JUNE 2019

BENEDICTUS

PHOTO: JOHN RAE

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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
Wednesday: 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 July 13th/14th.

On the cover:
Confirmation at Easter Vigil.

SAINT BENEDICT PARISH CLERGY

Pastor: Fr. Simon Lobo, CC
Associate Pastor: Fr. Alex Colautti, CC
Intern Priest: Fr. John Farley
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

THE FIRST DECADE

The reality is still sinking in, but on May 30th of this year I celebrated 10 years as a priest. That's a lot of water under the bridge. I feel so blessed by all of the people who have welcomed me into their lives and so many incredible experiences. In some ways priesthood has been much more challenging than I ever expected. I seem to constantly be on a learning curve. Nevertheless, my life is far more satisfying than I could have ever imagined. I feel spoiled thinking of all of the fruit — lives transformed by Jesus — that I have witnessed. I suspect that many priests only dream of being able to serve at a place like Saint Benedict, and I've been able to enjoy almost four years here already. Thank you, parishioners, for your ongoing love and prayers and for your 'yes' to being part of a parish on mission.

90 DAY TITHING CHALLENGE

We just completed our annual series on giving. Once again I want to express my deepest gratitude for your generosity to the parish. To those who have committed to start giving or to increase their giving, thank you!

We would prefer that everyone moves to PAR (Pre-Authorized Remittance) because these automatic deductions from your bank account are easy, safe, and the most convenient way to give. With PAR, 100% of your donation makes it to the parish. When giving through envelopes or with a credit card, almost 3% of your gift goes to cover fees.

With that said, we are so grateful for any method that you use to give. This year we introduced a couple of new ways to donate including online

continued on next page

FATHER SIMON SAYS continued

giving, with a credit card, and e-Transfers, which can be sent to finance@saintbenedict.ca. As with PAR, 100% of your e-transfer will be received by the parish.

After 10 years of priesthood, it finally dawned on me that I need to practice what I preach and tithe my first 10% back to the parish. I do already donate a substantial portion of my salary to my religious community, and I give to various other charities. So I was thinking to myself, "Haven't I already given enough?" But Jesus wants my whole heart. After prayerful reflection, I have decided to commit to take the 90 Day Tithing Challenge. Over these next 3 months I will give my first fruits, the first 10% of what I earn, to Saint Benedict Parish. Who will join me in surrendering to God and supporting the mission?

If you find that after 90 days you are either financially devastated, or that your spiritual life hasn't grown, we will freely return your money. If you plan to join me in the 90 Day Tithing Challenge, please send Chris Yetman a note (finance@saintbenedict.ca) to indicate that you are doing so.

COUNTING THE 'MAIN THING'

Fr. James Mallon loves to quote Stephen Covey: "The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing." The main thing at Saint Benedict Parish is 'to form disciples who joyfully live out the mission of Jesus Christ.' This is a very big, busy parish with so much amazing stuff going on, but the reason we exist is to bring people into friendship with Jesus and to support them in that walk as they invite others along, too.

Pentecost was the great moment when the Holy Spirit came down upon those first 120 disciples in the Upper Room. From there they burst forth on mission, telling others about what Jesus had done to save them. Over the last few years, we have developed a tradition at Saint Benedict to celebrate and count our new disciples at Pentecost. I would encourage those who have started to walk with Jesus in the last 12 months to be prepared to stand at whichever weekend Mass you attend so we can honour you, count you, and pray for you. You are a sign that we are truly keeping the main thing the main thing.

In addition to this, we plan on celebrating all those who have taken a next step on the journey in the last 12 months: **A Disciple A Day** and **A Next Step for Everyone**.

PRAYER & WORKS

On May 15th, we had 24 hours of Eucharistic Adoration. A staggering 175 people signed up and many more drop-ins showed up to pray. All of the good works we accomplish as a parish are enabled and sustained by prayer. Please keep it up. You can come out on Wednesdays for Eucharistic Adoration or pray almost any day in our peaceful side chapel during office hours.

Speaking of good works, a couple of years ago we supported a refugee family from Syria. There was a recent article in the Chronicle Herald about their successful pizza business. Thanks to all those who helped to get this family established in Halifax.

Stay tuned for our Steubenville Atlantic youth conference promotion. Last year the parish was incredibly generous. We hope to be able to send another large group of teenagers for the opportunity to have a life transforming encounter with Jesus.

