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Photo: John Rae

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 (FOR THE FIRST SUNDAY OF THE MONTH).

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME!

Please stop by the Welcome Booth and introduce yourself.

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A WORD FROM FATHER JAMES



LENT AHOY!!

Although Ash Wednesday (March 1st) falls relatively late this year, it is still not too early to begin to see it on our horizon. Lent is always a wonderfully rich time of renewal for us in our Christian lives. Here is what we can expect during Lent of 2017:

PARISH LENTEN MISSION

There will be no mission this year. (We already have someone arranged for Lent 2018, more on that at a later time). In place of a mission we have two exciting options:

MINI-MISSION WITH PETER HERBECK

Peter Herbeck from Renewal Ministries is a great friend of Saint Benedict Parish and is no stranger to us. He will be with us on the weekend of February 18-19th. He will give a reflection at each of the Masses and will also be speaking at an Evening of Praise and Worship on Saturday the 18th. Mark that date in your calendar. It will be a blessed evening.

DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

Discipleship Groups are a regular part of our life here at Saint Benedict Parish. They are a key part of our strategy to form disciples. They are our small groups (4-12 people) that meet in homes with the purpose of learning specific content through a variety of programs. These differ from Connect Groups which are mid-size groups (25-35 people) that gather for the primary purpose of experiencing Christian community. We have many Discipleship Groups that meet throughout the year, like the one on the cover of this issue, that recently completed The Marriage Course. During Lent we hope to launch many more that will gather once a week during the Lenten season. Our staff member

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



A WORD FROM FATHER JAMES

CONTINUED

Catherine Gould, the Discipleship Group Coordinator, has prepared a fantastic resource for daily prayer throughout Lent on the theme of, "Living Beyond Myself." A part of this process will be gathering with a small group of parishioners in homes to share aspects of this program (more of this on pages 7-8). Throughout the month of February we will hear more about Discipleship Groups.

LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

I wish to thank all the ministry leaders, Connect Group Leaders and members of the Finance and Pastoral Councils who took part in the last Leadership Summit. These gatherings are amazing opportunities to invest in those who are giving so much to make our parish what it is. We need to stop and reflect on where we are going and where we have come from and be intentional about growing as leaders and supporting one another. Once again people left the January meeting saying, "This was the best one yet!" That puts a bit of pressure on us, but a good type of pressure.

PARISH ENVELOPES

When you receive your next batch of parish contribution envelopes, you will notice a few differences. One of these differences is that, those on PAR (Pre-Authorized Remittance or, automatic withdrawal) will no longer receive regular Sunday envelopes. This means a substantial savings on postage. PAR cards will be made more available so that they can be dropped into the collection basket. Thank you to all who commit to regular giving to support the mission of the parish. If anyone is not currently using

envelopes or PAR, drop into the parish office or contact us at the Welcome Booth in the foyer. Also, we really do encourage parishioners to use the PAR method of giving to the parish.

FINALLY...

For those of you on Twitter, you may already have seen an announcement that was made mid-January. The parish leadership and the Divine Renovation team have announced our hope and intention to host another Divine Renovation Conference here at Saint Benedict Parish in June, 2018. As we reviewed our experience of the 2016 conference and received such wonderful feedback about it, we asked ourselves, how could we not do it again? So, we have a little bit of work to do, but we will build on everything we learned from the experience of DR16 to make DR18 even more successful. Please keep this endeavour in your prayers.



This crazy group just agreed to do Divine Renovation 2018. Let the conference planning begin! #DR18



RETWEETS
17

LIKES
57



- AN EVENING OF -
PRAISE & WORSHIP
- WITH PETER HERBECK -

Saturday February 18th
7 to 9pm in the Church

Featuring the Saint Benedict Parish
9am Music Ministry



All are welcome!
(We will take up a collection to offset costs.)





CHILDREN'S MINISTRY @SAINTBP

LAURA O'ROURKE

Director of Children's Ministries

We already made some big changes to the way that Half Time is running and more changes are coming! This is good news! The mission of the children's ministry at Saint Benedict Parish is to help children fall in love with Jesus, each other, and the Catholic Church. We are constantly evaluating how we can do this better, and you have a front row seat to witness some of the resulting changes!

