

MOMENTUM

Autumn 2023



New Beginnings

Also Inside: Newly Ordained Deacons

ST MAURICE PARISH

A man with grey hair and glasses, wearing a blue t-shirt and brown work apron, is kneeling on a wooden floor in a workshop. He is using a green and black power tool to work on a piece of wood. The background shows wooden walls and various tools and materials.

MESSAGE FROM OUR PASTOR FATHER BEN ST. CROIX

It has been four months since I was appointed pastor of St. Maurice Parish. What a great blessing it has been so far to have met so many new people. The staff has been supportive in helping me adjust to this new reality in my life. It has been a little challenging moving from itinerant preaching and building a convent to pastoring a parish.

Fr. Bob Bedard always taught us that it is the priority of a pastor to catch a vision and preach the Word. Everybody has been asking me “What is your vision for St. Maurice Parish?” I want to be cautious because prior to my arrival a five-year vision was prepared by the Pastoral Council and staff, which involves various ministries and priorities. One of the areas that the pastoral plan speaks of relates to fostering a great openness to the Holy Spirit and helping people to grow in their charisms. When I think of this priority, I can certainly get excited. I believe that the Lord wants to lavish and pour out his Holy Spirit on the Church today in a mighty way. The Lord wants to renew, strengthen and equip us for mission.

When I think back on the days at St. Mary’s Parish, there was a sovereign grace that was poured out on the parish at that time. Many hearts were touched and transformed. I have heard stories of people walking through the doors of St. Mary’s who were overcome by the presence of God. Fr. Bob would often make mention of grown men leaving Mass in tears because they were encountering the Lord and His holiness. I ask myself “What would it take for a sovereign visitation of God in a parish that would result in thousands being touched by God and set on Fire for His Kingdom?”

Our Protestant brothers and sisters have a rich tradition of revival and many instances have been recorded or spoken of where God has moved powerfully to change lives and rekindle passion for holiness and for the Lord. “Catch the Fire” at the Toronto Airport Church had thousands of pastors from around the world come to Toronto where they were powerfully renewed. Is it possible that thousands would come through Nepean ... this little church...and encounter a move of God, a touch of His love?

Do we have a hunger for a visitation from God? Do

we believe that God can move powerfully and touch St. Maurice? The reality is that many have been touched already by God at St. Maurice. Many are walking in a close friendship with God and it has been beautiful to witness, but I wonder if there is not more...more grace, more Fire, available to us if our hearts were fully open to what He desires to do and we fully surrender to what He wants to do. When God begins to move it can certainly mess up our lives. It can mess up our plans, and our control. But that is OK—He does it to redirect our hearts and our lives according to His Plan.

The Church being fully alive was Fr. Bob’s vision. On Pentecost morning the Church woke up...the Lord ignited a powerful Fire in the hearts of the 120 who were gathered. Tradition had it that they spent nine days praying and one day the heavens opened and the Fire of God’s Love, His Holy Spirit fell upon them and animated them...woke them up...they were changed that day and they went out with a great boldness and courage.

That is what we would love to do...wouldn’t it be great if we could gather like the Apostles and go after the Holy Spirit as a community and have the Lord visit us? Are we presently doing that? We offer Life in the Spirit seminars and teach about the gifts of the Holy Spirit, however, there is always something left wanting in these efforts. My deepest desire is for the whole community to come together and pursue the Holy Spirit with expectant faith and longing. Scripture says...“If my people who are called by my name would humble themselves and pray and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and heal their land” (2 Chronicles 7:14).

We are planning to host a parish mission the first week of Advent to talk about a visitation of God. This is appropriate as we prepare for Christmas. Advent is a beautiful time for fostering a hunger for God in our hearts and increasing our expectations for His coming.

Come Holy Spirit!



