Invitational Church P5
WELCOME TO THE CHURCH

MINISTRY P7
MINISTRY AT THE DAILY BREAD OUTREACH PROGRAM

MAY 2017

BENE DICTUS

SAINT BENEDICT PARISH

45 Radcliffe Drive
Halifax, Nova Scotia
Canada B3M 0E1
902-443-0725

PASTOR
Fr. James Mallon

ASSOCIATE PASTOR
Fr. Simon Lobo, CC

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

WEEKDAY MASS
Monday to Friday 9am

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

BENE DICTUS IS YOUR MONTHLY NEWSLETTER AVAILABLE IN PRINT OR IN YOUR EMAIL INBOX.

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME!
Please stop by the Welcome Booth and Introduce yourself.

@SaintBP livestream.com/SaintBenedictParish

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A WORD FROM FATHER JAMES

Transition

I wish to thank all of the parishioners who have been so kind and supportive over the last few weeks after the announcement about me stepping aside as pastor. I so appreciate your kindness towards me and Fr. Simon. As I mentioned in the past, I know that God is far from finished with Saint Benedict Parish and I look forward to continuing to be a part of what happens, although in a different role. Over the last few weeks, I am so impressed with Fr. Simon and how he is slowly stepping into leadership. Please continue to support him and pray for him.

As we look ahead, my last weekend in the parish as your pastor will be the weekend of June 24-25th. I will be presiding and preaching at all the Masses that weekend and will do my best to be present to people. However, please remember that I will not actually be leaving. After two weeks of vacation I will still be around from time to time during the week and on weekends. I have asked to celebrate a Mass of Thanksgiving and Transition on the evening of Friday the 23rd of June with a reception afterwards. This will be a time to give special thanks to God for all that He has done in our midst over the last seven years, and to celebrate the transition of leadership of the parish to Fr. Simon.

Funerals

I have written a special article about how we do funerals at Saint Benedict Parish and have described and explained some upcoming changes. Please take time to read this section of the Bene Dictus.

Kids Ministry ('SBP Kids')

As was announced several months ago, as of this weekend (May 14th), the children's ministry that takes place at the

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

A WORD FROM FATHER JAMES

Sunday morning Masses for elementary-aged children will undergo some changes. It will no longer be called Half-time but will be called SHINE. This stands for Seeking Him IN Everything. The other change is that children participating in SHINE will gather in the hall before Mass begins. Children who are preparing for their First Communion, or who are receiving the Eucharist, or those whose parents desire them to be present, will return to the Church at the offertory. The other children will continue in the hall with age appropriate experiences of teaching and prayer.

Equip the Saints

On Thursday, June 1st at 7pm, the Archdiocese will be holding a celebration of the release of the new archdiocesan pastoral plan, "Equip the Saints," here at Saint Benedict Parish. It will be one of several such gatherings held throughout our Archdiocese in the weeks ahead. The Archbishop has a vision of the launch being a joy-filled, Spirit-filled (he said "pentecostal") celebration of prayer. I have seen this new pastoral plan and I am absolutely excited about it and about where this plan can take us as an Archdiocese. In the midst of all our struggles as a local Church, we need to gather to celebrate this. Therefore, I would like to ask as many of you as possible to come out that evening, to gather around our Chief Shepherd and to hear about this plan and to celebrate what God is doing in our midst. Let's make a real effort to be present that night.

Funerals at Saint Benedict Parish

Fr. James Mallon
Pastor

Over the last few years, the issue of "how we celebrate funerals" has come to the fore, not just in our parish, but throughout the entire Archdiocese of Halifax-Yarmouth. I have been in conversation with many of my brother priests, and it appears that what we are experiencing here is identical to what they are experiencing. I can sum it up as this: most of our funerals are attended by a large majority of people who have no familiarity, or minimal familiarity, with Catholic liturgical rites.

In recent months, Fr. Simon and I have celebrated funeral Masses at which 90% of the people don't even make the sign of the cross, never mind understand the deep symbolism of the sacrifice of the Eucharist. This should not come as a surprise because the "attendees" at funeral are simply representative of the general population. In our part of the world, approximately 90% of baptized Catholics DO NOT participate in Sunday Mass on a regular basis. Yet, those who have drifted away from faith as well as non-Catholics and non-Christians seem to be the ones filling the pews at funeral Masses these days.

