

SAINT BENEDICT



PHOTO: JOHN RAE

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FISHING TO SURVIVE

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THE WAY OF STELLA MARIS

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SUNDAY MASS
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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.

The next issue of the Bene Dictus will be released on the weekend of October 10/11.

On the cover:

A recent baptism.

SAINT BENEDICT PARISH CLERGY

Pastor: Fr. Simon Lobo, CC

Associate Pastor: Fr. Alex Colautti, CC

Permanent Deacon: Deacon David Viscount

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BENE DICTUS - September 2020



FATHER SIMON SAYS...



Fr. Simon Lobo, CC

Pastor

EVOLUTION OF ONLINE MASS

During this time of pandemic, the one constant has been change! Instead of carving decisions in stone, we wanted to keep 'experimenting' with new initiatives.

Over the summer, as we re-opened for in-person Masses, we felt that the best way to maintain (and improve) the quality of the online experience was to pre-record Sunday Mass. We broke through barriers of what is possible to create with a relatively low budget and a small crew, and we've been able to offer one of the most visually stunning and intimate online Mass experiences out there. Many thanks to Divine Renovation Ministry for all of the extra help!

After many discussions with leaders, seeking input from parishioners, and in consultation with our Archbishops, we've decided to move back to a **live Mass online**, continuing on Sundays at 9am Atlantic. Please pray for our tech crew as we explore how to offer the best possible live experience.

ALPHA & LIFE GROUPS

We begin September with a four week preaching series: **What's Next?** We're launching online Alphas and parish-wide online Life Groups. And those are plural! For the first time, we will be starting an Alpha in late September that is open to both local and global guests. We know that new people continue to join us every week, so we want to create as many onramps as possible for them to begin the journey. We will be starting another Alpha season in late-October.

In order for this to be THE BIGGEST ALPHA EVER, we need you to say 'YES' to inviting

Continued on next page...

saintbenedict.ca **2**



FATHER SIMON SAYS continued

someone. Please start praying about who you can invite to try Alpha. You might have friends who are too busy, or maybe they are uncomfortable coming to a church. All of those obstacles have been removed with online Alpha. You can even invite friends or family from other parts of the world! I challenge every parishioner to invite three people to try Alpha this Fall. If you personally have not had the chance, this is your moment to experience the gift of Alpha. I promise it will help you grow in your relationship with God, and you'll get to meet some wonderful new people. Please visit and share: saintbenedict.ca/alpha.

If you've already taken Alpha and are wondering, "What's Next?", Life Groups are the answer. Later in our series we will be talking about these smaller gatherings where people are known and loved - safe places to continue to grow in faith and experience authentic Christian community. If you are not yet in a Life Group, you're invited! We want EVERYONE in the parish to experience the difference of community, which complements and deepens what we experience at Sunday Mass. Please visit and invite a few friends to check out: saintbenedict.ca/lifegroups.

RE-OPENING STEP-BY-STEP

In the last few weeks, we've seen growth in attendance at our Sunday Masses. Planning ahead, we've decided to add a third in-person Mass starting this weekend. The new schedule will include Saturday at 4pm, Sunday at **11:30am** (note the change from 11:15am), and Sunday at 4pm. As stated above, we will continue to Livestream Mass on Sunday at 9am.

As we updated you in a recent Overview, we

are adding weekday Masses on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 12:15pm, starting this past week. There will be a simple registration process in the foyer, and participants will have to wear masks and maintain social distancing.

We are also looking at how we can have funerals for up to 60 people, following all of the same protocols. We will have to approach these on a case-by-case basis. Receptions are not permitted at this time.

STAFF TRANSITIONS

After many years of service, Kate & Corey Robinson have both decided to move on from the parish staff team. We will miss them both, and we pray God's blessings upon them. We are in the process of forming a plan for our youth ministry, which will likely involve running Youth Alpha this Fall. Please stay tuned for more information.

I am excited to announce the arrival of two new members to the staff team. Isaac Longworth is a seminarian with the Companions of the Cross who will be starting a 10 month internship with us at Saint Benedict. He arrived in Nova Scotia just after Labour Day and is currently in the midst of 14 days of self-isolation.

I am thrilled to announce that we have just hired Chris Morris for the Portfolio Project Manager position. He and his wife, Tess, and their five children have been members of Saint Benedict since they moved to Halifax two years ago. Chris has a very diverse background which includes working as a police detective, a pilot for WestJet, and racing as a professional cyclist. We are thrilled to have him bring his gifts and experience to our team. 🙏

WHAT DO YOU DO?



Aurea Sadi
Ora Ministry

This reflection is for next Sunday's Gospel, Matthew 20:1-16.

