

SAINT BENEDICT'S



PHOTO: JOHNIRAE

p. 7
MEET ISAAC LONGWORTH

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ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE

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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 November 15th.

On the cover:

Praying at a recent in-person Mass.

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 - October 2020



FATHER SIMON SAYS...



Fr. Simon Lobo, CC

Pastor

A PHY-GITAL BENE DICTUS

You might be scrolling through this edition of our beautiful monthly magazine online, or you might be holding a physical copy. For the first time since February, we have been able to print physical copies of the Bene Dictus as Archdiocesan restrictions have been adjusted. I find this to be symbolic of our current and future reality; Saint Benedict Parish is and will continue to be a hybrid parish, both physical and digital. Thanks to all of those who contribute to creating this awesome publication, thanks to all the advertisers, and thanks to you, the readers!

IF YOU WANT TO MAKE GOD LAUGH...

... then tell Him your plans. This seems to be even more true throughout this pandemic. We planned, adjusted, and re-planned our Online Alpha. Then, the week we opened registration, we had over 70 people sign-up in 72 hours, essentially filling our spots. So we planned again! Don't get me wrong, this is the best possible problem: we can't find enough room for all the people who are open to explore the most fundamental questions of life and faith. We decided to run three simultaneous Alphas on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays this Fall. It's hard to fathom that we have guests joining us from all over: Halifax, Cape Breton, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland, Quebec, Manitoba, Alberta, British Columbia, Maine, Illinois, Ireland, Nicaragua, and Brazil. Perhaps this is due in part to our huge, international congregation that prays with us every Sunday for Mass online. Now we can say that with this round of Alpha, we will have the most guests attending in our history of running Alpha!

I want to say thanks to every single person who made a personal invitation to a friend or family member to try Alpha. Marketing can only get us so

Continued on next page...

saintbenedict.ca 2



FATHER SIMON SAYS continued

far. Personal invites are the most successful way to draw people to this journey with God. You are impacting the lives of others in the best way possible!

LIFE GROUPS

I was blown away to recently find out that about 600 people are connected to Life Groups at Saint Benedict. My dream is that, in addition to our large gatherings for Sunday Worship, everyone will also experience the blessing of a smaller Christian community. The purpose of Life Groups is to help each other become mature disciples in Christ! As this is being released, we are beginning our Life Group campaign. This is a simple way to try-before-you-buy. There is no long term commitment. We're asking you to host a group by inviting at least two friends to take part in a 7-week series called **The Search**. We will provide videos and discussion questions. A typical gathering - whether online or in person - might take about an hour. Seven hours over seven weeks could change your life or the life of a friend! If you're not sure what's next, why not try hosting a Life Group? You might just find a community of people that you never knew you longed for: saintbenedict.ca/lifegroups

YOUTH MINISTRY UPDATE

I am very excited to share that we are bringing Dan Perera onboard to run a Youth Alpha this Fall on Thursday evenings. Our first night will be on October 8th. It's not too late for you to join. In fact, we'd love it if you invited a couple of friends from school to participate. Let's be honest, we've all found the last six months challenging, many of us are struggling, and some are even asking serious questions about life. This could be a great moment for you and your friends to have some space to talk about the things that really matter. To find out more, email

youth@saintbenedict.ca, or visit saintbenedict.ca/youth.

TEAM-BASED LEADERSHIP

I remember Fr. James Mallon, the previous pastor here, talking about a conversion moment that he had when he moved from leading teams (delegating various tasks), to leading out of a team. I feel so blessed to be surrounded by amazing people who compliment my gifts and make up for my deficiencies. As of early September, our Parish Leadership Team is back to full strength, and it includes Fr. Alex, Tanya Noye, Noreen Smith, Chris Morris, and me. I can already see how God is uniting us to lead this beautiful parish.

Anna Stuart has stepped into the role of chair of our Strategic Parish Pastoral Council. This body of incredible strategic thinkers has been meeting since earlier in the summer, and they are looking at short and mid-term priorities specific to this time of pandemic. Finally, Marinko Vaci chairs our Finance Council, which is also made up of brilliant parishioners who work hard to provide responsible oversight and stewardship of your generous gifts. I am so grateful for your physical and digital financial offerings, which are helping us reach even more people in these difficult times.

Stay tuned for our next preaching series, which is going to be on the universal call to holiness. In the meantime, enjoy your Thanksgiving weekend. I hope that you are able to gather safely with your household or in a small bubble. I always find it beneficial to pause at some point during the turkey dinner, to go around the table and give thanks to God for his many blessings! 🙏

THE NAME OF THE GAME



Lindsay Elford
Ora Ministry

This reflection is for next Sunday's Gospel, Matthew 22:15-21.

