

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CHURCH

1223 16th St (P.O. Box 849), Fort Benton, MT - 59442

ST. MARGARET'S CHURCH

700 Brewster St (P.O. Box 50), Geraldine, MT – 59446

October 26, 2025: Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year C)

Rev. Mohan Raj Samy

Website: iccfb.org

Pastor

Office: 406-622-3726

Day, Month & Date	<u>Mass Schedule for October 26 – November 02, 2025</u>
Sun Oct 26 th	30th Sunday in Ordinary Time: 9 am Mass @ICC & 11 am Mass & St. Margaret's (Intention: Victoria Morger RIP, R/B Valerie Morger).
Wed Oct 29 th	9am Mass @ ICC.
Thurs Oct 30 th	10 am mass @ Hospital & 10:30 am Mass @ Bluffs.
Fri Oct 31 st	11am The Angelus, Novena & Mass @ St. Margaret's.
Sat Nov 01 st	9 am Mass @ ICC (All Saints Day).
Sun Nov 02 nd	All Souls' Day: 9 am Mass @ St. Margaret's & 11 am Mass & ICC.

Sunday Collections:

October 19, 2025 29 th Ordinary Sunday	ICC : \$ 1,554.00 + \$ 70.00 (Maintenance) = \$ 1,624.00 ICC: Savings Balance: \$ 1,839.78 & Boiler Fund: \$ 59,659.29. St. Margaret's, Geraldine: \$ 618.00
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Thank you to All who have generously donated. Your Generosity is very humbling.

Reflection by Pastor: Dear Loving Sisters, Brothers and Children in Christ!

Humility in Prayer

“Two people went up to the temple area to pray; one was a Pharisee and the other was a tax collector. The Pharisee took up his position and spoke this prayer to himself, ‘O God, I thank you that I am not like the rest of humanity - greedy, dishonest, adulterous - or even like this tax collector.’” [Luke 18:10–11](#).

In today's Gospel, we have the strange scene between a Pharisee and a tax collector. The Pharisee faithfully observes the obligations of a good Jew: he prays, he fasts and he gives alms. And yet, God is not happy with him. Why? Because he is totally a self-centered person. He says, "God, I thank you that I am not like other people...like this tax collector." What he really is saying is: "God, you should be deeply grateful that you have someone like me (and there are not many of us!), someone who is so faithful in following your commands".

We read that the tax collector "stood off at a distance and would not even raise his eyes to heaven but beat his breast and prayed, 'O God, be merciful to me a sinner.'" Which prayer more resembles your own prayer? To honestly answer that question, let's examine both prayers. First of all, the contrast of these two prayers is a contrast between humility and pride. The Pharisee was clearly full of pride. Pride blinds us from true self-knowledge.

The sin of pride is obvious in the prayer of the Pharisee and, therefore, his lack of true self-knowledge is also evident. Note that even his physical posture of standing depicts pride. Throughout the Scriptures, kneeling, or even falling prostrate, is the disposition of the humble. In addition to standing, the Pharisee's prayer was a list of his own goodness. He very well may have fasted twice a week and paid tithes on his whole income. But his prayer suggests that he did this by his own effort. He did not ascribe those acts to the grace and strength of God, which means they were not true acts of charity. His prayer suggests that he doesn't need God in order to do good. This is also seen in the fact that he asks nothing of God. Instead, he simply thanks God for how good he is through his own effort. The result is that God gives him nothing, since he asked for nothing.

True prayer must begin with the humble recognition of our weakness and need for God. The tax collector expressed this humility by bowing his head to the ground, not even daring to look up to Heaven. As a sinner, he doesn't deserve mercy but begs for God's grace as an act of God's mercy. *When the tax collector left the Temple, he did so as a friend of God, while the Pharisee was rejected.*

When you pray, how do you pray? What is the disposition of your heart and for what do you pray? Begin by considering the physical position in which you pray. Though we can pray standing, sitting, kneeling or even lying down, there is something very good about kneeling or even lying prostrate. It doesn't mean we have to do so the entire time we pray, but it is a good practice to kneel, bow your head or fall down prostrate before God at least for a moment each day. We begin the Mass by examining our conscience and confessing our sins. This is a good example of how to begin your prayer every time you pray. Reflect, today, upon the humility found in the prayer of this tax collector. As you

do, look at your own practice of prayer and discern whether you imitate this tax collector's disposition and prayer. Try to commit to physically humbling yourself before our Lord every day. Kneel, bow your head, or fall down prostrate every day. When you do pray, beg for mercy as one who doesn't deserve anything from God. This is the humble truth on which all prayer must be based. The more you can humble yourself this way, the more God will lift you up and pour forth His mercy upon you.

