JULY 2019

BENEDICTUS

PHOTO: JOHN RAE

p. 7 ..... GOING TO EVANGELIZE

p. 9 ..... VBS: POWER UP

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 August 10th/11th.

On the cover:
Fr. Simon imparts a Father's Day blessing.

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

SUMMER - SILENCE - SCRIPTURE - SACRAMENTS

I think I speak for all of us when I say I love that the sun is shining and that I can enter into a slightly slower pace over July and August. Of course, God is with us always, and we never want to take a vacation from our spiritual growth. If you have a bit more time on your hands, I would encourage you to carve out time for a daily personal prayer time with God. I have recently discovered that there are some really easy Bible Plans (as short as 3-5 days) in the YouVersion Bible app. You might want to try it out yourself (youversion.com). It's totally free and easy to use with a couple of friends. Finally, as this time of year has a lot of traveling and cottaging, please make Sunday worship a priority.

NUMBERS COUNT FOR A LOT

Thanks to all of those who stepped up on Commitment Sunday (June 2nd weekend) during our Stewardship of Treasure preaching series, *Keep the Change*. Here is a quick summary of the results: 44 people signed up for Pre-Authorized Remittance (PAR), 82 are increasing their PAR contributions, 13 people asked to receive envelopes, 51 committed to increase their envelope contributions, and 11 people stepped out in faith to take the 90 Day Tithing Challenge. I am incredibly grateful for your generosity to our parish. May we use our resources well to further the mission of Jesus, and may you experience the blessings of living a generous life.

Far more important than the financial numbers are the numbers of lives that are being transformed through the ministries of Saint Benedict. This past Pentecost we counted 52 people who came forward to declare that they have become disciples, followers of Jesus, in the

continued on next page

previous 12 months. Dozens and dozens of others stood to testify that they have taken a Next Step on the journey in the last year. It is so exciting to know that all of the work we do as a parish is bearing fruit. According to these metrics, we are helping to form on average one new disciple every week. I look forward to the time we are forming seven a week; **A Disciple A Day**.

When Fr. Alex was preaching that Pentecost weekend, he thought about the response to the question, and felt that the wording was affecting how people responded (especially those who are new on the journey and who don't understand all of the lingo). He adjusted his invitation to stand during the 6pm Mass and 30 people came forward. This is a bit unusual that the smallest weekend Mass had more 'new disciples' than the previous 3 Masses combined. We are continuing to learn that language matters. Ultimately, we want to celebrate what God is doing in our midst, and it's probably far beyond what we could ever identify or count. We need to do everything we possibly can to reach people AND trust that God's grace is at work in people's lives, sometimes in quiet or imperceptible ways.

YOUNGER DISCIPLES

The Steubenville Atlantic conference took place on July 7th-9th. Thanks to all who contributed to support our young people. We collected $8,700, and we were able to send 37 teens and 10 chaperones to be in a space where they can have an experience of God.

We're looking forward to the Vacation Bible School (VBS) coming up the week of July 22nd-26th. This year's VBS theme is *Power Up*. This is a great opportunity to invite friends' kids to a fun week that is completely free.

Finally, we are so proud of Abbygail MacDonald and Joseph De La Salle, two teens actively engaged in our parish youth group, The Rise, who are giving a year of their lives to serve as NET missionaries. Please read their interviews on page 7 and offer prayer and financial support.

STAFF UPDATES

Paul Lang, who has been serving as the Audiovisual Coordinator for the last 4 years, will be moving over fulltime to Divine Renovation at the end of July, right after his wedding to the lovely Kendra Chisholm! We are sad to see him go, but so happy that he can find a bit more focus as he begins married life. We are in the process of interviewing for a new Audiovisual Coordinator.

Thanks to Matt Vaughan who has helped out as my personal assistant for almost two years. He will be focusing all of his energy towards his role with Communications. Arlene Sibley, who has just come on board to offer Mission Support will also be serving as the Pastor's Assistant moving forward.