The upcoming changes capture our desire to form little disciples who joyfully live out the Mission of Jesus Christ today and tomorrow! Within the next few months, Half Time - the children's program that happens during Sunday morning Mass - will be changing even more. The two big changes you'll notice are a rebrand and timing shift.

Soon, parents will drop kids off at Half Time at the beginning of Mass and pick them up when Mass is over. Those preparing to receive their First Communion, or those having already received their First Communion will re-join their families upstairs right after the Prayers of the Faithful, just like they currently do, but everyone else will have the option to continue to pray and worship and learn downstairs. We understand that you'll have some questions, and we want to answer a few of those now.

THE LEADERSHIP TEAM HAS BEEN PRETTY CLEAR RECENTLY THAT THE CHANGES TO THE CONTENT OF HALF TIME WILL HELP FACILITATE A CONSISTENT THEME AND MESSAGE TO BE SHARED AT AGE APPROPRIATE LEVELS BETWEEN CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND ADULTS. PEOPLE ARE BEGINNING TO GRASP HOW THE LITURGY OF THE WORD IS BEING COMMUNICATED TO THE

KIDS EVEN WITH THE CHANGES. BUT HOW WILL THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST BE COMMUNICATED TO OUR KIDS WITH THIS CHANGE?

HOW WILL THE CHILDREN OF SAINT BENEDICT PARISH LEARN HOW TO BE CATHOLIC AND HOW WILL THEY BE ABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN MASS WHEN THEY GRADUATE OUT OF HALF TIME?

LAURA: If children are able to develop a personal relationship with Christ in Half Time in a way that is engaging and accessible to them, they will more easily be able to full-heartedly engage with the responses, the prayers, and the Eucharist when the time comes for them to participate. The foundation of everything that happens during Mass is Jesus. With that heart for Christ, they won't just be reciting and repeating, they will be worshiping and praying during Mass.

These children will also benefit from the guidance and resources of Dinah and her team as they prepare to receive the sacraments through PACT (Preparing and Celebrating Together).

FR. JAMES: The Church teaches that the primary formation of children in the Catholic faith is through their parents. How are children going to learn to be Catholic? From their parents!

They never did learn how to be Catholic from parish staff or programs if it's not coming from their parents. If that actually worked, why have 95% of our young people been walking away from the church? And with regard to learning how to participate at Mass, it's not a mechanical thing. People can learn the mechanics of standing and sitting and saying the prayers very easily, but again, if that was the answer, why are people leaving in droves?



.....

The best way you can have to participate at Mass is to fall in love with Jesus. That's the foundation of worshipping at Mass – knowing Jesus, having a relationship with Jesus. The Catechism itself (below) says that evangelism and conversion must precede liturgy and sacraments and that's exactly what we're trying to do.

1072 "The sacred liturgy does not exhaust the entire activity of the Church": it must be preceded by evangelization, faith, and conversion. It can then produce its fruits in the lives of the faithful: new life in the Spirit, involvement in the mission of the Church, and service to her unity.

- Catechism of the Catholic Church

IF MY KIDS HAVEN'T HAD THEIR FIRST COMMUNION YET, DO THEY HAVE TO STAY DOWNSTAIRS FOR THE WHOLE LENGTH OF THE MASS OR CAN THEY STILL COME UP AND CELEBRATE THE EUCHARIST WITH OUR FAMILY? HOW WOULD THEY BENEFIT BY STAYING IN HALF TIME FOR THE WHOLE TIME?

LAURA: Absolutely! No one will be forced to stay in Half Time! Our goal in making these changes to the children's programming is to make it as easy as possible for the whole family to worship! Those who do stay back in Half Time will be also focusing on meeting Jesus with their peers in engaging and accessible ways.



FR. JAMES: As Laura says, no one HAS to do anything! These programs are offered to serve families, to help them. We have families who are in different places in their faith lives. If as a family, you value having your children with you at Mass, that's your option. A family has to make that call for themselves.

Again, the parents are the primary people who have responsibility for forming their children. We're offering these programs to serve because we want kids to come to know Jesus. We want them to grow into

the worship of the Eucharist. We also want to free up parents for Sunday Mass, to allow them to enter as fully into the worship at Mass as possible.