WAITING WITH GOD

Aurea Sadi
Ora Ministry

This reflection is on next Sunday's Gospel, John 16:12-15, which is Trinity Sunday.

Waiting. I consider myself a patient person. Waiting is not often a difficulty for me; however, for many it's not something they do well these days. We live in a world where we want what we want - now. We have fast internet, we have fast food, we have fast cars, we have fast answers (thank you, Google). We cook food in instant pots. We binge-watch whole seasons of TV shows. Why wait?

"I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now," says Jesus in this week's Gospel. Jesus is telling his disciples to be patient and wait. Just prior to this discourse, he was telling the disciples that his time to depart was soon. And just before speaking about his departure, Jesus told them they would face challenges and persecutions. So why stop telling them things now? Because they need to walk the next part of the story with someone else. Jesus has done what he was sent to do. It's time for the Holy Spirit do come in and do his part. Jesus was asking his followers, and ultimately us, to anticipate and to make room so the Holy Spirit can make clear what cannot be understood right now. The Holy Spirit will continue to reveal what Jesus was already revealing to them about the Father. Revelations are best understood when the time is right, through the right 'person'. Teamwork makes the dream work!

Waiting is challenging because it opens the door to mystery. I love a good mystery story, but mystery also causes anxiety because you don't know what will happen next; will it be something good or something bad? As Catholics, there is much in our faith that is a mystery. Having authentic faith means we trust that something good will come next. One of the biggest mysteries is alluded to in this Gospel - the individual, yet at same time communal, action of our Triune God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. While I don't fully understand it, I can trust that allowing myself to dwell in this mystery creates space for my faith, my belief and trust in a God who unconditionally love, to develop and grow. While I am uncertain of how the Father, Son, and Spirit work, I can be certain that **1.** Jesus lived, died, and rose from the dead for me, **2.** he sent the Holy Spirit to continue to guide me/us, and **3.** because of Jesus and the Holy Spirit, I am certain God loves me and wants a relationship with me. The bigger mystery is that this was all done for me without my asking or meriting it. It was freely given to me because of the goodness from which I was created, and the necessity to share this goodness with others. As a believer, I must trust that in the midst of the mystery, our Triune God is working to bring about more goodness... and that's worth the wait.

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

KINGDOM OF ME

John Rae

Bene Dictus Team

In military strategy, the use of a pre-emptive strike can give you an offensive advantage that can be the game changer in prevailing against the enemy.

Consider this possible conversation between the Father and the older brother about the younger (prodigal) brother. "Look Father, you can't just pre-emptively forgive him! You, at least, have to rub his nose in it a bit and maybe follow up with some baby steps of therapy. For goodness sakes, you can't just forgive him, that's just so scandalous!"

In Matthew 11:6, Jesus says, "Blessed is the one who is not scandalized by me."
At the culmination of the passion narrative, Jesus engages in pre-emptive forgiveness when, from the cross, he says about his persecutors, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." (Luke 23:24).

Consider this headline from the news service, *The Independent*: *May 19, 2016, Mosul, Iraq - "Forgive them": 12 year old Christian girl's dying request, to her mother, after being burned alive by militants.*

What could be the strategy behind pre-emptive forgiveness? To the one who is being forgiven, it can prompt the internal reaction, "For goodness sakes, what do I need forgiven for?" That response can be the tiny seed that hopefully gets sown into the fertile soil of the heart. If it does take root, it will germinate and develop into the tree of repentance.

At Pentecost we celebrate the arrival of the Holy Spirit, of whom Jesus says, "When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth," (John 16:3). As the Holy Spirit waters and cultivates the sapling that is growing in your heart, you start to become aware of some truths about yourself: about the crosses you may have compelled others to bear, and the innocent suffering you may have caused, all for the sake of building up your individual Kingdom of Me.

In the fullness of time, when that tree is mature enough to bear the fruit of heartfelt repentance, you will then have the final and necessary ingredient for *metanoia*, the receiving of the heart and mind of Christ. At that point you can then journey from the Kingdom of Me to the Kingdom of God.

CARING FOR OTHERS

Susan LeRue
Bene Dictus Team

I had the pleasure of interviewing three ladies who are members of the new Care and Companionship Ministry launching at Saint Benedict. They are Sheila Kidd, Anne Conrad, and Dorothy Edem.

What is the purpose of this ministry?

