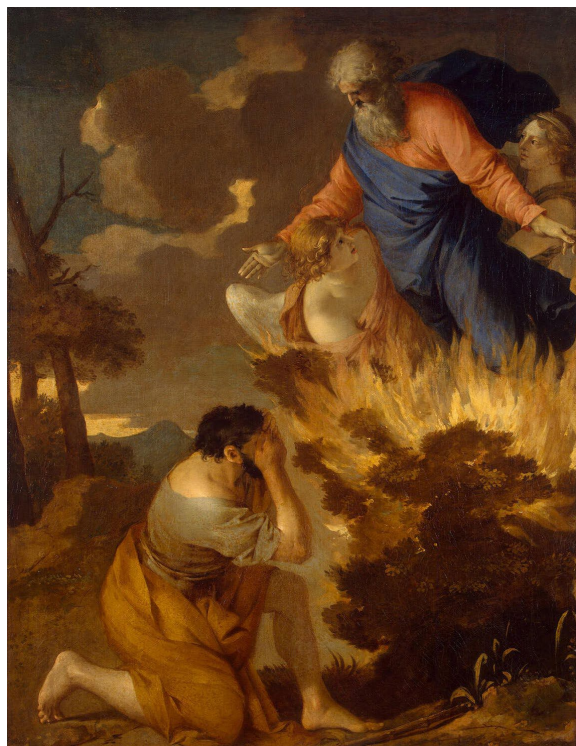
The Gospel of Luke, in describing Mary's response to various perplexing episodes in her life, says that she "bore all these things in her mind and pondered them in her heart." (Luke 2:19). What is the difference between "bearing in our mind" and "pondering in our heart"?

Marshall McLuhan, the communications theorist, says that our mind is the venue for concepts and our heart is the venue for perceptions. For example, Moses, when he first encounters the burning bush, has no 'concept' of what's going on, he only 'perceives' that the bush is burning without being consumed. It is only after he ponders this perception that he is able to receive the conceptual content of the experience, in this case the name of God (I AM) and the terms of his mission (to lead the Israelites out of Egypt). Concepts are second order entities downstream from encounters with Mystery. At lot of concepts have 'best

before dates' and need to be replaced with ones more suitable to our current context, so we need to continually hone our perceptive skills. Jesus alludes to this in Luke 12:36, where He says, "Blessed are those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching."

Presumably burning bushes can come in different sizes. At one end of the spectrum, how often does something draw our attention, for just a brief moment which causes us to pause for a second or two and go, "Hmmm"? Like Mary, we can tuck these little episodes away in our heart, knowing that God, through this tiny moment, has something to teach us. But sometimes we find ourselves presented with circumstances that are initially totally unfathomable and even painful, to the point where even contemplating pondering will pierce our hearts.

In his lecture, Archbishop Mancini stressed that the primary modality of the New Evangelism was 'encounter' (our own burning bush experiences where we are given an opportunity, by God, to ponder). In addition to our life experiences, the Mass gives us a weekly opportunity to practice our pondering, because, as Archbishop Mancini said, "In the Sacraments you are put in touch with the Mystery of God." 



SAYING YES TO SERVICE



Peter Mallette
Bene Dictus Team

You're likely familiar with the adage, "It's better to give than to receive." Those words were actually spoken by Jesus: "In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way, we must help the weak, and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, it is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts 20:35). At a recent Beta event this summer, Peter Mallette and Treena Campbell spoke about why we serve and the gifts we receive from it.

TREENA: The act of giving, or in this context, serving, makes us happy, healthy, content, and grateful; and it's only a matter of saying 'yes', or being willing or open to make it happen.

PETER: I was born and raised Catholic and I liked going to church. I served at the altar for years as a kid. When I got too old for that, I became involved in Youth Encounter, which is something like Alpha, but for teens. As a young adult, I read at Sunday Mass which is what got me comfortable speaking in front of people and ultimately interested in a career in media.

TREENA: Like Peter, I was born and raised Catholic right here in Nova Scotia. When I was in junior high, my parents stopped going to church. You'd think for a teen that would be like being handed a get out of jail free card. Not me. I kept going mostly because a lot of

my friends were going to church so it was fun. I became involved with youth ministry, read at Mass, and was part of a travelling youth retreat team for the diocese that I really enjoyed. Eventually, my head and heart lead me to a career in nursing. I didn't realize it then, but service must have been in my blood, since some people would say that nursing and service are one in the same. I've spent 23 wonderful years serving and touching the lives of people in need through nursing.