“What do you do?”

I've been asked this question. You've been asked this question. Maybe at a dinner party. Or your spouse's Christmas party. On a first date. While networking. At the gym. In an elevator. It is commonly asked when you're trying to get to know someone. And crazy enough, we prepare to answer this question from a very young age. How often as a child or teen were you asked: What do you want to be when you grow up? My answers varied from Wonder Woman, to an actress, to a fashion designer, to a writer, to a French teacher. And well, I'm still trying to figure it out!

However, there is a slight difference in those two questions. To 'do' something and to 'be' something are not the same thing. Often we seem to put more value on what a person does rather than who they are. The labourers in our gospel story have done this, and that makes me a little sad. They believed their sense of worth was solely tied to the work they did. They worked longer, so they should be entitled to more pay. Yet the landowner saw things differently. He wanted to make sure those who could work had work, and he saw the dignity that having work provides. The landowner focused on who the labourers were, not just on what they could do.



In this parable, we understand the landowner to be God. And God values me for me and you for you. He placed that value in each of us. This is why, as Christians, it is difficult when we see a person's value being taken for granted, or mistreated, or sadly, even thrown away. This should cause us concern and hopefully call us to action. Unless we choose a 'job' that helps us bring out the value God has placed in us, then that 'job' is truly what we do, but is not and cannot be all that we are.

I can easily lose the value that God placed in me and focus on the values of our world. I can be like the labourers waiting for and wanting what I believe I am entitled to. But there is another choice. I can remember

the value I have as a daughter of God, a worth beyond measure. I can choose to be one of the labourers or I can strive to be like the landowner who sees the value already inherent in everyone and help to provide each of my brothers and sisters with the support and care necessary to build up

their value.

God places value in us, making us who we are and we can connect that value to what we do. Ultimately we all have the same thing to do: proclaim God's goodness. Because that's where our value lies.

So... what do you do?

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



Share
life
faith
hope
Jesus



#AlphaOnline

Who will you invite?

Online Alpha begins September 23rd.

Register today at saintbenedict.ca/alpha

FISHING TO SURVIVE



John Rae
Bene Dictus Team

In Matthew 1:16-20, Jesus approaches a group of commercial fishermen who are casting their nets and offers to change their occupation from being catchers of fish to being fishers of men. I live in a fishing village, Sambro, and some of my neighbours are commercial fishermen. They do not fish as a pastime; they fish to survive. They are out in all sorts of weather, and to be successful they need to develop a deep and intuitive knowledge of the environment they are working in; with fishing, the real action is happening far below the surface.

The book of the prophet Habakkuk talks about the Babylonians, who had been casting their cultural nets to try and capture the hearts and minds of the Israelites in order to drag them into a soul-destroying servitude. (Habakkuk points out that Babylonian fishermen engage in a liturgy where they literally worship their nets as their gods, as they provided for their needs, so his net metaphor has spiritual overtones.) What was puzzling to him was that the Israelites were willing accomplices in

their own destruction because they had allowed themselves to become entangled in the pagan lifestyle.

Ancient pagan warriors sometimes used a net as their weapon of choice. Being caught in one of those nets was a prelude to your eventual death. However, to be caught in the net that Jesus casts is the prelude to your abundant life.

In net fishing, the mesh size is all important. If it's too wide open, the fish just swim through the net, and if it is too tight, the fish never penetrate the net far enough to get caught. To be an efficient fisherman, you need to know what species you are fishing for and have the proper gear. The secular postmodern fishers, the modern Babylonians, are using a mesh configuration specifically designed to entrap idealistic younger people. There is fierce competition out on the spiritual fishing grounds. 📍



LIFE GROUP CAMPAIGN



Susan LeRue
Bene Dictus Team

I had the extreme pleasure to speak with our parish's own Bill Scollard about his plans for our

Life Groups to grow enormously this Fall. And by 'enormously', I'm talking about Life Groups with no borders, worldwide.

How would you describe a Life Group?

BILL: We experience church here in two ways: the first is '**big church worship**', when we celebrate Mass together. The second is **small groups**, where people can grow in a Christian community. People need to know how critical small groups are, and how those small groups benefit their faith.

Are Life Groups only for our own parishioners, or are they open to others?

The exciting thing, and the blessing of this time with COVID-19, is that our church has expanded from Clayton Park, or even Halifax, to the world. You know, the Holy Spirit blesses us with over 10,000 viewers a week from all over the world, and he fully expects us to have them become parishioners of Saint Benedict Parish.