HOW WILL THE KIDS COMING UPSTAIRS PARTWAY THROUGH MASS KNOW WHERE TO LOCATE THEIR PARENTS IF THEY WERE DROPPED OFF DOWNSTAIRS BEFORE THEIR PARENTS FOUND A SEAT?

LAURA: During Mass, there will be a time when adults can meet their kids at the Baptismal Font and accompany them back to their seats.

Helping children form a real relationship with Christ should be important to every person sitting in the pews! These children who go downstairs for Half Time every Sunday are part of our church today but they are also part of tomorrow's church. Helping them find and form a healthy faith in Christ Jesus strengthens our church now and in the future. Most importantly, it helps to build a solid foundation for each individual child as they grow into adulthood. God has placed these children in our midst – in our families and in our church. We smile at them as they run to put money in the Little Church. Some of us care for the physical wellbeing of these children. But are we, their church family, taking enough responsibility for their eternal lives?

As a mother I've felt like this is my most monumental priority. But my responsibility doesn't end at my role as a mother. That's what is so wonderful about being part of a church family. We're stronger together. We're able to build each other up and catch one another when we fall. And we've all got a responsibility to the children of our church. With the changes outlined above, we require more people who are excited and willing to help point these wonderful kids towards Christ! Please consider joining the team. Send Laura an email to get started!

laurao@saintbenedict.ca



DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS



LIVING BEYOND MYSELF

CATHERINE GOULD

Discipleship Group Coordinator

The period of Lent is a journey. It reminds us to turn away from worldly distractions and focus on our journey to God. It is a time of inner reflection and we should expect to find ourselves in a different place spiritually than when we began.

"Living Beyond Myself" is the theme for our Lenten preaching series and Discipleship Group materials. In the past, we participated in the Archdiocesan Lenten series, with material that had a big church focus. This year we created our own material that will support our weekend messages (homilies) and the emphasis of our material is on individual habits and practices to help develop our own faith.

We would like to get as many people into Discipleship Groups as possible this Lent. We are putting the call out to all willing to attend training to be a group facilitator to help lead discussion and prayer. We ask that you come with someone who is willing to co-facilitate with you. Weekly material (print, not video) will be accessible on the parish website. The format is easy to follow so those new to faith or seasoned Christians can participate.

Whether you are forming a new group or are part of an established group, we are offering two different facilitator training opportunities on February 12th (2-4pm or 7-9pm).

Register to attend facilitator training here: saintbenedict.ca/DGtraining.

Discipleship Groups are an important part of our Game Plan as they help form disciples who joyfully live out the mission of Jesus Christ. The "Living Beyond Myself" material is designed to help people begin to either develop, or deepen habits and practices that help us grow closer to Jesus. The five weeks of prayer, journaling and small group discussion will help us to establish practices that we will be able to use in our everyday lives moving forward. The material provides a guided experience and while it's not difficult to facilitate, the training is necessary to help understand the material to better serve the members in your groups. For five weeks we are asking people to make Discipleship Groups and this material a priority and to connect with others.

OVERVIEW

"Living Beyond Myself" is laid out to have us read scripture, pray, journal and learn to (or grow in our ability to) listen to the voice of the Spirit to help us better understand how God has designed and shaped us to serve him. This material has the potential to greatly assist us in our spiritual formation.

Groups can happen any day of the week but the ideal would be to meet on Sunday as your group sharing time and have Monday be the day for the next week's material to begin. If Sunday doesn't work for you, set a schedule that will accommodate your group members.

Please pray about facilitating a Lenten Discipleship Group, invite someone to co-facilitate with you and register (saintbenedict.ca/DGtraining) to attend training on February 12th. Then invite (2-10) others to be a part of your group.

Choose a schedule for your group. Ideally, it would look like this:

SUNDAY, MARCH 5TH (1ST SUNDAY OF LENT)

- Discipleship Group meets for an introduction to the material.
- Individuals pray daily with the material, March 6, 7, 8 & 9.
- Individual prayer review, March 10 & 11.

SUNDAY, MARCH 12TH (2ND SUNDAY OF LENT)

- Discipleship Group meets to share (guided by material).
 - Individual group members pray daily with new material, March 13, 14, 15, 16.
 - Individual prayer review, March 17 & 18.
- Repeat the schedule (with Day 7 always being

the Discipleship Group gathering day) until Palm Sunday (April 9th).