PETER: I've been attending Saint Benedict for the past two years. Because of Alpha and the power of the Holy Spirit, I am now on the Alpha team, a member of the Prayer Ministry Team, and a writer for the Bene Dictus. I like to think of myself as the Alpha correspondent.

TREENA: Since I took Alpha eight years ago, I am now an Alpha team leader. I have become involved with hospitality, youth ministry, and I'm a Connect Group leader, too. I think part of that is due to the fact I don't know how to say no!

PETER: Why do we do it? First and foremost, we do it for the love of God. Secondly, we haven't come up with an effective strategy, at least not yet, to say 'no' to Father Simon when he asks. (Just kidding Father!)

TREENA: We are called by God to bring others into relationship with Him. God uses us to help with this process and this is way more impactful on their lives and my faith, so

it really is twofold.

PETER: What I love about Saint Benedict is the invitational culture here. They're not afraid to ask, and that's great because some of us need a bit of a nudge now and then. Perhaps you're thinking, "But what could I possibly do?" There are so many opportunities to serve at Saint Benedict. There are 70 ministries, and 1684 different roles filled by 842 parishioners.

TREENA: Every person who serves at Saint Benedict is either directly or indirectly bringing people closer to Christ. Each and every act of service is important and fulfilling. The glorious part is all paths lead to God. How wonderful is that? We don't all have the same gifts or talents, but God is willing to use us just as we are.

PETER: What I love most about serving at Saint Benedict are the new friendships that result from it. But to be perfectly honest, they're more than just friendships. They're deep spiritual connections that make my heart and soul happy, and I don't enjoy anywhere else but here.


TREENA: All those yesses have changed my life in ways that cannot be measured. I am


much happier, grateful and connected. I receive more from serving than the recipient does, and bringing people to God is the joy that results.

PETER: I also think we have a responsibility to serve. It's the least we can do in return for the wonderful and generous gifts we receive from God. And trust me, the kind folks here at Saint Benedict will nurture you every step of the way. In every ministry I am involved with I've been trained appropriately and prayerfully, so whatever team I'm on, I'm made to feel that the others have my back, and through prayer, God too.

TREENA: It's easy to share ourselves and the love of God when we're doing something we love. There are so many options available, so consider how you might fit service into your life.

PETER: So if someone asks you to consider serving in Ministry, think about it. Others may see a gift in you that you don't see in yourself. Trust their judgement. Trust yourself that you can do it, and trust the Lord. For it is written:

"Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have; God is pleased by sacrifices of that kind." (Hebrews 13:16) 



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SBP KIDS FAQs



Jenna LeBlanc
Bene Dictus Team

At Saint Benedict, we often do things differently than other parishes. Children's Ministry is no exception. I sat down with Laura O'Rourke, Director of Children's Ministry, to find out more about why things are so different – and why that's great!

What programs are available?

Wee Ones Word, or WOW, is offered for the littlest ones from birth through age four. This runs during the 9am Mass.

SHINE (Seeking Him In Everything) is offered for elementary school-aged kids during the 9am and 11:15am Masses, with the option for children to join their parents at Mass during the Offertory or remain throughout the entire Mass.

Why are children's ministries offered during Mass, not before or after?

We firmly believe that children are not the future of the Church – they're part of its present, here and now. We want to evangelize everyone who enters our church, from newborns to seniors.

WOW isn't just babysitting – it's a ministry for the faith life of its participants! Infants, toddlers, and preschoolers learn best when they feel loved and safe, so our goal is to offer a safe and loving environment where we sing, dance, and play games to learn more about Jesus. One of my favourite parts is that the

older children are often taught a bible verse, along with actions – I was amazed the first time my three year old came home reciting a verse of scripture!

For school-aged kids, we offer SHINE during the 9am and 11:15am Mass. Our focus is on helping kids get to know Jesus personally and develop a relationship with Him. Children at this age learn best with their imagination and creativity is engaged, so we offer a fun, high-energy celebration with lots of room to be busy and silly! We worship God through singing and dancing, spend time in storytelling learning about scripture and our relationship with God, spend time praying together, and take part in fun activities and games.

Kids who are preparing for or receiving the Eucharist always return to Mass and join their parents during the Offertory. Parents of kids who aren't ready for the Eucharist yet can choose whether their kids will return or stay until the end of the Mass.

Parents often worry that their kids find Mass boring or dread going to church on Sundays. Our children's ministry helps kids get to know the Jesus they'll encounter in the Eucharist. Our experience is that as kids grow and mature in their faith in WOW and SHINE, they feel increasingly called to the Sacraments. When the time is right for them, they make a personal choice to leave SHINE behind and start attending the full Mass weekly. They understand it better and genuinely like to go!