There is a part of me that really enjoys the black and white. I prefer certainty over uncertainty, and I like it when there is right and wrong. It just makes my life easier, and something inside me just wants my life to be easier. We all know, however, that nothing is certain and life is most definitely not easy. So, I have come to understand that where I seek certainty is important!

The Pharisees and the Herodians are trying to back Jesus into a corner, to prove him wrong, to catch him in a mistake. They don't like what he represents, they don't believe in him. They believe it is their job to bring him down, because he could be a great personal cost to them. They seek certainty in their condemnation of him.

Jesus gives them, and us, the brilliant choice: Give to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God the things that are God's. But as we know, all things come from God and belong to God, so it is up to us to decide how we sort that out. Our first allegiance must be to God, and under this allegiance, we are forced to make

a decision: "No one can serve two masters," (Matthew 6:24).

There have been many times in my life where I have been certain in my condemnation of people and situations. The more I endeavour to grow closer to God, the more obvious it becomes to me that certainty is not the name of the game. Especially in relational terms, there are some things that matter more than my opinion – when someone does not perform or behave the way I think they should, it is my job to recognize not their failings but their heart, which belongs to God just as much as mine does. Whether we know it or not, we all seek the same thing, and that is Love.



Unfortunately, this certainty still does not always result in certainty in my life. Operating under this worldview means I need to be sensitive to the needs of others, whether I agree with them or not. This doesn't mean that truths, standards and expectations should not

be upheld, but in my experience, attention to people's hearts is what makes all the difference in that regard. I've come to believe that discernment in the Spirit is the name of the game; not always convenient, and not always certain, but always more fruitful.

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

WHAT YOU REALLY WANT



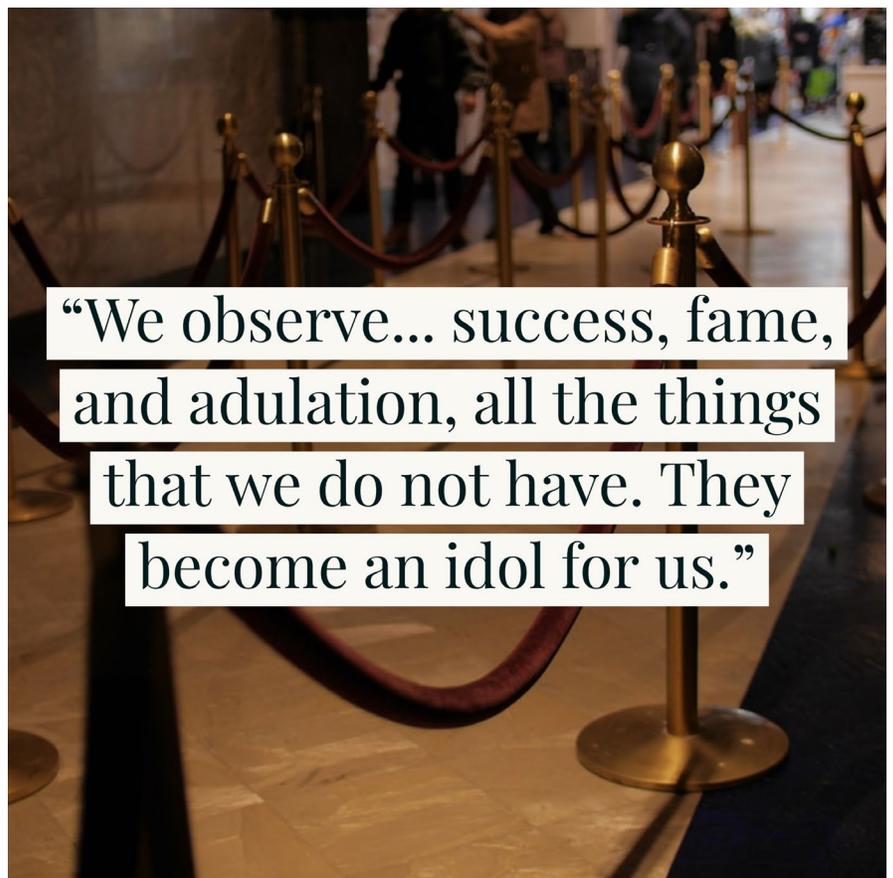
John Rae
Bene Dictus Team

In John 1:35-38, two of John the Baptist's disciples start to follow after Jesus. When Jesus senses that they are walking behind him, he turns around quickly, and borrowing a line from a 1990s pop song, he says something like, "So tell me what you want, what you really, really want?". Notice that Jesus does not ask them what they know or what they believe, but what they want. At this point, Jesus is not so much interested in the thoughts and beliefs in their minds, but in getting them to articulate the desires of their hearts.