If you're in a Connect Group, and your plan is to meet with a Discipleship Group every second week, then you'd simply cover two weeks of prayer at your (3) Discipleship Group gatherings.

If your Discipleship Group isn't able to follow the schedule as suggested, that's okay! The seventh day of praying with the material should always be your group meeting day.

This will all be clarified at the training session on February 12th. Members of your group need only a pen and journal or notebook to record daily reflections.

For those not interested in facilitating a group, we encourage you to ask around to find a group to join.



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PARISH ENVELOPES



PARISH GIVING ENVELOPES UPDATE

JOANNE THIBEAU
Manager of Finance

We would like to take a moment to explain several upcoming changes to our parish contribution envelopes. In early December we were notified that our long time supplier was going out of business effective December 31st. This left us scrambling to find a replacement supplier. We have settled on a new company-- the largest provider of church envelopes in Canada.

In reviewing the various options and associated costs it was quickly apparent that to keep things exactly as they were would result in an increased cost to the parish of over \$2,000, due to the new supplier's cost structure. Would you be surprised to know that in 2016 we paid close to \$11,000 to supply parish envelopes? In addition to considering the cost, we also undertook a review of how we track and manage the distribution of envelopes.

THE RESULT IS THAT WE WILL BE MAKING A FEW CHANGES EFFECTIVE APRIL 1ST:

- Parishioners currently giving via weekly envelopes will continue to receive quarterly mailings, with the only change being that quarterly mailings will be received a little later than they were in the past.
- Parishioners currently giving through PAR (Pre-Authorized Remittance) will no longer receive quarterly mailings, but rather an annual mailing of special collection envelopes only. Special collections include monthly Parish Debt, Archdiocesan

collections, etc. You will receive a mailing in March that will include the special collection envelopes for the remainder of 2017.

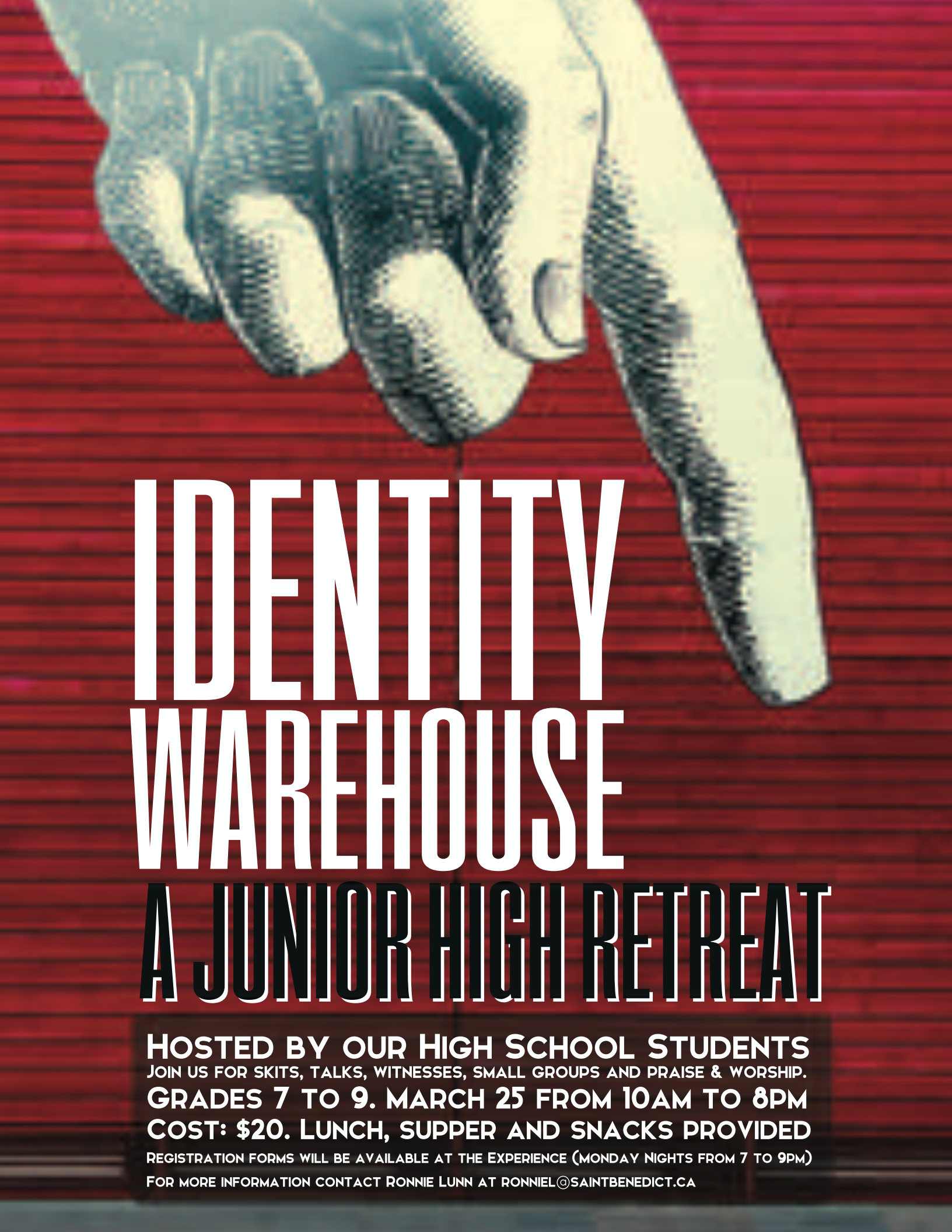
This change will help us reduce the overall parish envelope cost to stay more inline with the 2017 budgeted amount. There is an environmental saving as well as we will no longer be mailing weekly envelopes to PAR users, many of which are never used. For PAR users who had used weekly envelopes to participate in the collection, we realize this will be a change; however, at the same time we are developing a replacement for the PAR cards currently found in the pews. More details on that in the weeks to come.