What's the difference between Children's Ministry and Sunday School classes?

We've moved away from a classroom model, where kids learn facts about God, to a ministry model, where kids grow in relationship with God. This is our priority – that they know and love Jesus. Information without a relationship is just noise. Kids in our program do learn facts about Jesus, the Bible, and the Catholic Faith, but these are integrated into the process of deepening their relationship with God. Evangelization comes first!

When do kids prepare for Reconciliation and First Communion?

When they're ready! Unlike most churches, we don't celebrate these sacraments at a specific age. When kids are involved in SHINE, they'll grow in faith and build relationships with friends who receive the Eucharist. When they're at the right age, maturity level, and spiritual growth to be interested in receiving communion, it's time for PACT! Preparing And Celebrating Together is our program for preparing families whose

children are ready for the sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist. This separate program guides kids and families together in getting ready for full participation at Mass. After PACT is done, SHINE is still a welcoming community of faith for kids, who can learn through imagination and play with their friends before rejoining their family to receive Communion.

When do I register my kids? How much does it cost?

You can register anytime, and it's FREE! SHINE occasionally takes a break for up to a month in the summer, but otherwise runs and welcomes new kids year-round. WOW is always available. Both programs are completely free – registration is a quick process to ensure essential info on you and your child is at our staff's fingertips. Whether this is your first time ever coming to church or your child already has a strong faith in Jesus, WOW and SHINE are safe, welcome places to grow deeper in relationship with God. ☕



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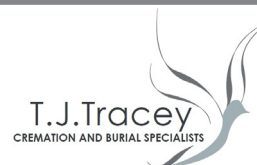
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LIFE'S HEALING CHOICES

Life's Healing Choices is a program that offers an opportunity to make the connection between past hurts and how they can cause habits and hang-ups which interfere with the peace we are all seeking. Based on the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-10), Life's Healing Choices presents eight choices that are designed to guide you along God's healing pathway to wholeness, growth, and spiritual maturity.

The first night (October 11th) is a mandatory information session where your questions will be answered as you are introduced to the group process and the content of the program.

TESTIMONIALS FROM PREVIOUS PARTICIPANTS:

"Life's Healing Choices was very instrumental in my healing process. I had a lot of pain and hurt inside. This program assisted me in facing these issues and allowed me to start healing. At the same time, it also helped me grow in my relationship with God. I am very thankful that I decided to take this course."

"It was the Life's Healing Choices program that opened my mind, heart, and soul to God's love and made me a true believer... As I attended our meetings, listened, talked, prayed, and had fun – healing, belief, and happiness entered into my life. One of the key features of this program is that it does not focus on one particular problem. It brings benefits to everyone with a variety of issues. I thank God that now I am a true believer and a member in heart and soul, as well as body, of Saint Benedict Parish. Life's Healing Choices saved my life."

"This program afforded me the tools to begin the healing process, tools I will use repeatedly as I continue my journey of healing through faith. My experience with Life's Healing Choices was very personal and transformative. It brought me from a place of great darkness to one where I felt loved and accepted despite my failings."

Life's Healing Choices runs for 10 weeks, from October 11th to December 13th from 7pm-9pm. To register (space limited) or for more information please contact Paulette:

**poiriermpaulette@yahoo.ca or
902-443-9985. ☎**



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alpha starts september 21st! register today:
saintbenedict.ca/alpha

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"O come, let us adore Him!"

Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross

Come celebrate the feast day of the Companions of the Cross with Mass at **7pm on Friday, September 14th.**

Please note that there will be **no 9am Mass** on September 14th.



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Alpha Team



Ministry



Discipleship
Groups



Alpha



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Office@SaintBenedict.ca

If you're interested in the sacraments of baptism or matrimony 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, please call the parish office (902-443-0725, and listen to the prompts) to be connected with our funeral ministry team.

FINANCIAL UPDATE - JULY 2018

PARISH DEBT REDUCTION	REC'D	TOTAL	AVG/
ENVELOPES	167	\$4,345	\$26.01
PAR (PRE-AUTHORIZED REMITTANCE)	62	\$3,287	see note
MORTGAGE BALANCE (AS OF MONTH END)		\$535,664	
INTEREST PAID (ON MORTGAGE)		\$1,901	
PRINCIPAL PAID (ON MORTGAGE)		\$9,537	
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	1,365	\$39,976	\$29.29
PAR (PRE-AUTHORIZED REMITTANCE)	404	\$56,432	see note
Note: PAR options include weekly, bi-weekly and monthly withdrawals; therefore a 'weekly' average is unavailable.			



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