The Care and Companionship Ministry offers outreach support to people within our parish community who are sick, frail, isolated, homebound, dying, or bereaved. We develop companionship with individuals who are suffering by offering a listening ear and prayer as requested. People need to know they are not alone in time of suffering. We offer spiritual support.

Our volunteers are compassionate, respectful, dedicated individuals sharing their time, talent, and sacred listening skills to support and comfort individuals who are suffering.

How did this ministry come to be?

We were inspired by Archbishop Mancini's letter on what it means to be a missionary disciple, and at the Assembly of the People of God we heard Dr. Alana Cormier and Dr. Nuala Kenny speak about the need in the community for people to be present for those who are suffering, dying, frail, all of those things, but mostly people who have no support.

That, along with what the Archbishop said, brought things together. Nine members of our Discipleship Group jumped on board and said "Yes, we want to serve."

Could you offer a few words of encouragement to those who might benefit from this ministry, yet are hesitant to ask?

In a Christian community like we are at Saint Benedict, we are called to serve. Most of our parishioners are already serving in different capacities. Someone in need is not a burden and should not feel vulnerable asking for help. There comes a time when we need to ask for help. By asking, you are allowing somebody else to practice their Christian faith, to live out their Christian love by helping you. We also receive by giving.

Is the ministry still open for new volunteers?

Yes. There will be ongoing training to support ministry volunteers for anybody who feels they'd like to volunteer. That way, you're comfortable when you visit people whatever situation you they may be in. The number one requirement is that you're mature in your faith. And it helps if you're a good listener and have a compassionate heart.

For information about receiving visits from one of our volunteers, or information on becoming a volunteer, please contact careandcompanionship@saintbenedict.ca, or call 902-222-6185.

BACK FROM LC19

Taya Vaci
Bene Dictus Team

Leadership Conference 19, hosted by Alpha International, gathers leaders together to offer world-class teachings and seminars on leadership. A handful of parish staff and some enthusiastic parishioners made the trip over the pond to London, England to partake in the conference. Here they have shared their experience.

How did you hear about the conference? What made you want to go?

DANIEL ARSENAULT: I heard about the conference from some parishioners at Alpha. I was late in deciding and thought I missed my chance since it ended up being sold out. A random conversation connected me with a person who could no longer go, so their tickets were available for sale. From there I found accommodations and, the next thing I knew, my plane ticket was booked and I was on my way. Everything lined up so perfectly, out of nowhere. I know it was the Holy Spirit who intervened and put it all in place.

TANYA NOYE: I have wanted to go to the conference for years after hearing about it from others in the past. I knew that it had made a huge impact in people's lives, and the biggest change was in how they ministered to others. I wanted to go to have that experience of God guiding me and leading my ministry work.

Did you have a favorite moment at the conference?

TREENA CAMPBELL: It's hard to pinpoint one moment, as it was all so impactful. The praise and worship time really stands out in my mind. Such a large group of people, everyone praising God together, was remarkable.

DINAH SIMMONS: I was very moved when we prayed together with so many people. Moments of silent prayer, waiting on the Holy Spirit. There was such a powerful sense of connectedness and such a strong sense of hope and trust in God.

TANYA NOYE: My biggest take away was the recurring theme to lead with prayer. Sometimes in ministry we can get wrapped up in all the 'to-dos' and not rely on God enough. One of the speakers,

Michael Todd, said, "Everything we do without Him, we will have to sustain without Him." That really struck me. I want to continue to do everything with the Lord and not rely solely on myself.

TAMMY LEBLANC: The conference gathers people from across a multitude of Christian denominations. It was an incredible prayer environment. At one point during praise and worship I took a step back to observe the crowd. Thousands of people were singing 'What A Beautiful Name'. Unification in the name of Jesus was powerful to experience.

Is there something you have taken away to implement back home?

TANYA NOYE: The most important thing I took away is being intentional about prayer. Holy Trinity Brompton (the church that started Alpha) shared that they changed the way that they prayed for people who were on their hearts to invite to Alpha. While doing this, their following Alpha registrations increased by 40%. Everything that we do has to have that foundation of prayer.

SCOTT LEBLANC: I was really impacted by Craig Groeschel and his message. Coming back home, I'm committed to gather with a group and listen to his podcasts. These podcasts will give me and others an opportunity to continue to grow in my faith and be virtually mentored.

Tell me something about the conference that surprised you.