PLEASE GIVE CONSIDERATION TO USING THE PAR OPTION FOR YOUR REGULAR GIVING:

- PAR giving takes the onus off parishioners to remember to use weekly envelopes.
- PAR giving provides a more consistent cash flow to the parish (less worry due to winter storms, parishioners being away). For example, the recent snowstorm on January 8th resulted in a reduction in collection of \$3,000 which most likely will not be recovered.
- For every parishioner who switches to PAR there is a saving in envelope costs to the parish which will definitely add up over time.

Visit saintbenedict.ca/par to download a PAR form that you are welcome to drop in the collection basket or in the parish office.

Thank you for your understanding and patience as we make this necessary change.

A large, stylized illustration of a hand pointing downwards, rendered in a halftone or stippled texture. The hand is positioned in the upper half of the image, with the index finger pointing towards the center. The background is a solid, deep red color.

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NEW @SAINTBP EVENT

ON SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11TH AT 6PM.

Please RSVP to Kate Finlayson, (902)-240-3996,
katefin8@gmail.com, by Wednesday, February 8th.

CORINTHIANS

January 22nd - February 26th

Connect Groups

Alpha Team



Ministry



Discipleship Groups



Alpha



Invitational Church



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

Worship



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FALL ALPHA 2016

ROSIE MCLEVEY

Alpha Team Member

Fall Alpha 2016 was not my first time serving on an Alpha Team but it was my first experience with the Holy Spirit Weekend. I have been a table helper twice and part of the kitchen team once. For the past 3 Alphas my shifts as a nurse kept me from attending the Holy Spirit Weekend (I now know what I have missed out on).

Saturday afternoon was truly amazing. I have been blessed to experience the Holy Spirit in my life before this weekend, but we all need our tanks refilled and to be reminded that when we invite the Holy Spirit into our lives, just how

different our lives can be. Well this is what I needed NOW!

The music, the prayers, and the people surrendering and opening up to the Holy Spirit were amazing. What truly made it special for me was to be with my new Alpha family (the members of table 14 especially). I remembered all from our table who could not be with us to experience this amazing weekend. I truly feel that my tank has been refilled, thank you Lord!

PLEASE PRAY THAT OUR CURRENT THURSDAY EVENING ALPHA GUESTS ATTEND THE HOLY SPIRIT WEEKEND!

