



BENE DICTUS

Saint Benedict Parish's Monthly Magazine

July 2025

100K HARVEST
Evangelizing the streets — p. 7

UNITED IN PRAYER
Celebrating Mass for those who have passed on — p. 9

PHOTO: JOHN RAE

THE BENE DICTUS

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Become a member! Visit saintbenedict.ca/connect for more information.

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The Bene Dictus is our monthly magazine featuring stories about changed lives at Saint Benedict Parish.

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FR. SIMON SAYS...



Fr. Simon Lobo, CC
Pastor

SUMMER SLOW DOWN

Surviving another Canadian Winter is a rite of passage

for those of us living in the True North, strong and free. That means Summer is a sacred season that should be held with the utmost care. Like so many of you (especially those with children), I too have had a busy few months and am in need of a chance to recharge the batteries.

Personally, I need to take care of my **physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health** in order to be the kind of person and priest that others enjoy being around and following. I encourage you to take some time to prayerfully reflect on these areas. Summer might be a time to get outside more and do a bit more exercise. To feed my mind, I love sitting on the deck and reading a good book. It's so important to intentionally connect with family and friends, including people in your Life Group, to make sure you are being surrounded by people who love you for who you are. Last but not least, summer is a great time to invest in your personal relationship with Jesus. I know that many people travel during the summer, and so you

might do a bit of research ahead of time to find a Sunday Mass wherever you go. I often talk about fostering our Daily Prayer Time, dedicated time every day to quiet down, read scripture (perhaps the day's Mass readings), and journal. I believe that developing a daily prayer routine will change your life and bring rejuvenation. "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest," (Matthew 11:28).

THE NEXT GENERATIONS

I was recently at an Alpha gathering in Toronto, where the National Director of Alpha Canada, Shaila Visser, spoke about reaching the 4.4 million teenagers in Canada with the Good News of Jesus. She talked about adopting a high school in our area that we can start praying for. I'd love for us to pray for all of the high schools who have Saint Benedict teenagers in attendance. As we start to think about how to do this, please join me in praying right now for the 500+ teenagers who will be participating in the Steubenville Atlantic Youth Conference from July 11-13. Last year I had the privilege of being a priest-chaplain at Steubenville, which included processing through the auditorium with Jesus, truly present in the monstrance during Adoration.

It was so moving to see how the teens responded, reaching out desperately, many moved to tears, some encountering him personally for the first time. May Jesus have an impact on a chunk of those 4.4 million teens next weekend here in Halifax!

Now to look even younger, we are hosting our annual VBS (Vacation Bible School) for ages 3-11, but it promises to be fun for all ages. It's taking place in the afternoons of July 22-26. By the time you read this, it's likely that all of the participant spots will have been filled. However, if you are 12 years or older, **we need you to help serve this next generation.** Please visit saintbenedict.ca/vbs to find out all the details and to register.

THANK YOU FOR INVESTING

This parish is incredibly generous, and I realize that we have called upon that generosity several times this Spring. Just last weekend, we invited you to support the ongoing formation of Companions of the Cross through our Adopt-a-Priest campaign.

We also invited you to help us send a huge group of teenagers to Steubenville so they can have life-changing experiences. We look forward to hearing the stories. **It's not too late to help us match our goal of \$6,000.** Please go to saintbenedict.ca/give and select 'Steubenville Youth' from the drop-down menu.

Just after Easter we preached *Deposit: A Series on Giving and Trust*. So far we've had 47 people increase their Automatic Giving, for an impact of \$11,200 for the balance of this year, and we had 15 brand new people sign up for Automatic Giving for an impact of \$11,600. We know that many others have increased their giving, but using different methods, which are not as easy to track. We also received a single stock donation of \$10,000, which was a pleasant surprise and a win-win for the giver and the parish.

I share a few of these details mainly to say **THANK YOU**. We are so grateful that you believe in our mission and have supported these key initiatives. May God bless you for your kindness.

CLERGY AND STAFF

It's sad to see Fr. Dan and Fr. Graham depart; we will miss them. On a positive note, it's wonderful to welcome newly ordained Fr. Eran Amarasingha back to our parish, now as a priest! Over the last couple of months we have been going through the hiring process for several positions. We have been blessed to have some gifted candidates apply. So far we have hired Madison Gorham to be the new half-time Life Groups Coordinator. Please pray for us as we continue to prayerfully discern who God is sending to be part of our team for this next season. 🙏

ALL MY PRAISE



Lisa Matheson
Ora Ministry

This reflection is for this Sunday's Psalm, Psalm 66.