Fr. Ben St. Croix, CC

“According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation... Let each one take care how he builds upon it. For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” –1 Corinthians 3:10–11

CALL TO THE DEACONATE

By Deacon Kevin O'Shea

Ron Bishop was born and raised in southern Ontario. He graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Kinesiology from the University of Waterloo, and a certificate in Aviation Pilot (Rotary Wing) from Canadore College. He served as a Bioscience Officer in the Canadian Forces, then worked as an Investment Advisor before taking early retirement. During the Jubilee of Mercy in 2016, Ron travelled to Poland on his first pilgrimage. Ron has a special devotion to the Divine Mercy, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the Holy Souls in Purgatory. Prior to the start of his diaconate formation, Ron taught Bible studies at St. Maurice Parish, where he has been a member since 2016. During his formation,

Ron has a special devotion to the Divine Mercy, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the Holy Souls in Purgatory.



Deacon Ron and his wife Irene

in the midst of the pandemic, he had the opportunity to serve at the Ottawa Mission & the Ottawa–Carleton Detention Centre. After his ordination on September 21 2023, Ron was happy to be assigned to St. Maurice Parish. With fellow parishioner, Joan Gregorich, he currently leads catechumens and candidates in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA). On Sunday mornings, he enjoys his ministry to the military veterans at Perley Health, a 450–bed state-of-the-art long-term care home in Ottawa. Ron and his wife, Irene, have two children. In his spare time he enjoys hiking, camping, fishing, mountain biking and downhill skiing.

At a lower level of the hierarchy are deacons, upon whom hands are imposed not unto the priesthood, but unto a ministry of service. For strengthened by sacramental grace, in communion with the bishop and his group of priests they serve in the diaconate of the liturgy, of the word, and of charity to the people of God. Lumen Gentium 29

ARE YOU CALLED TO THE DEACONATE?
For more information email
CharlesFink@ottawacornwall.ca



Deacon Alvaro, Deacon Kevin and Deacon Ron

Alvaro Sanchez is an Information technology consultant. He and his wife Gabriela came from Mexico and have been married for 30 years and are proud parents of Fatima, Ana Paula and Juan Pablo. The family has been serving as lectors, altar servers, extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion and sacristans at St. Maurice. Gabriela also taught Childrens Liturgy for many years at Our Lady of Fatima and more recently continues teaching at St. John the Apostle. They also collaborate with the Cursillo community and Alpha retreats.

Alvaro helped launch and continues to help with *That Man Is You* men's ministry in both St. Maurice parish (English) and La Sagrada Familia parish (Spanish). During the summer months, Alvaro and Juan Pablo are avid golfers and spend their time between family, parish duties and the golf course.

Alvaro was delighted to be appointed to St. Maurice Parish as one of the newly ordain deacons. Many of the parishioners of St. Maurice played a key role in the discernment process and during the diaconate formation years

with the many prayers, words of support and encouragement. At St. Maurice, Deacon Alvaro will be part of the pastoral care team who looks after our senior community needs. There are 4 residences within the parish boundaries (2 long-term care centres and 2 retirement homes). Within the Archdiocese Of Ottawa–Cornwall, Deacon Alvaro has been appointed as Coordinator of Practicum for the Permanent Diaconate Formation Program and to the Prison Ministry at the Ottawa–Carleton Detention Centre.



Deacon Alvaro and his wife Gabby



GOD IS GOOD

By Fr. Lawrence Hygenius

It is such an unexpected blessing to be back at St. Maurice this year! Given that my last time here in 2020 was interrupted by the pandemic, I feel as though the Lord in his goodness has given me this time to serve here once again. The leadership of the Companions of the Cross saw the great things that the Lord is doing at St. Maurice and that is why they decided to invest and assign a third priest. I am very encouraged and inspired by the joyful witness of the many families and parishioners who give so generously and sacrificially of their time, treasure and talents to advance the mission 'to know, grow and go' as missionary disciples of Jesus.