That's the Holy Spirit stepping in and saying. "No, we don't define church by just Clayton Park. We built Saint Benedict Parish to feed the world! I'm going to send hungry people to you and I expect you to feed them." So we are going to feed them,

absolutely!

We've got three people from Mumbai, India who belong to a Life Group hosted by one of our parishioners. We have people from all over the world.

What's the next step to inviting others to join a Life Group?

The invitation is going to go out in a campaign, starting in September. It will be for whoever is praying with us on Sundays to become a member of a Life Group, and we will expect it to go global!

How many people do we have in our Life Groups now?

We have gone from 300 people to 600 people. We have doubled the size in ten months. The expectation is by the end of 2021, we will have over 1,500! The expectation is that everyone who attends Mass regularly will be in a Life Group.

Our church has grown to 10,000, and whether that stays or not after the pandemic, we will take whatever God gives us; and right now, he is giving us over 10,000 parishioners. And He expects us to feed them.

Anything else?

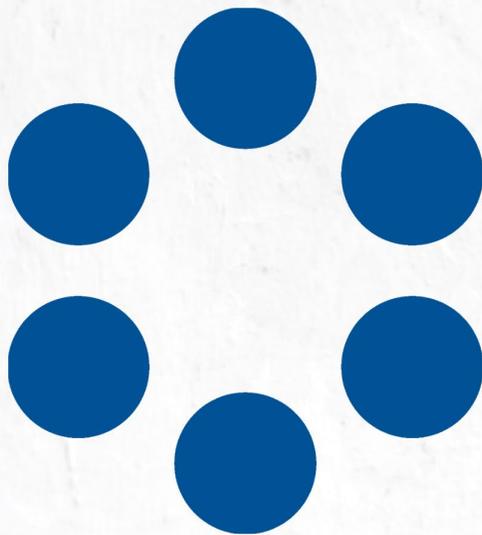
We are not built to walk our spiritual journeys alone. Jesus started with 12. He knew he had to work within a community, and send that community out. As we walk in our faith, we need the exact same

thing. We need to progress in our faith, and we need other Christians who are also wanting to progress in their faith.

Anyone who has spent any time in a Life Group (or Connect Groups and Discipleship Groups, as they used to be called) understands the value of quiet time with Jesus, but also group time with others where you can feed off each other,

hear other interpretations of scripture, pray together, love each other, and be able to experience the ups and downs of life together. In the absence of that, you actually can't grow in your faith.

This was an incredible interview, and I am so thankful for Bill Scollard and the enthusiasm and witness that he brings to our parish. 🙏



LIFE GROUPS

Sign up to join or lead
a Life Group at

saintbenedict.ca/lifegroups



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THE WAY OF STELLA MARIS



Taya Vaci
Bene Dictus Team

The Way of Stella Maris pilgrimage recently took place for the second time this August, where thirty registered pilgrims joined together for a six day walking retreat. The Way of Stella Maris provides a walking pilgrimage centered on prayer, specifically prayer for the renewed life of the pilgrims and our Archdiocese. It was started in 2019 by Deacon Rob Elford.

Previously, the 110km route began at Holy Cross Church in Middle Musquodoboit and finished at Saint Mary's Cathedral Basilica in downtown Halifax. With COVID-19, however, there was a dramatic impact on the initial pilgrimage setup, so organizers were required to pivot their initial plan. In the spirit of welcoming everyone, pilgrims were given two options to participate: join the in-person group, where pilgrims walked from Middle Musquodoboit to Halifax; or take part in a home-based retreat where pilgrims walked a similar



distance within their neighbourhood.

Each day began with a scripture passage for pilgrims to meditate on. These scripture readings came from Luke's version of Jesus' travel narrative, Luke 9-19. Jesus teaches his disciples as they walk with him toward Jerusalem.

The grace pilgrims sought out in this first day of the pilgrimage was to trust in God's personal love. Pilgrims reflected on what attachments inhibited them from fully accepting this love and, therefore, inhibits them from loving others as God loves them.

The middle days of the pilgrimage focused on growing in a deeper desire to know Jesus more intimately, which increases our ability to live more freely as we were created to be. Throughout the final day, pilgrims asked for the grace and courage to live a life of gratitude, with hearts and minds fixed on Jesus Christ and appreciating all God has done for them.

During this pilgrimage, participants



carried two rocks with them, which comes from the Camino de Santiago (the traditional pilgrimage path from France to Spain). Travellers on the Camino carry a rock with them, which they leave as a symbol of letting go of a prayer request and leaving it with God. For The Way of Stella Maris pilgrimage, this tradition was retained and modified, but with an additional stone. The first stone is left at the foot of the crucifix at Saint Andrew’s cemetery in Eastern Passage, which is along the pilgrimage route. This stone represents the pilgrims own personal petition. The second stone is a symbol of the pilgrim’s prayers for the renewal of

our local church; it is left at the foot of a cross in Saint Mary’s Cathedral Basilica.