I have a confession. When I read psalms of praise and thanksgiving, I have trouble entering into prayer with them. I skim the words, making assumptions about what comes next. God is good. God is all powerful, steadfast, and loving. Yeah, yeah, I know all that. This is not a good disposition, and I am not proud of it. Skimming over God's awesome deeds is a surefire route to ingratitude. So, I am grateful for the opportunity to take time with the psalm for this Sunday and allow it to sink into my heart. Albert Einstein once said that there are two ways to live your life: one is as though nothing is a miracle, the other is as though everything is a miracle. I don't know about you, but I definitely choose the latter. In Psalm 66, an actual miracle is cited:

"He turned the sea into dry land; they passed through the river on foot."

The Israelites were freed from slavery, only to be pursued again by the Egyptians because Pharaoh had a change of heart. They came to the literal 'end of the road,' with no place to go. Then God instructed Moses to lift up his staff and stretch his hand over the sea. I can't even imagine what

it must have felt like to witness the parting of the Red Sea. Perhaps a mix of fear, incredulity, hopefulness? God never left his people – protecting them and providing for them every step of the way. He led them to safety and destroyed their enemies. Now that calls for some serious praise! Time to break out the tambourines and lyres and make a joyful noise to the Lord.

Rejoicing doesn't always have to follow a miracle of this magnitude. In fact, rejoicing doesn't have to follow a specific event at all. We are called to praise God in good times and bad – not because of our current situation, but because of who he is.

"Come and hear, all you who fear God, and I will tell what he has done for me."

Nothing that happens in our world can ever change the fact that God sent his only son to conquer death, to save us from sin, and to make a way for us to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. He has made a way for us to be in relationship

with him for eternity. That's how much he loves us. And that deserves all my praise, all the time. Lord, may I sing the glory of Your name my whole life long.

(And Lord, please help me to not skim over psalms anymore. Amen.)

Lisa is a Bene Dictus team member and a contributor to Ora, where you can read reflections for the weekend Mass readings. Go to oraministry.ca to read more. 🙏





ADORE

Friday, July 18th, 7pm

An evening of Eucharistic Adoration with Praise & Worship



MILESTONE WEDDING ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Saturday, Sept. 20th at 4pm Mass

Sign up at saintbenedict.ca/milestone by August 15th



THE SEARCH



Zach Lewis
Bene Dictus Team

Last month, members of the Saint Benedict Parish community completed the seven week series called ***The Search***, which took place on Wednesdays in the Auditorium this Spring. In many ways, the experience of the series is similar to Alpha.

People drew together in small group tables over the course of the series and enjoyed some meaningful camaraderie while sharing some snacks and refreshments. The evening's main content was a 20 minute video presented by Chris Stefanick. The weekly videos were incredibly thought-provoking and became more and more profound as the series went along. The first few took a fairly extensive dive into the meaning of life. As the series progressed, the connection to Jesus was brought in. Each video had discussion questions which led to interesting conversations

run by a group leader, which led to lasting bonds forming among small groups.

If you are looking for your next Life Group series, *The Search* is certainly worthwhile. Much like Alpha, you will very likely have some questions answered. Many people have credited these kinds of gatherings as big stepping stones in their journey to faith or an increased faith, and you or someone known to you could experience this by attending The Search. Visit **[Formed.org](https://www.formed.org)** to get started! ☺



100K HARVEST IN AUGUST



Keiran Bray
Bene Dictus Team

There are some amazing ministries all around the world, and very soon we will have the opportunity to experience one of them first hand at Saint Benedict Parish. **E3 Ministry** and **Disciple a City** are coming to Halifax, specifically to Saint Benedict Parish, to host an event called **100K Harvest**.



The 100K Harvest mission revolves around an app, which can be found on Apple's App Store or Google Play called 100K Harvest. The mission is to share the gospel 100,000 times before the new year, hence the name of the app. In Europe, the app is helping the gospel to be shared about 1 million times per month! The fruits of this mission are showing in massive numbers all around the world.