We are sad to say goodbye to Fr. John Farley, who served as an intern priest for over eight months. Let's keep him in prayer as he begins his next assignment in San Diego. We'll pray especially for good weather. At the moment, we don't have another intern priest lined up to assist us at the parish. Fr. Alex and I will probably feel the sacramental burden a bit more acutely now. We ask for your prayers and your patience, because we want our shared ministry to be healthy and sustainable.

WAITING WITH GOD

Donna Davis
Ora Ministry

This reflection is on next Sunday's Gospel, Luke 10:38-42.

Some people love to cook. Not me. In my opinion, food always tastes better when someone else prepares it. That said, I do plan and produce multi-course meals on a regular basis. Why? Because I love to have people over, and offering to feed them is just an excuse to get them in.

Few things give me as much pleasure as relaxing on the couch, my feet tucked up and a mug of tea in my hand, talking with company. For me, shopping for the groceries, cleaning the house and preparing the meal are just the means to this delightful end.

I wasn't always this way, however. I recall years ago receiving an unexpected visit from a member of my family. After welcoming her in and getting her settled on the couch, I set about fetching water, tea, fruit and cushions. Mesmerized by this flurry of activity, my guest finally said, "Donna, just sit down and talk to me!" I had been so wrapped up in making her comfortable that I lost sight of why she was there, which was to visit me. In Biblical terms, I was much more a Martha than a Mary.

In this week's gospel, Jesus, who has been travelling the countryside, arrives at Martha's home where he is warmly welcomed. While her sister Mary becomes engaged by what Jesus is saying, Martha enters 'hostess mode'; her attention and energy quickly focussing on honouring Jesus by providing for his every comfort. Jesus, noticing this, observes, "You are worried and distracted by many things."

I have encountered interpretations of this passage suggesting that Martha's motivation is to impress her guests and keep up appearances, so Jesus scolds her for it. I am unconvinced. Martha loves Jesus. She wants to do whatever she can to ensure his comfort. Similarly, Jesus loves both Mary and Martha, which is why he has come to visit them. Moreover, he loves Martha for her acts of service, which is why he does not chastise her but instead says, with gentleness, "Martha, Martha."

It is notable that, in comparing Martha's actions with those of Mary, Jesus says, "Mary has chosen the better part," but he never says Martha has chosen the wrong part. Jesus is saying just what my own guest said: "Donna, sit down and talk to me!" This week's gospel reminds us of what is most important, that being with Jesus is the better part. We need to spend time in the Lord's presence because it refuels and enriches us. Yes, we are his hands and feet, but prayer will teach us what to do and where to go.

However, this is not just passively killing time with Jesus, either. Jesus wants us to talk with him and also to listen. We get our instruction by listening to the Lord, who will reveal to us his plan for us. In his presence is where we love him and rest in his love for us.

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

THREE SISTERS

John Rae
Bene Dictus Team

In Ephesians 2:10, Saint Paul says, "For we are God's masterpiece, He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, to live lives filled with good works that he has prepared for us to do." In other words, our 'good work' is to be living, breathing works of art who witness to the truth, goodness, and beauty of Christ.

One of these 'works of art' was my wife's sister, Marilyn, who passed away this May.

In the classical tradition, the transcendentals of beauty, goodness, and truth are considered identical triplets; three sisters. Once you met one sister, you will eventually meet the other two. In our modern culture, Truth and Goodness have a hard time because they are assumed to be mere opinions. "You have your truth, and I have my truth," or, "You do what you think is good, and I'll do what I think is good." This leaves Beauty to do most of the heavy lifting.

Beauty is in the domain of the artist, and Marilyn was an artist par excellence, both as seamstress, with her religious wall hangings, as well in her work as a Christian counsellor.

In addition to the technical expertise in their medium, an artist must be able to glimpse the potential behind the everyday appearance of things. Think of Michelangelo going out to the quarry and looking to 'see' in which particular slab of marble the statue of David was hiding.