It has been wonderful working alongside Fr. Ben and Fr. Marcus, along with the other staff members as we begin this new chapter in the life of St. Maurice. I will be serving as Team Lead to the Service and Outreach Ministries, which include the Catholic Women's League, the Knights of Columbus, Legion of Mary, St. Vincent de Paul and St. Simon's ministry. It is also my great privilege to connect with our local Catholic schools, which include elementary schools

of St. Gregory and St. John XXIII, as well as Frank Ryan Middle School and St. Pius X High School. I am pleased to let you know that sisters from the Queenship of Mary Community and the Servants of the Cross have graciously accepted my invitation to be part of this ministry to our elementary schools. Please keep this initiative in your prayers so that our children may experience the love of God our Father and the prayers of our Blessed Mother Mary. I am also working with Fr. Marcus in the Liturgical Ministries to ensure that St. Maurice continues to foster joyful and reverent liturgies.

As we approach our 60th anniversary in the year 2024, let us continue to give God permission to work in our lives and the life of our parish so that we may build on the wisdom of the past to ensure a bright future for all those who will be blessed to call St. Maurice their spiritual home.

Jesus Christ is Lord, now and forever, Amen!

BREAKING FREE

By Jeremiah MacDonald

I was raised in the Catholic Church and taught her teachings. I had questioned the existence of God in my mind as a child of 10 or 11 but my doubts went away quickly. I was homeschooled so I didn't really have any external things or people challenging my faith until I got to high school. I went to a public high school that had a secular culture but I still remained fairly strong in my faith. It wasn't until grade 11 that I really started to question my faith.

I didn't have many Catholic friends, and as a result I started to become closer friends with people at school and even started to change my personality to fit in. This happened gradually but as time went on I began to feel as though the Catholic Church and her teachings were limiting my freedom. As I spent more time with friends who had secular lifestyles and mindsets I began to feel stronger temptations to sin.

At this point, I was still considering myself Catholic and still going to Church. I didn't want to be though. I felt that it would be illogical to just leave the faith without any valid reasons and I also felt that I would be judged by my family for leaving the faith. Rather than leaving the faith I fell into lukewarmness as a Catholic. While still going to Church every Sunday my religion didn't influence me much in day-to-day life. As time went on though I realized that it is pointless to have religion and believe in God if not making it the center of my life. I started to not want to believe in God.

Eventually I was able to break free from the sins that were holding me back.

I was unsure about my belief in God because I felt the Church's rules were so restricting and limiting on me and I felt that Jesus was not giving me freedom. Eventually, I considered myself an atheist while not even knowing what I believed in. At this point in my life, my family would often be having theological discussions. I was not interested in partaking in these discussions because even though I wouldn't admit it part of me was afraid that the Catholic Church is what holds the fullness of truth and if it did I would have



to detach myself from habitual sins. This caused me to start to metaphorically distance myself from my family, I would spend less time with them and more time being alone. As a result, I felt less accountable for my actions. This distance allowed me to fall deeper and deeper into patterns of sin.

I continued to fall deeper into sin for a couple of years. As time went on I realized that growing apart from my family was causing a lot of problems internally and I should make an effort to grow closer to them. As I grew closer to my family I felt inclined to better myself as a person. I began to think about answers to hard philosophical and religious questions often through discussions with my siblings. As I looked for answers I began to find beauty and truth in the teachings of the Catholic Church. At first, this made me feel anxious and worried. I was not ready or willing to give up my life of sinning. As time went on though, I started to see how much loneliness, suffering, and despair my sins were bringing me. I began to realize that I was a slave to sin and I wanted to break free.

I worked on breaking free from my sins and failed many times. I didn't let this demotivate me though and kept on persevering. Eventually, I was able to break free from the sins that were holding me back.

At this point, I already knew deeply in my mind and heart that the Catholic Church is the truth but with my pride and attachment to sins I could not face that fact. After breaking free from sins that were enslaving me for a long time I was able to face that fact and I decided I wanted to make God the center of my life and form a deep intimate relationship with Him.