This situation is especially tragic when the deceased person, for whom the funeral Mass is being offered, was a person of faith. More and more we see elderly and devout Catholics with children and grandchildren who have no connection to the Church. At the funerals for these faithful people, the church is filled with their family members (and the friends and colleagues of these family members), most of whom have little or no connection to the Church.

The question we face is this: what is the best way to respond to this situation? There are a few principles that we need to acknowledge:

1) Celebrating the funeral rites for the deceased faithful is one of our responsibilities as a parish. We are committed to this as much as ever. Canon Law says that there are three purposes for our Catholic funeral rites: to provide spiritual support for the deceased, to honour their bodies, and to bring the solace of hope to the living (Canon 1176.2).

As an aside but related point, please note the wording in the very next line in Canon Law: The Church earnestly recommends that the pious custom of burying the bodies of the deceased be observed; nevertheless, the Church does not prohibit cremation unless it was chosen for reasons contrary to Christian doctrine (Canon 1176.3).

2) We have an ancient custom in our Church that involves offering the celebration of the Eucharist for a deceased person. We are still committed to offering Mass for the repose of the soul of the deceased.

3) A fundamental principle of pastoral care is to meet people where they are.

For the past 150 years, in our part of the world, the funeral rites and the offering of Mass for the deceased were celebrated in the same liturgy. This was not the case in the past, and is often not the case in many parts of the world today (due to great distances, the need to bury the body quickly and a lack of priests). We have become accustomed to this manner of merging the funeral rites with the celebration of Mass.

When the vast majority of people at a funeral have no idea what we are talking about or what anything means, are we lovingly meeting them where they are? Or are we essentially telling them that they must meet us where we are, and it's too bad if they don't understand most of what's happening? At the end of a recent funeral, I found myself wanting to apologize to the people present, as the vast majority seemed to have no idea what the Mass was about. I was very conscious of just how odd so many of our sacred, liturgical symbols would seem to an "outsider" looking in.

In September 2014, our Archbishop addressed this same issue in a pastoral letter to the faithful of the Church of Halifax-Yarmouth. He recognized that we were facing a huge change with regards to society's attitude towards life, death and funerals. He recognized an increasing disconnect of many from faith and the Church. He also noted a rise in the number of funerals due to aging congregations, along with a decreasing number of priests. What follows is the section of the letter relevant to this topic:

In many cases, instead of speaking of a funeral "with or without the Eucharist" – an expression which might be understood as referring to the level or quality of the service, it should be the ordinary practice to propose the funeral rite which best meets the family's current situation or spiritual context.

Continued on Page 9

RCIA: Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

Meet Those Who Came into Full Communion with the Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil:

Becoming Catholic is important to me because faith is becoming an important factor in my life and I am honored that I will be able to share this with my future spouse.

Philson Kempton

After many years of attending church as a non-catholic I attended Alpha and joined the Dwelling Place Connect Group with my husband. The Christian fellowship I found there along with the evangelical homilies my faith in Christ was renewed and I felt it was time to become a member of the Catholic Church.

Arlene Barron

I listened to Fr. James deliver his homily, connected with his message and really enjoyed how he (and Fr. Simon) relate scripture to real-life experiences. Now I come back for the guidance (and the puns)!

Rey Richards

My husband is a devout Catholic. He was raised Catholic. We have been together since 1997 and married for 15 years, I have always seen him go to church. So, I have decided to follow his spiritual path and I have noticed that it has drawn us closer as a couple.

Apie Nda

I decided to become Catholic because through the power of the Mass and the Sacraments, for the first time in my life, I experienced and felt God's love in a deeper way than I had before.

Ken Nauss

I attended church with my wife and liked the welcoming nature and atmosphere of Saint Benedict Parish. I have always been interested in the Catholic faith.

Mike Hanuschuk

I first came to SBP as a visitor who had only experienced serious preaching that I could never relate to until I experienced SBP's friendly approach and meaningful messages.

Shiju Koshy Mathew Koshy

I first came to Saint Benedict Parish when my daughter invited me to the Advent Celebration of Hope (evening of prayers and carols). I feel God calling me to SBP; the liturgy is profoundly meaningful to me.