Marilyn was attracted to people who were diamonds in the rough, and diamonds in the rough were attracted to Marilyn. Under the tutelage of the Holy Spirit, she would clean and polish them to reveal facets of their beauty that had been hidden by the heavy burdens of their lives. I'm sure that some probably felt that they were occasionally being rubbed the wrong way, but once they caught a glimpse of the finished product, that was enough to quicken their spiritual growth. As Marilyn continued her witness, they would start to become infused with the truth and goodness of Christ. So that in the fullness of time, they would be born again, and Marilyn would be there to help with the birth.

To quote Mother Theresa: "Do you want to do something beautiful for God? There is a person who needs you. This is your chance."

Are you an Alpha Grad?
Come take the next step with Beta.
Thursday, July 18th at 7pm in the Auditorium
BETA

WATCH MASS LIVE
ON SUNDAY MORNINGS AT 9AM
FACEBOOK.COM/SAINTBP
OR
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GOING TO EVANGELIZE

Taya Vaci
Bene Dictus Team

Abbygail MacDonald and Joseph de la Salle are two young Saint Benedict parishioners who are about to embark on a yearlong mission with the National Evangelization Team (or NET). NET is an international Catholic ministry that puts into action the Church's mission to evangelize young people and raise up young disciples. Within NET, Abbygail and Joseph will be equipped with the ministry skills needed for evangelization and sent out into the world. Here they have shared some details about their upcoming NET mission.

Abbygail MacDonald is 18 years old and has been a Saint Benedict parishioner for seven years. She is the oldest of six kids, loves to travel, sing, and will be serving with NET Canada.

Joseph de la Salle is also 18 years old and is the eldest of 12 kids. He loves listening to music and learning other languages. While his family lives on the South Shore, they travel regularly to Halifax for The Rise youth ministry and Sunday Mass at Saint Benedict. Joseph will be serving with NET Ireland.

What made you want to apply for NET?

ABBYGAIL: I've had a passion for youth ministry for as long as I can remember. It's through youth ministry that I developed a meaningful relationship with God! I applied for NET because I want to change this world for the better. I want to use my God-given gifts to serve our youth through this ministry, and have an impact on their faith development.

JOSEPH: One night at The Rise, two NET recruiters came and gave a talk on what NET was. They invited me to a 'Do Something Amazing' retreat, and that was when I really became interested. On that retreat, I realized I wanted to become a NET missionary. Everything about NET stood out to me, and I wanted to do something good for the youth.

What expectations do you have for this next year?

ABBYGAIL: I'm looking forward to everything that God has in store for the youth of Canada. NET reaches over 24,000 youth in Canada every single year! God is going to do amazing things and I can't wait to be a part of it.

What has been the reaction of your family and friends?

JOSEPH: The first person I told that I applied and was accepted was my mom. At the time, I also got accepted to Franciscan LEAD, which was a huge blessing, because both acceptances were within the same week! My family has been very supportive of me preparing to be a NET missionary, and have helped me greatly. My friends have also been very supportive of what I will be doing.

What are you doing to prepare for NET in the Fall?

ABBYGAIL & JOSEPH: Praying! All of the NET missionaries have also been asked to commit to daily prayer, as without it, we would not survive our year on NET.

Do you know any details about your mission?

JOSEPH: I'll be part of a small group where we will work with parishes to develop youth ministry programs and help facilitate retreats at schools and parishes. We will be sharing our faith and praying with thousands of young people across Ireland, as well as training these young people to become evangelists.

Were you impacted by the NET missionaries that served at Saint Benedict a few years back?

ABBYGAIL: I attended a youth retreat they put on. Being on that retreat and experiencing the missionaries love for the Lord inspired me to become more involved. I want to gain the skills to be able to give talks, lead praise and worship, and form small groups. I want to share my love with the youth of Canada. I am so happy to say that with NET I will be able to serve as one of those missionaries.

What can we at Saint Benedict do to support you?

ABBYGAIL & JOSEPH: As missionaries with NET, we need to assemble a support team, people that will partner with us in mission, both prayerfully and financially. Since NET is a non-profit organization, we rely and trust on God's providence through the generosity of donors. Please consider joining our support team. It would mean so much to us, to know you are with us in this mission, investing in the future of our youth.