WELCOME TO OUR TEAM

One of our strategic objectives is to optimize our resources and to ensure that our facilities are clean and secure, and that our equipment is operating optimally. In September, we officially welcomed Perry Debellefeuille as our Facilities Manager. Perry served Canada for 38 years in the Canadian Navy and brings to this position a desire to serve the parish in a way that meets our needs and allows him to use his diverse gifts. Perry is excited to organize a new volunteer ministry of handymen (and women) who can work alongside him on small maintenance projects in the parish. If you are interested in sharing your handyman skills, please contact Perry at perry@stmauriceparish.com.

In our last issue of *Momentum*, we introduced Pauline McGrath as our Equip Coordinator. As we actively expand our evangelization and discipleship



Perry Debellefeuille

ministries, we discerned the need to also expand Pauline's scope of leadership to meet this important strategic goal. Pauline now works closely with Avery Burrows, our Evangelism and Discipleship Team Lead as Team Lead Assistant and brings with her a wealth of training, leadership, and organizational experience. With her passion to see the parish grow in, experience, and share the gifts of the Holy Spirit, we are excited to see how God will work through her!

WE HAVE LAUNCHED OUR CHURCH MANAGEMENT SYSTEM!

Last Fall, we reported that we were looking for a new church management system—one that is fully integrative with our website, calendar, back office, financial giving, ministry support, and communications—and we found the perfect, all-in-one platform, Sunergo. Sunergo is created and managed by an amazing Canadian, Christian, not-for-profit company. This secure, cost-effective system ensures that parishioners have access to their own personal data so that it is always up to date. Ministry leaders will enjoy using the Sunergo Connect feature to stay organized and connected with volunteers and participants via real-time chat. Event registrations, scheduling, and event attendance are a breeze and so is creating follow-up analytics. Ministry files can be uploaded, saved, shared, and accessed in the future.

Sunergo is created and managed by an amazing Canadian, Christian, not-for-profit company

Forthcoming in 2024, we will enable the online giving feature that will process all donations and events registrations within seconds and issue receipts immediately. And that's not all—parishioners will be able to download all their financial receipts, including tax donation receipts, at any time! We are excited about Sunergo and look forward to onboarding our ministry leaders and parishioners. So, stay tuned for your Sunergo Connect invitation and let's all get onboard!

THE RCIA EXPERIENCE AT ST. MAURICE

When my husband and I started attending a Catholic parish eleven and a half years ago, I had no thought of becoming a Catholic. We were there as sojourners, taking a break from heavy ministry responsibilities at our evangelical Protestant church. But the Lord had other plans.

"After a year at the parish, the priest encouraged me to take RCIA, "no strings attached," so I could explore the Catholic faith more deeply. I accepted the invitation and devoted myself to that exploration over the next six months, studying Scripture, praying, reading the Catechism closely, and asking endless questions.

But no one was more surprised than I when I came into full communion with the Catholic Church at Easter Vigil 2014.

RCIA, or the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, is the process of study, prayer, and rites and sacraments of initiation by which adults enter the Catholic Church. Deacon Ron Bishop and I are currently co-leading RCIA at St. Maurice, with the goal of bringing

everyone in the group into greater knowledge of God and his love for us, a deeper conversion, and a better understanding of such Catholic distinctives as the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, the sacraments, and devotion to Mary and the saints.