Grace Kane

My wife, Kerry felt drawn to the church and pulled me along too. I had a strong personal experience of the Holy Spirit, and it brought about a dramatic change in my life.

Bob Jordan

I first came here with a friend and found Saint BP to be a very welcoming community. Catholicism spoke to me in a way that other Christian Denominations did not. I feel as if Catholicism is my Spiritual home.

Carlson Lequesne

It was an invite that brought me here and a welcome acceptance I felt from everyone I encountered.

Peter Manuel

Saint Benedict Parish is in my community and had exactly what I was looking for in a church. I love the liturgy and history. Saint BP is very friendly and welcoming.

Melissa Kane

I came to Saint Benedict Parish because my wife was attending here. I was already attending Mass and so worshipping with a friendly community of faithful parishioners who supported me where I was at. This eventually lead to a greater need to become more spiritual.

Darrell Eisner

I made the decision to become Catholic because of my experience of the liturgy, the programs, progressiveness, the church's unity of love and the priests' humbleness.

Pam Langille

I always want to go to church not because I have to, but I want to. That is what I find in this Parish. I became Catholic because I want to be a better person to other people, most importantly, I want to be a better husband to my wife and father to my son.

MIKE NG

My husband and I had visited several churches before Saint Benedict Parish was recommended to us by a friend. It had exactly what we had been unable to find at any of the churches we had visited previously: an uplifting atmosphere and young families.

JANELLE WATSON

A desire for a contemporary liturgical worship service drew me to Saint Benedict Parish Being Catholic is a perfect fit with spiritual accountability, tradition, and God-centred leadership.

WARREN KANE

I have been attending Mass at Saint Benedict Parish as a non-Catholic Christian and some thought within me said that it was time I should come to SBP as a Catholic (which I had always wanted to be).

AMITHA WILSON

We relocated to Halifax in 2015 and started going to SBP at that time. We instantly appreciated the difference in approach and the unique ability that both Fr. James and Fr. Simon have to connect with parishioners. I have attended church for many years with my Catholic husband and our daughters as we've grown our family. I have planned to convert for a number of years, but finally decided to take action after we relocated to Halifax and joined this parish.

ERIN GRIFFIN

I came to Saint Benedict Parish in late November after being away from all forms of religion and faith for over 40 years. I always questioned my faith, and asked if this was it or if there was more? After meeting an amazing woman and talking about her faith and beliefs, I wanted to find out what else there was and what my plan was. I have since found this faith and joyful feeling.

ROBERT MCGREGOR

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MINISTRY

The Daily Bread Outreach Program

Ron Hazell
Parishioner

My ministry at The Daily Bread Outreach Program is all about stewardship, the sharing of our time, talents and treasure with others, especially the marginalized: in other words, living for others rather than for ourselves.

We are all given various gifts at Baptism by the Holy Spirit. As St. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 12: 4 – 6, "There are different kinds of spiritual gifts. there are different ways of serving the same God gives ability to all for their particular service". In other words, we are given the tools to serve. It's up to us to work out the details.

While ministering to the sick for many years, I also felt a call to serve the poor. I started my ministry at the Daily Bread Outreach Program serving sandwiches and coffee. But within a few weeks, I was invited to bring my paints and easel and start a painting program. Having taught engineering most of my life, it seems that teaching is one of the gifts with which I have been blessed. So, for those outreach clients who are interested, I offer art classes every Tuesday afternoon. Creating art has long been recognized as important therapy for not only the physically ill, but the mentally ill as well. As one client told me, "Ron, when I am painting, I forget all my troubles". Another feels that painting "feeds her soul". Another said that painting helps restore his self-esteem, especially when someone purchases one of his paintings.

Mental illness is one of the major reasons why people are dealing with poverty. Some of the clients in the program suffer with addictions, some have had accidents rendering them unemployable and some are working poor. They all have their own story to tell, our brothers and sisters in Christ. The art program also provides a venue for social interaction between clients. My ministry is made possible by support from my wife Pat.

We receive no government funding, so to help defray the cost of the art supplies, to bolster the clients' confidence and to give them a bit of pocket money, we hold an art show in the spring each year. The show includes the paintings done by the clients as well as by the volunteers, a community effort.