Is there a difference between what we 'want' and what we 'really, really want'? At a social level, we have wants or desires. We desire to be successful, to be seen as fashionable or cool, or to be part of the political in-crowd. These everyday desires are caught and are spread like viruses. That is how advertising works. Living totally within this level of desire makes us surface dwellers, susceptible to the storms created by every new social virus that appears on the horizon, where our individual vessels are disconcertingly tossed about

on pretty rough waves. In this sea state, Jesus comes to us and offers to enter our boats, bringing with him that mysterious gift of 'what we really, really want'; the fulfilment of our deep desires.

Our surface desires highlight, in us, a kind of neediness, a sense of deficiency, and our deep desires can reveal a gnawing emptiness in our lives. Consider two young children playing in a nursery. The red ball in the corner has sat there for the past half hour, but as soon as one child goes over to play with it, the other child immediately wants that particular ball and starts crying for it. Our desires are triggered by the virus of what some other person has and we do not have.



This is true at a deeper level as well. We observe some music or sports star who has success, fame, and adulation, all the things that we do not have. They become an idol for us. At one level we want some of their 'stuff', so we buy their album or, at an auction, bid on their game-used hockey stick, but at deeper level what we really, really want is to share in their 'being', for they appear to have a fullness that we don't have.

Is there another possible use for our desires? In Matthew 5:17, Jesus says, "I have come not to destroy, but to fulfil." Could Jesus use our surface desires as a portal to gain access to our deep desires? In trying to satisfy our desires purely

by acquiring some thing or status, we will have some success, but our deep desires are fulfilled through the gift of relationship. It is only in a mutual relationship that love is made manifest. At the Mass we discover that God, in His love for us, desires our deepest fulfilment, our salvation.

Colossians 2:9 says, "For in Christ all the fullness of the Godhead dwells in bodily form." At the Eucharist, Christ offers to board our vessel, not with some token of himself, but bringing with him that mysterious gift of his actual being, which is the true fulfilment of all desire. We just have to welcome him on board. 🙏



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MEET ISAAC LONGWORTH



Matt Kerrigan
Bene Dictus Team

Isaac Longworth has just joined Saint Benedict Parish as a Seminarian-Intern. He comes to us from the Companions of the Cross Seminary in Detroit. He took a bit of a twisty road, with some pauses, to get here. When he came back into Canada from Detroit, he had to quarantine for 14 days. Then he set out for Halifax, passing through checkpoints, province-by-province, before finally arriving here to do his second 14 day quarantine.

Upon arrival in Halifax, Isaac got his first taste of Maritime hospitality. A generous parishioner invited Isaac to use their boathouse on the Northwest Arm for his self-isolation. He has since moved into the community house shared by the Companions of the Cross with Fr. Simon and Fr. Alex.

Isaac grew up in Woodstock, Ontario. He is the oldest of seven children. Up until grade 11, he was home schooled. Prior to university, he attended a Catholic high



school. He has since gone on to complete a degree in philosophy and is currently in the midst of earning his theology degree.

Early on in his faith journey, at the age of seven, Isaac felt a call to the priesthood. His call to the Companions of the Cross came two years later when he encountered Fr. Tim Devine. Fr. Devine, who is blind, inspired Isaac by demonstrating that in spite of his

challenge, he could quite capably carry out every aspect of his priestly duties. Isaac has completed seven years of seminary with two left to complete before his ordination to the priesthood.

Isaac has charisms for evangelization, teaching, writing, and preaching. He puts them to good use for a weekly radio show (on evangelization) that he does on Radio Maria every Friday night, called "Winning Souls for Christ." If you miss one of his shows don't fret; he uploads all of them (after they've aired on the radio) to his YouTube channel.

In his leisure time, Isaac loves hanging out with people. He is keen on all 'over-the-net' sports, especially volleyball. Last year he ventured into hockey and had some fun at an 'in-the-net' sport.

He enjoys Great Big Sea and kitchen party music. He loves Praise & Worship music and is looking forward to more of our Praise & Worship Nights. Fall Alpha is coming up on his radar, and he is really excited about that.

Please take every opportunity to make Isaac feel included and welcome in our parish! 





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ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE



Taya Vaci
Bene Dictus Team

With the drastic changes brought on by COVID-19, we likely find ourselves in uncharted territory this Thanksgiving. Family dinners may be smaller, Mass will have fewer in-person attendees, and hand sanitizer is probably at the top of your grocery list! Thanksgiving 2020 is unlike any other Thanksgiving in the past.

As Christians, we have the ability to recognize that even through this disparity, we are a hopeful people who know God is in control. Together we can be thankful that, in the face of the unknown, we can rely on His mercy and provision.

For me, I am especially grateful for everyone that is currently caring for my 89-year-old Nana. She is in the centre of the pandemic in Toronto, but by the grace of God, she has managed to stay protected from COVID-19. Every time I get to speak with her, I'm reminded of how much I treasure that time, and how blessed we are to have people care for her at this vulnerable time. I love you, my Nana Banana!