Pilgrims were encouraged to bring along an object that is spiritually meaningful to them. What did you bring?

ROB: I carried a crucifix and a pendant that is deeply meaningful to me. These symbols are a reminder that I am entirely dependent on God’s grace each day.

TREENA: I carried a rosary that was acquired for The Way of Stella Maris pilgrimage last year.

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DIANNE: I always carry my rosary. For the pilgrimage, I tucked it into my knapsack along with a small booklet of meditative prayers.

TANYA: Each day I started my journey praying the Rosary with a rosary that I've had on other pilgrimages through my life.

You were among one of the pilgrims who chose the home-based retreat, what was that like?

BEVERLY: I am no longer able to walk many miles, but I joined by daily walking in my own community and amid the beauty of the Public Gardens. The prayer structure was brilliant. I loved the format and found the process both healing and challenging as I explored my personal life pilgrimage. I am not often reminded that we are a pilgrim people walking daily with our losses and joys, always in the presence of the grace of God. I experienced this reality as we walked together.

DIANNE: I decided to make my own

journey, mapped out mileage to correspond with the daily schedule, and set out from my cottage each day to walk and pray. I would start by praying the rosary; that allowed me to enter the spirituality of walking with Mary while praying for the intentions of the pilgrimage. Then I set my mind free to reflect on the morning readings. It's like having that first burst of caffeine in the morning that gets you motivated and energized.

Walking the Stella Maris pilgrimage is a gift that inspired me to live out more fully my personal daily pilgrimage. I am tripling my prayers for a COVID-19 vaccine in time for the pilgrimage in 2021, so that an abundance of people will be open to partake.

The Way of Stella Maris is being used to heal and transform the lives of pilgrims. After only two years, the stories of pilgrims are powerful and deeply meaningful. I encourage you to check out the website (thewayofstellamaris.com) and consider joining in 2021. 🙏



DEACON PATRICK SALAH

On Saturday, August 15th, our very own Patrick Salah was ordained a deacon by Archbishop Mancini at St. Mary's Cathedral Basilica in downtown Halifax. Here are a few moments from his ordination. To view the Mass, visit livestream.com/halifaxyarmouth/patricksalah.



A photograph of a church interior with wooden pews, a high ceiling with exposed beams, and several hanging pendant lights. The background is slightly blurred to make the text stand out.

WEEKEND MASS SCHEDULE

- 4PM SATURDAY (IN-PERSON)
- 9AM SUNDAY (LIVESTREAM)
- 11:30AM SUNDAY (IN-PERSON)
- 4PM SUNDAY (IN-PERSON)

A photograph of a church interior, similar to the one above, showing wooden pews, a high ceiling, and pendant lights.

WEEKDAY MASS SCHEDULE

- 12:15PM TUESDAY
 - 12:15PM THURSDAY
- (BOTH IN-PERSON)

UPCOMING EVENTS

at Saint Benedict Parish

SEPTEMBER 13 - What's Next?
preaching series begins

SEPTEMBER 23 - Online Alpha
begins

SEPTEMBER 27 - Life Group
campaign kickoff

OCTOBER 5 - 200th Anniversary Mass
at St. Mary's Cathedral Basilica

OCTOBER 11 - Thanksgiving

For full event details, be
sure to subscribe to
The Overview by visiting
saintbenedict.ca



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If you are 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 Viscount: **weddings@saintbenedict.ca.**

For information on preparation for the sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Communion, please email **FACT@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 - JULY 2020

SUNDAY COLLECTIONS	RECEIVED	TOTAL	AVERAGE
ENVELOPES	-	\$11,871	-
AUTOMATIC GIVING	429	\$61,691	\$143.80*
LOOSE	-	\$282	-
ONLINE	-	\$16,237	-
TOTAL	-	\$90,081	-
PARISH DEBT REDUCTION	RECEIVED	TOTAL	AVERAGE
ENVELOPES	-	\$5,585	-
AUTOMATIC GIVING	54	\$2,724	\$50.44*
MORTGAGE BALANCE (AS OF MONTH END)			\$349,609
PRINCIPAL PAID (ON MORTGAGE)		Payments deferred due to COVID-19	
INTEREST PAID (ON MORTGAGE)			\$845.41
TOTAL PAID (ON MORTGAGE)			\$845.41

*NOTE: Automatic Giving average includes weekly, bi-weekly, and monthly withdrawals, which are totalled and divided by the number of givers.



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