This year the annual art show will be held on Sunday, May 28 from 11am 4pm in the hall of St. Mary's Basilica. Everyone is invited- a chance to purchase some art which speaks from the soul.

Women's Prayer Breakfast

SATURDAY, JUNE 3RD

Tickets ($10) on sale

May 14th

speaker: Judy Savoy

hosted by the Catholic Women's League

Vacation Bible School

Funerals at Saint Benedict Parish

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

This would better reflect and respect our Catholic faith and would enable people to feel more at ease in the present context which is increasingly secular. As a rule, it does not seem appropriate to celebrate a funeral Mass when, clearly, the majority of the people present are not in touch with our faith or not properly disposed to celebrate the Eucharist or to receive communion. It would be preferable in such circumstances to offer a funeral service in the form of a Liturgy of the Word. These matters should be addressed with the family of the deceased at an appropriate time, before the actual funeral takes place in the Church.
Although our bishop wrote these words almost three years ago, I do not know of any parish that has really tried to implement this, including Saint Benedict. As they say, those who are out in front usually end up with arrows in their back! Seriously, though, our starting presumption has been incorrect: the majority of people attending funeral Masses will be people of faith. Hence, the norm has been to celebrate a funeral Mass, whereas a Liturgy of the Word Funeral may be suggested as the rare exception. In the few instances, over the last two years, when we have recommended a Liturgy of the Word to a family that is not connected to the Church, they have pushed for a Mass. Even though they themselves lack faith, their deceased loved one was a believer. Furthermore, this approach has almost felt punitive to those families who were unconnected to the Church, so we were less inclined to follow through. The result has been exactly what I have described: funeral Masses with 90% of attendees who are not familiar with the Mass.

After much reflection and discussion, we will be adjusting our approach to this issue at Saint Benedict Parish and will implement a new approach at the beginning of September 2017. The norm for funerals will be a Liturgy of the Word. Funeral Masses will be the exception. (This simply reflects the reality, because right now, a funeral Mass, at which there is a substantial gathering of the faithful, is actually the exception). What will this mean? Obviously, any parishioner who is active and known within our parish would have a funeral Mass because we know that many of the faithful will be there. Families who are not connected will be best served by a Liturgy of the Word; a Mass will still be offered for the deceased at another time. If gathering at a Mass is important to some members of the family, then they are welcome to join our community at one of our weekday 9am Masses, which will be offered for the repose of the soul of their loved one. In this way we will once again respect the three principles I spoke about earlier:

1) The Funeral Rites will be celebrated for the deceased, fulfilling the purpose called for in Church Law and our tradition (we will pray for the deceased, honour the body and provide comfort and support for the living).

2) Mass will be offered for the deceased, with family members present if they so choose. Even if the family is not aware of or interested in the supernatural power of the Eucharistic sacrifice, one of the priests will offer an unannounced Mass, at another time, praying for God's mercy to be upon this deceased person.

3) We will minister to the family in a way that they can understand and is meaningful for them.

Although it is not the primary concern, this change in our approach also has other benefits. If every funeral is a funeral Mass then it places particular demands on priests. It is not uncommon for Fr. Simon and me to work 60–80 hours in a given week. Often our weeks are booked up well in advance with essential meetings, deadlines and obligations. Funerals, of course, come at very short notice and can sometimes come all at once. A few months ago, we had six funerals within seven weekdays. Fr. Simon and I were both feeling that the situation was becoming critical in terms of our own ability to respond to the demand and maintain our sanity and health. Also, it makes scheduling funerals very challenging for our Funeral Ministry Team when we have to decide what has to be moved or cancelled to allow for the most ideal time for a Mass. By moving to Liturgy of the Word Funerals, as the norm, it gives us greater flexibility in responding to families and being able to offer them more options as both deacons and lay people are permitted by the Church to preside over funeral rites that do not include the Eucharist.

I know that for many parishioners this upcoming change may be difficult to accept. Just to reiterate, if you have made efforts to connect to our parish, we will gladly celebrate a funeral Mass for you – as many of our own parishioners will be present praying as a community for you on that day. These changes are being made to better serve the 90% who are disconnected from faith and from Church. As always, we ask for your patience and understanding. We live now in a very different world. We need to adjust how we do things while remaining faithful to the essentials. I believe that through this change we will be doing just that.