TREENA CAMPBELL: I was surprised by how many people globally knew about Saint Benedict Parish. When I encountered new people, they were excited to meet Saint Benedict parishioners and wanted to know all about our church. It's wonderful to see how far Saint Benedict Parish has reached.

DINAH SIMMONS: The various witness talks always have a sort of surprise element. Stories of how people's lives have been changed. There was one in particular: a man who was once a drug dealer and is now preparing for ordination.

The calibre of leadership training, prayer, and an obvious presence of the Holy Spirit has had a huge influence on the attendees. They have all expressed their gratitude for the opportunity to attend and have returned to Saint Benedict filled, equipped, and mobilized for action.

10TH ANNIVERSARY

On May 30th, 2009, Fr. Simon Lobo was ordained to the priesthood. This year marks ten years of priestly ordination. Congratulations Fr. Simon!

So remember your people,
Remember your children,
Remember your promise,
Oh God

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YOUTH ALPHA

Jeff Nephew
Bene Dictus Team

The Rise, Saint Benedict Parish's youth ministry program, ran a Youth Alpha session this Spring, including a Weekend Away at Bayside Camp in Sambro Head. Here are a few testimonies from some of the participants.

Sabrina H. - Grade 12
Heading to Bayside, I didn't know what to expect. I was sure that it was just going to be like a normal gathering with people my age, and that would be the end of it. My favourite part was the Holy Spirit prayer time, because it was my first time praying over and for people. I had people come to me and tell me how they felt lifted up or relieved when they were prayed over. I've already started recommending Alpha to a lot of my friends because of all the friends and great experiences I've had there.

Issy D. - Grade 11
I had an AWESOME time at the Weekend Away, and it's very hard to pick which was my favourite part about the day... I think it's a tie between the Holy Spirit prayer time and the roller skating (it was loads of fun!). The Holy Spirit prayer time was absolutely AMAZING! It felt like we were all one huge, united, family letting the Holy Spirit in. It was cool! Being prayed over for the first time was awesome. I felt so much peace. It was the greatest experience I've had in a long time.

Joseph D. - Grade 12
I really enjoyed the videos. They really are clear and easy to follow, and they keep your attention with the little bit of humour. I had a blast on Saturday. I really enjoyed myself. The roller skates were fun, and, even if I did not do particularly well with them, it was fun to see everyone have a great time!

Paul H. - Grade 9
My favourite part of the day was probably when I first walked in. I was late, so I thought it was really awesome looking at the number of people that actually came, a LOT of people came. The Holy Spirit prayer time was so relaxing for me. I had a bunch of school work that I needed to finish and having a group pray over me was what I needed. I haven't felt that relaxed and calm in a long time.

Aslyn W. - Grade 6
My favorite part about the Weekend Away was the prayer time. When I got to pray over each person at my table, it was really powerful and beautiful. It was heartwarming and touching just to know that all of these people took the time to come here to the Weekend Away to learn more about God and to form a relationship with him. It's amazing! For me, it was really nice to know that I'm not the only Christian in the world, and that other people are going through the same thing. It's nice to know that God is with me through it all, and that I don't have to worry about a thing, only my relationship with Him.

TWO NEW WAYS TO GIVE

ONLINE GIVING

Interac® e-Transfer

E-TRANSFERS

GO TO SAINTBENEDICT.CA/GIVE

New @SaintBP Event

Saturday, June 22nd
6:00pm in the St. Joseph Room

Details at the Welcome Centre

Go to
saintbenedict.ca/calendar-events
to see what's
coming up!

Connect Groups

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Ministry

Alpha

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How Saint Benedict Parish forms disciples who joyfully live out the mission of Jesus Christ

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If you're 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 - APRIL 2019

SUNDAY COLLECTIONS	REC'D	TOTAL	AVG/
ENVELOPES	1,242	$33,984	$27.36
PAR (PRE-AUTHORIZED REMITTANCE)	405	$54,149	see note
LOOSE	-	$7,712	-
ONLINE	-	$1,198	-
TOTAL	-	$97,043	-

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

PARISH DEBT REDUCTION	REC'D	TOTAL	AVG
ENVELOPES	139	$4,112	$29.58
PAR (PRE-AUTHORIZED REMITTANCE)	62	$3,157	see note
MORTGAGE BALANCE (AS OF MONTH END)			$448,963
PRINCIPAL PAID (ON MORTGAGE)			$9,762
INTEREST PAID (ON MORTGAGE)			$1,676
TOTAL PAID (ON MORTGAGE)			$11,438

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