E3 and Disciple a City

are inviting you to join them at Saint Benedict Parish on Saturday, August 8th to begin with some sessions to learn how to evangelize, creating 15 second testimonies, and learn some basic skills to determine whether or not a person you've just met is ready to hear the gospel. Saturday's session runs from 7-9pm.

Then there's an all-day event on Sunday, August 9th. Beginning at 9:30 am, we are going to hit the streets of Halifax and share the



THE 100K HARVEST

DOWNLOAD THE APP TODAY



SCAN THIS QR CODE
WITH YOUR PHONE!

good news with anyone and everyone – using what we learned about evangelization the previous night. Don't worry, you won't be left alone all day, as everyone will be in at least a pair of two people. The event will go until 9pm that night. More details can be found about 100K Harvest at 100kharvest.ca, and you can get more info on the Halifax mission in

particular at saintbenedict.ca/100kharvest.

You can register for the event online at the link above, however E3 Ministry told me that registering at the door on August 8th is no problem.

I can't wait to see the fruits of this mission in our city! See you there! 🍷

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UNITED IN PRAYER



Stéphanie Potter
Bene Dictus Team

Part of the beauty of our shared Catholic faith is the ongoing care for our loved ones who have died. We keep our loved ones in our prayers as we acknowledge that God's mercy is so vast, so powerful, and so giving that it extends even after our earthly life. While our goal as Christians is to die completely prepared, body and soul, to be with God, the reality is that we haven't achieved perfection in Christ in this life. So, when we die, we continue to accept God's grace which enables us to be fully and finally freed from all sin. How great is our God's mercy!

The Catechism of the Catholic Church states it clearly: "All who die in God's grace and friendship, but are still imperfectly purified, are indeed assured of their eternal salvation; but after death they undergo purification, so as to achieve the holiness

necessary to enter the joy of heaven." (CCC 1030)

While we do our daily work of becoming more like Christ, we can also remember our dead loved ones and unite in the work of God's mercy through prayer. This prayer can be a support to them as they undergo purification. As a Church, we also take time to pray together at Mass. This can be through the funeral rites we celebrate after someone dies, Masses celebrated in remembrance later on, at annual liturgies like All Souls' Day, and at special Masses offered every year in our Catholic cemeteries.

In Halifax, we have three primary active Catholic cemeteries. To provide special opportunities for the faithful to remember their loved ones buried in these cemeteries, our Archdiocese is hosting a series of **Masses for the Faithful Departed** in August and September.



On **Saturday August 9th at 10am**, there will be a Mass for the Faithful Departed at **Mount Olivet Cemetery** on Mumford Road in Halifax. This cemetery is steeped in history and is the final resting place of many victims of the Titanic and the Halifax Explosion, in addition to many

Saint Benedict parishioners. It is a short walk from the Halifax Shopping Centre where there is ample parking.

On **Wednesday August 13th at 7pm** at **Gate of Heaven Cemetery** in Lower Sackville, a Mass for the Faithful Departed will be held. This cemetery opened in 1938 and is the final resting place of several Archbishops and priests of our Archdiocese, as well as many faithful Catholics.

Holy Cross Cemetery, which was established 1843, is the final resting place of over 25,000 souls. Our Lady of Sorrows Chapel, which sits at the top of this historic cemetery, was famously built in a day. Located directly across from the Victoria General Hospital on South Park Street, this cemetery is home to many Catholics of Irish descent, as well as decorated war heroes and public figures, including the first Catholic Prime Minister of Canada, Sir John Thompson. They will hold a **Mass for the Faithful**



Departed at 5pm on September 15th, the feast day of Our Lady of Sorrows.



If you have a loved one in either of these three cemeteries, you have an opportunity to come together with the Church to pray for them as they continue to embrace Christ's saving grace.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen. 🙏

FINDING GOOD SEED



John Rae
Bene Dictus Team

I recently listened to an online discussion between three prominent public intellectuals who were lamenting the destruction of what they considered the positive aspects of Christianity. In their work, they had each been attracted to the foundational principles of what we could call *secular humanism*. They considered it good ground that could provide the nourishment to grow a mature moral and ethical society. Now they weren't so sure, because the ideas rooted in that ground were not producing the fruit that they had hoped for, but a crop of poisonous ideologies that were actively crowding out the Christian culture they had come to admire.