CALENDAR OF IMPORTANT DATES MAY/JUNE 2017

14 SUNDAY SUNDAY MASS MOTHER'S DAY	15 MONDAY THE EXPERIENCE (YOUTH NIGHT)	16 TUESDAY GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP	17 WEDNESDAY EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT DAYTIME ALPHA	18 THURSDAY	19 FRIDAY MEN'S LEADERSHIP GYM	20 SATURDAY
21 SUNDAY MASS NAME TAG SUNDAY	22 PARISH OFFICE CLOSED	23 CONNECT GROUP LEADERS TRAINING	24 EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT DAYTIME ALPHA	25	26 MEN'S LEADERSHIP GYM	27 NEW @ SAINTBP EVENT
28 SUNDAY MASS	29 THE EXPERIENCE (YOUTH NIGHT)	30 PROVINCIAL ELECTION POLLING STATION	31 EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT DAYTIME ALPHA	JUNE 1 'EQUIP THE SAINTS' EVENT	2 MEN'S LEADERSHIP GYM	3 WOMEN'S PRAYER BREAKFAST
4 SUNDAY MASS PENTECOST	5 THE EXPERIENCE (YOUTH NIGHT)	6 PARISH OFFICE CLOSED	7 EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT DAYTIME ALPHA	8	9 MEN'S LEADERSHIP GYM	10

For a more detailed listing of parish events or ministries, please visit: saintbenedict.ca/calendar-events/ or contact parish ministry leaders.

PARISH STAFF TEAM (OFFICE: 902-443-0725; EMAIL: @SAINTBENEDICT.CA)

DARLENE BONANG (EX 0)
Office Manager
DarleneB@

CHERYL BOUDREAU
Administrative Assistant
CherylB@

JEN FERRIER (EX 30)
Evangelization Coordinator
JenniferF@

CATHERINE GOULD (EX 27)
Discipleship Group Coordinator
CatherineG@

RON HUNTLEY (EX 39)
Director of Pastoral Ministries
RonH@

PAUL LANG (EX 41)
AV & Music Coordinator
PaulL@

RONNIE LUNN (EX 37)
Youth Ministry Coordinator
RonnieL@

ROB MCDOWELL (EX 26)
Director of Parish Life
RobM@

RYAN ORLANDO (EX 40)
Facilities & Custodial Manager
RyanO@

LAURA O'ROURKE
Director of Children's Ministries
LauraO@

KATE ROBINSON (EX 29)
Director of Communications
KateR@

DINAH SIMMONS (EX 24)
Director of Sacraments & Liturgy
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JOANNE THIBEAU (EX 28)
Manager of Finance
JoanneT@

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Permanent Deacon
DavidV@

CHRIS YETMAN (EX 21)
Director of Engagement
ChrisYetman@

MONTHLY FINANCIAL UPDATE - MARCH 2017

PARISH DEBT REDUCTION	REC'D	TOTAL	AVG/
ENVELOPES	158	$3,978	$25
PAR Pre-authorized Remittance	67	$3,327	See Note

MORTGAGE BALANCE AS OF MARCH 31, 2017	$724,193
INTEREST PAID (ON MORTGAGE) IN MARCH 2017	$1,992
PRINCIPAL PAID (ON MORTGAGE) IN MARCH 2017	$9,445

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

SUNDAY COLLECTIONS	REC'D	TOTAL	AVG/
ENVELOPES	1,327	$32,441	$24
PAR Pre-authorized Remittance	373	$44,833	See Note

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

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 3 MONTHS IN ADVANCE OF YOUR HOPED-FOR DATE FOR BAPTISM AND ONE YEAR PRIOR TO YOUR DESIRED WEDDING DATE.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON BAPTISMS, PLEASE CONTACT CAROL: BAPTISMS@SAINTBENEDICT.CA. FOR MORE INFORMATION ON WEDDINGS, PLEASE CONTACT DEACON DAVID: WEDDINGS@SAINTBENEDICT.CA.

****

FOR FUNERALS, PLEASE CALL THE PARISH OFFICE (AND LISTEN TO THE PROMPTS) TO BE CONNECTED WITH OUR FUNERAL MINISTRY TEAM.

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