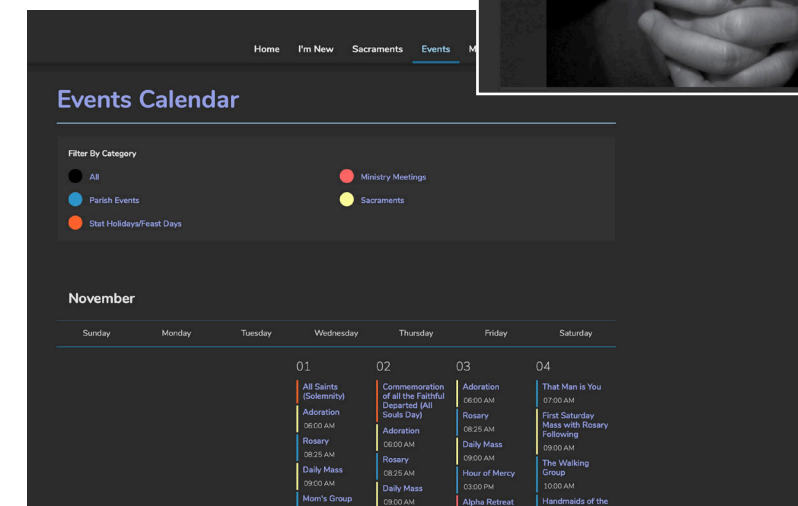
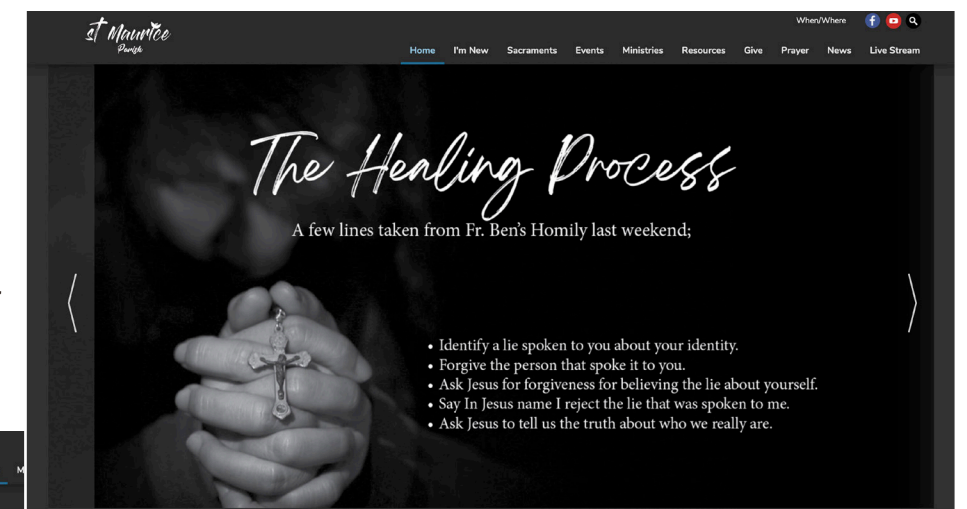
But no one was more surprised than I when I came into full communion with the Catholic Church at Easter Vigil 2014

Our expectant hope is that this process will culminate in each catechumen and candidate being received into the Church at Easter Vigil next March. Every person attending RCIA brings a different background story, so one size does not fit all. We tailor the learning experience to each individual through intentional accompaniment, walking with them in their faith journeys and encouraging them to keep the questions and conversation going between our weekly sessions.

Joan Gregorich

OUR WEBSITE HAS NEW FEATURES

Our website, now powered by Sunergo, has a few new options that didn't exist on our old website. There is a slide show on the home page that changes weekly to highlight important upcoming events and messages from our Pastors. Click on the arrows to advance to the next or previous slide or let the timer advance automatically.



The events calendar can now be filtered by 5 categories: All, Sacraments, Parish Events, Ministry Meetings and Statutory Holidays/Feast Days. Events that appear in the calendar are linked to facility bookings ensuring no scheduling conflicts. Sunergo's enhanced features help promote our parish vision and mission in a way that is beautiful and engaging.

NEW MINISTRY UPDATES

One of our strategic objectives is to develop a Welcome Ministry to welcome people into our parish and integrate them into parish life.

Welcome Ministry

The Welcome Ministry is a recent addition at St. Maurice and our primary mission is to create a welcoming and inclusive environment for all! We are incredibly fortunate to have a dedicated team of volunteers who greet parishioners before our weekend masses. We hope that your experience has been one of feeling genuinely welcomed, with friendly smiles and kind words as you join us for mass.