They were talking in Biblical terms. The seed that they had planted in the ground of their lives had sprung up and produced an impressive growth initially but ended up producing substandard fruit. Their conversation struck me like the 'debriefing' conversation that Adam and Eve might have had after their episode in the garden. The fruit offered to them by the serpent had been 'pleasing to the eye', but after sampling it they discovered it was poisonous and would be the death of them.

The problem was either the soil or the seed. Their implied question was: Where do you find seed that can drive its roots into a deeper reality and produce good fruit?



The answer to their question can be found in the story of Easter. The political and philosophical powers of Jesus' day assumed that they were just crucifying some Galilean troublemaker. They had no fear of the seed he had sown. But little did they realise that when they planted that cross on the rock of Golgotha, they were also planting the tiny seed of pure love, which has the power to sink its roots down to where the living waters flow.

We can be tempted to try and rely on philosophical and political movements to grow Christianity. However, as our resident theologian Dr. David Deane points out in his book *The Tyranny of the Banal*, if society's ethics are rooted in only the philosophical and the political, then whatever fruit is produced will be substandard. In many ways, the seed that

Christ planted is incompatible with the ground of secular culture. For example, Christian understandings of abortion or euthanasia come across to our current culture as if we are Galilean strangers from a strange land who are speaking in a foreign tongue. It was interesting to see online thinkers were at the border of that strange land and so were getting dangerously close to having a 'come to Jesus' moment.

In Luke 13, the Kingdom of God is compared to a mustard seed. Even though it is the smallest and most inconspicuous of all seeds, it eventually grows into the largest of all plants and becomes a tree that the birds come to and nest in its branches. What a beautiful image of Christ and His Church. ☺



JULY UPDATE

BY JOSEPH EZEANI, SARA LINERO,
AND CAMILA NOTARI

VBS IS BACK!

WHEN?

JULY 22ND - 25TH
FROM 1:15-4:15PM
&
THE CLOSING WILL BE
JULY 26TH
FROM 2:15-5PM,
INCLUDING A BBQ!

WHO?

CHILDREN BETWEEN THE
AGES OF 3-11 ARE INVITED
TO PARTICIPATE

ACTIVITIES WILL HAPPEN IN
AGE GROUPS.

3-5 YEARS OLD
&
6-11 YEARS OLD

THEME :

TRUE NORTH -
TRUSTING JESUS IN A
WILD WORLD!



WHAT TO EXPECT:

SCIENCE EXPERIMENTS

EXPERIENCE GOD'S
POWER IN THE NATURAL
WORLD



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TO BRING GOD'S WORD
ALIVE

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THROUGH CRAFTS AND
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ADULT

*ESPECIALLY ADULTS

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UPCOMING EVENTS

at Saint Benedict Parish

JULY 11 - Feast of Saint Benedict

JULY 11-13 - Steubenville Atlantic

JULY 22-26 - VBS - True North

AUGUST 4 - Natal Day

AUGUST 6 - Feast of the Transfiguration

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



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WEEKEND MASSES

Saturday: 4pm

Sunday: 9am (streaming), 11:30am, 4pm (incense)

WEEKDAY MASSES

Monday to Friday: 12:15pm

CONFESSION

Thursday: 7:30pm-8:30pm

Sunday: 1pm-2pm

ADORATION

Wednesday: 9am-9pm

Thursday: 6pm-9pm

Monday to Saturday: 6am-9am

(contact adoration@saintbenedict.ca to take part in early morning Adoration)

TRY ALPHA

Have questions about life and faith? Get info about our upcoming Alpha sessions at saintbenedict.ca/alpha.

For general inquiries, email office@saintbenedict.ca.

For information on baptisms, weddings, preparation for the sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Communion, youth Confirmation, or information on becoming Catholic through OCIA, visit saintbenedict.ca/sacraments.

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 2025

SUNDAY COLLECTION	RECEIVED	TOTAL	AVERAGE
AUTOMATIC GIVING	403	\$61,120	\$151.66*
ENVELOPES	-	\$13,391	-
LOOSE	-	\$10,983	-
ONLINE	-	\$22,067	-
TOTAL	-	\$107,561	-
RESERVE FUND	RECEIVED	TOTAL	AVERAGE
AUTOMATIC GIVING	25	\$1,970	\$78.80*
ENVELOPES/ONLINE	-	\$5,150	-
TOTAL	-	\$7,120	

*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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