*The prayer of the humble pierces the clouds,
and it will not rest until it reaches its goal....
Indeed, the Lord will not delay... (Sir 35:21-22)*

Catholic Foundation of Eastern Montana

This Sunday's readings call us to humility (Luke 18:9-14) and to trust that the Lord hears the cries of the humble and oppressed (Sirach 35:16-18; Psalm 34). Faith is not about Self-righteousness but about knowing our need for mercy. The Catholic Foundation of Eastern Montana is one way we live this out: providing for those in need, sustaining our priests, supporting our parishes, Catholic schools, and ministries. Each gift to any endowment at the Foundation strengthens the Church's ability to carry out its mission. To learn more, please visit www.catholicfoundationmt.org or call (406) 315-1765.

St. Margaret's Bulletin

Thanksgiving Baskets - St. Margaret's Church has donated cans of cranberries for the Thanksgiving baskets that will be prepared by the Fort Benton Woman's Club for less fortunate in our county.

Harvest Dinner and Raffle - Please reflect and plan what you wish to donate to the Country Store or Silent Auction. Sign-up sheet to donate for the dinner and where you wish to work are on the bulletin board in the church entry. All the proceeds from this event will go toward the installation of our elevator/lift. Additional raffle tickets are available at the back of the church. Most importantly invite your friends and neighbors to our free ham dinner.

Reflection by Trish - Follow the Way

The early followers of Jesus were Jews who believed Jesus showed them how to live their Jewish faith more fully. They were called The Way. They took seriously the message to love and care for the vulnerable and those who were poor and struggling. They believed in not judging others and forgiving others over and over again.

These Jews told the stories of Jesus' teachings. They embraced his way of seeing by opening their hearts and minds to the revolutionary message he preached. It was as

difficult in the first century as it is now, over 2000 years later, to truly accept and live out the life of simplicity, acceptance, and love.

The first followers were dark skinned Palestinians, like Jesus, who lived in a country under the political control of Rome. The Roman Empire tolerated the Jewish people as long as they did not cause any problems. The ruler of Rome believed he was a god, and the Palestinians were subjects of the Roman leader.

The followers of The Way spread the message of a new way of living, a new attitude, a way to feed your spirit and bring about increased inner peace. The Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5:1-11, is a powerful message from Jesus, “Fortunate are you who are poor, for yours is the realm of God. Happy are you who are hungry now for you shall be satisfied. Fortunate are you who weep now, for you shall laugh. Fortunate are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth. Happy are the merciful, for they shall be shown mercy. Happy are the pure of heart, for they shall see the face of God. Fortunate are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.”

Each message, each story from Jesus tells his followers to reject what the culture tells us is important. Then as well as now, society says it is important to obtain more wealth, more power. Through social media, TV, magazines, etc., we see advertising telling us what we need. We need to purchase items to stay looking young, to own what will give us an image of success or power, and how to look good in the eyes of others. The message we receive is that by having more we will be happier.

Jesus talks about a way of being, not a way of achieving. Jesus never said, “Worship me.” He said, “Follow me.” Jesus talks about embracing an attitude of loving God, others, and ourselves. We are to have an open circle that accepts all people, welcomes others even when they are very different from us. If all we do is worship Jesus, we excuse ourselves from the difficult challenge to exemplify his way of life.

Following Jesus is not easy. Jesus says we will struggle. We will carry our own crosses; we will have a yoke upon us. It might be helpful to look up what a yoke is, they are burdensome. Jesus says that if we follow The Way, our burdens will be lighter. As the Sermon on the Mount says, we will be able to laugh, be fortunate and see the face of God.

Jesus, you showed us The Way,

May we open our hearts to your message of The Way to live.

May our actions reflect your Way.