If you would like to join these two as a member of their support team, here's how:

To support Abbygail: *Go to* ***netcanada.ca****, click on the red donate button. From there, click on* ***Support a Missionary****, then click on* ***Abbygail MacDonald*** *under* ***Nova Scotia****.*

To support Joseph: *Go to* ***netministries.ie****, click on the* ***Donate Now*** *button at the top of the page. Under* ***Where would you like your donation to go?****, select* ***Donate to a specific Missionary****. In the* ***Additional Comments*** *section at the bottom of the page, specify that you would like your donation to be sent to* ***Joseph de la Salle****.*

AFTER SYMBOLON

Susan LeRue
Bene Dictus Team

77 parishioners signed up for a 10-week Discipleship Group entitled: ***Symbolon, Knowing Your Faith****, facilitated by Catherine Gould. The small group sessions were held in the Auditorium on Thursday evenings. Now that it is over, I asked participants to share their thoughts on the course with our readers.*

LIZ GALSWORTHY: I love *Symbolon* because it is pitched to and appropriate for everyone, regardless of age, knowledge, or stage on their Catholic faith journey. Each presentation provoked much discussion in our group, and some hilarity. I have had fun sharing our different perspectives and experiences. It has been fun to simply come as I am, relax, and learn. I love my Catholic faith!

ANGELA GERARD: I came with just one friend and we were able to join a group of several people that we barely knew. What a blessing that is to spend time with people that we had never been with before, in such an intimate setting. Very often there is no better way to hear what the Holy Spirit wants us to hear than through strangers.

LORRIE & BUTCH STEWART: We are grateful for the beautiful group we have and feel that it was part of God's plan for us. We're grateful that we had a positive sharing group that respected each other, and we now do feel like family. It helped us dig deeper into our spiritual journey and grow in our understanding of the Church and its teachings.

JENNIFER TOBIN: I loved the videos, and in our group discussions I learned a lot by listening to other people sharing. This has helped me to develop an even stronger relationship with Jesus.

SANDRA BROWN: I have enjoyed *Symbolon* very much. I was a little intimidated at first, but now I realize I have to watch the video at least twice at home before anything sinks in. It is a lot of detailed information, but I feel I have learned a lot, and that certainly is not a bad thing.

COLLEEN SMALL: *Symbolon* has been incredibly eye-opening and has challenged me to really dig deep into my faith in novel ways. What I loved the most about it was exploring my faith through the words and experiences of my group; they always helped me to see things in a different way. *Symbolon* is a 'must do!'

PAT HEDLIN: I thought the entire course was thought-provoking. Every lesson had me doing more research, which encouraged me to delve deeper into my own spiritual life. I look forward to the next course, because learning never stops.

LIZ COSGROVE: I am seeing *Symbolon* for the second time, and I could watch it again and still hear something new. The series has an easy-to-follow format and opens up our hearts and minds for lively spiritual discussions. It can reawaken our Catholic faith and encourages us to be better disciples.

MARIAN COFFIN: I really enjoyed *Symbolon*. I learned a lot, and everything was simply and clearly explained. I would recommend the course to Catholics, no matter where on their journey they may be. There is something for everyone to learn.

MARY NEWELL: I'm so glad I signed up for the Discipleship Group. I thought I knew the Church and it's teachings inside out, but it was not so. There is a lot in our faith that gets buried over the years, but believe me, nothing was left out in this series. Most important, I found the sharing time so informative.

FREDDIE DOUGLAS: I've been attending the Discipleship Group and have been enjoying the nights. I am celebrating 11 years since becoming Catholic, so at times the questions were difficult for me to understand; but as I listened to the replies of my group, I was able to offer some reply of my own. Each group member brought life to the questions and was instrumental in helping me to understand.

JACQUELINE LUPIEN: After Alpha, I wanted more! I wanted to know the how, what, and why of what we do as Roman Catholics. *Symbolon* leads us deeper into this longing and answers many questions. It is a beautiful, informative first step look into the lifelong journey we are on; the road to becoming saints.