Our Welcome Table on the mezzanine is a place where both visitors and newcomers can engage in conversations with our Ambassadors. Here you will find lots of information about ongoing parish events and answers to many questions.

In the spirit of personal connections, we hosted our second New Parishioner Social in November. This event aimed to extend a warm welcome and foster connections. We are happy to host 45 new families who have recently joined St. Maurice. Praise God! 'Welcome one another, then, as Christ welcomed you, for the glory of God' (Romans 15:7)



Welcome to St. Maurice



City View Retirement Residence

Hour of Mercy

This quarter saw the launch of a new prayer time at St. Maurice—the Hour of Mercy—at 3 pm every Friday.

As revealed to us in the Diary of St. Faustina, Jesus declared 3 o'clock the hour of great mercy for the whole world (*Diary*, paragraph 1320). He said that in this hour, He will refuse nothing to the soul that makes a request of Him in virtue of His passion (1320). And so, we gather to pray for the conversion of souls within our parish, our families, and our world.

Hour of Mercy prayers begin with the Stations Of The Cross, followed by the Divine Mercy chaplet. Station Of The Cross booklets are provided, along with cards outlining the Divine Mercy prayers, including the opening and closing. In total, prayers take about an hour to complete.

To date, numbers have been small, with up to a dozen people joining in. The Hour of Mercy is open to anyone wishing to pray, and we hope many more will join us in the future.

Pastoral Care Ministry

This fall has been a very exciting time for the Pastoral Care Ministry. Our Pastoral Care Team has grown and we have been able to resume many of our activities. We held a training session in October with over 30 parishioners. We currently have volunteers serving in all four long term care and retirement residences in our parish community, leading Liturgies of the Word and distributing Holy Communion to residents. Our priests will be offering the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Anointing of the Sick. In addition, we are creating a team of volunteers to bring Holy Communion to parishioners in their private homes who are not able to attend Mass. Also new in the parish is "The Walking Group: Accompanying each other on our grief journey" for anyone suffering grief after the death of a loved one. The group meets every Saturday morning at 10am in the parking lot for a walk around the neighbourhood. All of this is part of our effort to strengthen our Pastoral Care Ministry. If you have any questions or a desire to serve in Pastoral Care, please contact Heidi at pastoralcare@stmauriceparish.com.

Know Grow Go

Handmaids of the Queen

This fall, St. Maurice Parish, in collaboration with the Sisters of the Queenship of Mary Community, has welcomed 30 young girls once a month to participate in "Handmaids of the Queen", a new initiative designed to help the girls of St. Maurice grow in virtue and prayer. So far, the girls have explored the virtues of humility and charity, learning from Our Lady's example at the Annunciation and Visitation. Each month, they experience a time of Eucharistic Adoration, where they write what the Lord is speaking to them in their prayer journals. They have also been encouraged to make their own special prayer corner in their home.



Youth Ministry

The Way, St. Maurice's youth ministry is inspired by a desire to make lifelong disciples. We provide young people an opportunity to be noticed, named, and loved through small group communities and encounters with the Father. Our launch this fall has reached many youths in our parish and invited them to go deeper on their discipleship journey.

If you are a high school student or young adult interested in helping out or a parent interested in finding out more about what we do please reach out to youth@stmauriceparish.com.

Family Ministry

The Family Ministry and parish events restarted this year with a hugely successful Corpus Christi BBQ. We followed that up with a potluck and an All Saints party (see photos). There will be an Advent family workshop to close off 2023. The beginning of 2024 will start with a spaghetti dinner, a Lenten family workshop, and a fish fry with the Knights of Columbus. The Sunday Social is continuing to do well and is a huge draw each week for fellowship after the 9 am mass. We are looking for volunteers to help us continue these important invitation ministries.

These exciting three ministries are part of our commitment to discipling the families and youth of our parish.

stmauriceparish.com



Family Ministry All Saints Party



Come
Holy Spirit!



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