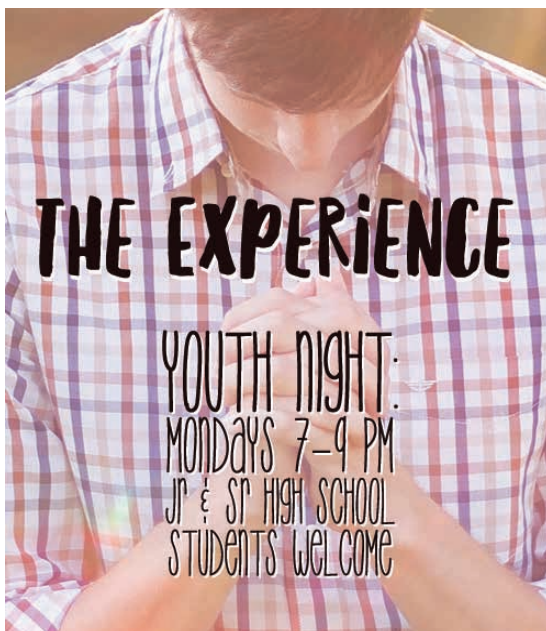
OUR NEXT SPRING DAYTIME ALPHA WILL BEGIN ON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 29TH.



CALENDAR OF IMPORTANT DATES FEBRUARY 2017

29 SUNDAY	30 MONDAY	31 TUESDAY	1 WEDNESDAY	2 THURSDAY	3 FRIDAY	4 SATURDAY
SUNDAY MASS W.O.W. WEE ONES' WORD PACT	THE EXPERIENCE (YOUTH NIGHT)		EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT	THURSDAY NIGHT ALPHA	MEN'S LEADERSHIP GYM	
5 SUNDAY MASS W.O.W. WEE ONES' WORD PACT BAPTISMAL PREP. COFFEE SOCIAL RCIA	6 THE EXPERIENCE (YOUTH NIGHT)	7	8 EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT	9 THURSDAY NIGHT ALPHA	10 MEN'S LEADERSHIP GYM	11 NEW @SAINTBP EVENT
12 SUNDAY MASS W.O.W. WEE ONES' WORD DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING BAPTISMAL PREP. COFFEE SOCIAL RCIA	13 THE EXPERIENCE (YOUTH NIGHT)	14	15 EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT	16 THURSDAY NIGHT ALPHA	17 MEN'S LEADERSHIP GYM	18 EVENING OF PRAISE & WORSHIP WITH PETER HERBECK
19 SUNDAY MASS W.O.W. WEE ONES' WORD FIRST RECONCILIATION BAPTISMAL PREP. RCIA	20 PARISH OFFICE CLOSED	21 ANOINTING OF THE SICK GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP CONNECT GROUP LEADERS TRAINING ALPHA TEAM TRAINING	22 EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT	23 THURSDAY NIGHT ALPHA	24 MEN'S LEADERSHIP GYM	25
26 SUNDAY MASS W.O.W. WEE ONES' WORD PACT BAPTISMAL PREP. COFFEE SOCIAL RCIA	27 THE EXPERIENCE (YOUTH NIGHT)	28 SHROVE TUESDAY PANCAKE SUPPER	1 ASH WEDNESDAY MASS AT 9AM. 4PM. 7PM	2 THURSDAY NIGHT ALPHA	3 MEN'S LEADERSHIP GYM STATIONS OF THE CROSS	4

Please note, this calendar does not list all events, ministries, meetings or special dates. For a more detailed listing, please visit: saintbenedict.ca/calendar-events.




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MONTHLY FINANCIAL UPDATE - DECEMBER 2016

PARISH DEBT REDUCTION	REC'D	TOTAL	AVG/
ENVELOPES	157	\$6,971	\$44
PAR	69	\$3,422	See Note
Pre-authorized Remittance			
MORTGAGE BALANCE AS OF DEC 31, 2016		\$756,015	
INTEREST PAID (ON MORTGAGE) IN DEC 2016		\$2,101	
PRINCIPAL PAID (ON MORTGAGE) IN DEC 2016		\$19,336	

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

SUNDAY COLLECTIONS	REC'D	TOTAL	AVG/
ENVELOPES	1414	\$48,329	\$34
PAR	374	\$44,525	See Note
Pre-authorized Remittance			

*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 THE PARISH OFFICE: WEDDINGS@SAINTBENEDICT.CA.



THE BLESSED SACRAMENT IS EXPOSED IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING 9AM MORNING MASS. REPOSE IS AT 10:00PM

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