VBS: POWER UP

Matt Vaughan
Communications Coordinator

This year's Vacation Bible School is coming up in a couple of weeks, so I talked to Laura O'Rourke, our Children's Ministry Coordinator, to find out more.

For those who have never heard of it, what is Vacation Bible School?

LAURA: Vacation Bible School (VBS) isn't like school at all! Some people call it camp... but it is really the most fun your kids will have at church! It is a week-long summer program that runs in the afternoons during July 22nd-26th. There are fun and games and snacks and songs, and it is a really wonderful way for the kids of our community to get to know Jesus deeper, or for the first time!

What's the age group for VBS?

VBS is for kids who are entering Primary to Grade Six in September 2019. (This means they have to at LEAST be born in 2014 or earlier. Unfortunately we cannot take anyone younger than that this year.) Anyone older than this can absolutely take part on the team! It is a great way to spend a week of your summer!

Is it just for kids who come to the parish?

While we are so excited that kids from our parish get to do something so awesome here this summer, it is not just for them. We hope that this will be for their friends and other neighbourhood kids, too! We speak a lot at Saint Benedict Parish about being invitational, and VBS is the perfect thing for kids to invite their friends to. They don't even have to be Catholic to come. In fact, last year over 20% of our VBS kids didn't have a home church. What an opportunity! VBS is a fun and inclusive environment that introduces kids at any stage to Jesus.

What is this year's theme?

This year's VBS theme is *Power Up: Raise Your Game*. This is a video game theme that kids and adults alike are going to LOVE. Parents will feel nostalgia for the video games of their youth in some of the main artwork, and kids will connect to the theme whether they play video games or not -- because they all play games! *Power Up* teaches kids that God loves them,

wants a relationship with them, and He gives them power to live for Him!

How much does it cost? How do I sign up?

VBS is FREE! We want it to be super easy for any kid to come! You can register online at: saintbenedict.ca/vbs.

Even though VBS is free, there is an option to purchase an optional activity book. This book isn't meant for the week of VBS, but it instead allows kids to dig deeper into what they learned during VBS. For nine weeks, they can explore God's Word and prayer as they grow in discipleship and see how God's Spirit can help them raise their game! The book costs $25 and there is an option to purchase it through the website.

How can (non-kid) parishioners help out?

We need team and donations! If you have time that week, come and have fun with us. Youth and adult team are so important because the kids who come need to know that they are loved by God, and VBS team members are the best ones to show them that! We cannot do VBS without the team. In fact, we have space for 78 volunteers - so God can absolutely use YOUR gifts to change a kid's life this summer. This is true if you're going into Grade 7 or if you're 77 (or older!). Contact Laura (laurao@saintbenedict.ca) for more information, or sign up on the registration page.

If you cannot be there to join the VBS team, we could also use help through financial donations. VBS is free so that any kid from any family can come, but it is not free to run. Your financial gift could help a child feel God's love and hear about Jesus for the very first time. You can donate at saintbenedict.ca/give.

VBS runs from 1pm to 4pm each day, beginning on Monday, July 22nd and ending on Friday, July 26th. Register to volunteer or participate at saintbenedict.ca/vbs.

Want to
Raise Your Game
after VBS?
Pick up a copy of the
Power Up Devotional
when you arrive at
VBS on July 22nd.
Go to saintbenedict.ca/vbs
for details.

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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 - MAY 2019

SUNDAY COLLECTIONS	REC'D	TOTAL	AVG/
ENVELOPES	1,219	$32,661	$26.79
PAR (PRE-AUTHORIZED REMITTANCE)	405	$54,350	see note
LOOSE	-	$5,560	-
ONLINE	-	$81	-
TOTAL	-	$92,652	-

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

PARISH DEBT REDUCTION	REC'D	TOTAL	AVG
ENVELOPES	124	$3,602	$29.05
PAR (PRE-AUTHORIZED REMITTANCE)	60	$3,212	see note
MORTGAGE BALANCE (AS OF MONTH END)			$439,220
PRINCIPAL PAID (ON MORTGAGE)			$9,743
INTEREST PAID (ON MORTGAGE)			$1,695
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.