In the spirit of having an attitude of gratitude, other parishioners at Saint Benedict have shared what they are thankful for this year:

MAU: I am grateful that God is always present with me and in every person I meet. The faith community we have here helps a lot with my journey in serving him and my

brothers and sisters in Christ.

KAT: I am thankful that God looks after us each day and night. I am so grateful that he never leaves our side, despite our shortcomings, and that he continues to invite us to hold onto his love and mercy.

CORINNE: I am thankful for the incredible gift of technology that is keeping all of us connected. My 87-year-old mom is a Facetime pro now! I am thankful for the overwhelming love and support from friends when I faced a health issue this spring. I'm thankful for knowing the power of a hug.

LINDSAY: I am thankful that I was able to work from home during this pandemic, and that I was protected from potential financial hardship.

CRYSTAL: I am thankful for my family and my amazing husband. I am blessed to have their support in all aspects of my life.

JENNIFER: I'm thankful for my village. It's so true that it takes a village to raise a child, and my family, friends, and neighbours have shown me daily how much they love and support us.

JAYA (9 years old): I'm thankful for family road trips, and I'm especially thankful to get to visit family in Cape Breton this Thanksgiving.

VANESSA: I'm thankful for the Atlantic bubble, and that I was able to see and spend time with my family after many months



apart.

ROBERT: I'm thankful that everyone in my family remained healthy through all of this.

DAVE & RHINA: We are thankful for the good health of our families and for ourselves, for the daily miracles that we have experienced, for the safe travels of our family during the pandemic, and for the Lord's providence.

EDWINA: I am thankful to God for my health, both mentally and physically.

MARINKO: I am thankful for the commitment and cooperation between our provinces in the Atlantic bubble in the fight against the spread of COVID-19. It's meant a lot of sacrifice for many, but I'm happy to see people really care about protecting our vulnerable population.

MARIA: I am thankful for the quality time I've spent with family during this time.

GEORGE: I am thankful for our growing family, as we are expecting twins in addition

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to our two sons.

GABE (3 years old): I'm thankful for lemurs.

FRED (2 years old): He's thankful for his barrel of monkeys.

DAN: I am thankful for the gift of authentic friendships. Having just moved back to BC, I've been reconnecting with friends after years of distance, I'm grateful that they are a source of stability and consolation for me.

MELISSA: I am thankful that my family and friends have been protected from COVID-19 thus far.

KIM: I am thankful to be a part of the Saint Benedict family, and for the many spiritual doors that have been opened for me since I first joined the parish. I'm thankful that I was able to invite all my loved ones to experience this journey with me.

ASHLEY: I am thankful that experiencing

quarantine at home opened an opportunity for me to grow closer with my teenage daughter.

MARC: I am thankful for God's outpouring love for me. Even on the days I feel most distant from him, his merciful love breaks through any barrier. I am thankful for my family and friends who support me through this journey towards Jesus. All of this is more than I could've ever asked for.

ELIAS & MICHELLE: We're thankful for our healthy, growing family, especially with the recent birth of our second son.

LAUREN: I'm thankful to God for giving me an amazing family. No matter what is going on in life, there is always time for family.

Perhaps the silver lining in this pandemic is that it has allowed us to experience first hand what we are grateful for, enabling us to have an attitude of gratitude. Thanks be to God! 🙏



IN-PERSON MASS IN PHOTOS





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UPCOMING EVENTS

at Saint Benedict Parish

OCTOBER 14 - The Encounter returns

OCTOBER 18 - New preaching series

NOVEMBER 1 - All Saints Day

NOVEMBER 2 - All Souls' Day

NOVEMBER 6 - Archdiocesan Assembly

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



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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 - AUGUST 2020

| SUNDAY COLLECTIONS | RECEIVED | TOTAL | AVERAGE |
|------------------------------------|----------|----------|-----------------------------------|
| ENVELOPES | - | \$14,492 | - |
| AUTOMATIC GIVING | 429 | \$61,127 | \$142.49* |
| LOOSE | - | \$428 | - |
| ONLINE | - | \$14,556 | - |
| TOTAL | - | \$90,603 | - |
| PARISH DEBT REDUCTION | RECEIVED | TOTAL | AVERAGE |
| ENVELOPES | - | \$5,295 | - |
| AUTOMATIC GIVING | 54 | \$2,607 | \$48.28* |
| MORTGAGE BALANCE (AS OF MONTH END) | | | \$349,609 |
| PRINCIPAL PAID (ON MORTGAGE) | | | Payments deferred due to COVID-19 |
| INTEREST PAID (ON MORTGAGE) | | | \$872.49 |
| TOTAL PAID (ON MORTGAGE) | | | \$872.49 |

*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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