

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

PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD (Year A)

Rev. Mohan Raj Samy

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Pastor

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Day, Month & Date	<u>Mass Schedule for March 29 – April 05, 2026</u>
Sun Mar 29 th	<i>Palm Sunday: 9 am Mass @ ICC & 11 am Mass @ St. Margaret's.</i>
Tues Mar 31 st	<i>10:30 am Mass @ Bluffs.</i>
Thurs Apr 02 nd	<i>Sacred Triduum - Holy Thursday: 6pm @ ICC.</i>
Fri April 03 rd	<i>Good Friday: 5:15 @ St. Margaret's & 7pm @ ICC.</i>
Sat April 04 th	<i>Easter Vigil: 6 pm @ ICC.</i>
Sun April 05 th	<i>Easter Sunday: 9 am Mass @ St. Margaret's & 11 am Mass @ ICC.</i>

Sunday Collections: March 22, 2026: Fifth Sunday of Lent (Year A)

ICC: \$ 1,003.00 & \$ 360 (Maintenance) = \$ 1,363.00. Boiler Fund: \$ 1,000.00. St. Margaret's, Geraldine: \$ 630.00
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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!

Palm Sunday—A Model of Courage and Determination

And when he entered Jerusalem the whole city was shaken and asked, "Who is this?" And the crowds replied, "This is Jesus the prophet, from Nazareth in Galilee." [Matthew 21:10–11](#).

The commemoration of our Lord's Passion has begun. Today, Mass begins with the reading of Matthew's account of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Riding on a donkey, Jesus is greeted by a very large crowd who "spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and strewed them on the road" ([Matthew 21:8](#)).

The people welcome Him with shouts of: “Hosanna to the Son of David; blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord; hosanna in the highest” ([Matthew 21:9](#)).

The word “Hosanna” in Hebrew means, “Save us, we pray!” Though it was originally a plea for deliverance, it became an expression of praise and joy, especially as it came to be associated with the Messiah’s arrival. The phrase “Hosanna in the highest” calls for God, enthroned in Heaven, to bring His saving power to earth. The crowds’ acclamation reveals both a hope for salvation and recognition of Jesus as the long-awaited Messiah.

During Passover week, Jerusalem’s population increased several times over with pilgrims from across Israel. The atmosphere was vibrant with religious fervor and communal celebration. Merchants sold sacrificial animals, food, and provisions to the crowds. Central to the festivities was the Temple where sacrifices were offered and the Passover lambs were prepared for the sacred meal. Roman authorities increased security, wary of potential unrest, as the commemoration of Israel’s liberation from Egypt stirred hopes of national deliverance. The Jewish authorities were also on high alert, concerned that any disturbance might provoke harsh reprisals from the Romans.

Imagine the excitement, concern, and surprise that many of the religious and Roman leaders felt as large crowds professed their belief in Jesus as the Messiah. Was Israel’s deliverance at hand? This public acclaim highlighted why some saw Jesus as a threat. The Pharisees, in particular, feared that His messianic identity might undermine the religious authority to which they clung. Most of them dismissed the possibility that Jesus was the Messiah they awaited.

Jesus, however, had a very different understanding of the Passover that year. He knew it was the time for His hour of suffering and death, leading to His glorification. He had no interest in political maneuvering. His sole desire was to fulfill His mission as the Messiah by becoming the one perfect Lamb of Sacrifice whose blood would atone for the sins of many. Jesus was determined and confident as He rode into Jerusalem. Though He knew the suffering that awaited Him, His gaze was fixed on His mission of saving souls. In His sacred humanity, He overcame every temptation to fear or anxiety, allowing peace, strength, and joy to fill His heart.

Not only is Jesus our Savior and the one Mediator between God and us, His human life perfectly models how we are to live. Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem especially models for us how we are to face every difficult situation that tempts us to fear and anxiety. His courage must become our courage and His determination our determination.

Reflect today on Jesus’ interior disposition during His triumphal entry. He invites us to share in His sacrificial love, laying down our lives selflessly for others. This is only possible if we allow His virtues to take root in us every time we are called to imitate His love. As we embrace our own mission, we must not allow fear or anxiety to hinder us.

Pray that the courage, peace, and steadfast love that Jesus embodied during that first Holy Week may flourish in your heart. Let go of fear, worry, and selfishness, and allow Jesus' love and strength to fill you, so that His mission may continue through you and, with our Lord, you may lay down your life for others.

Kindly Pray for “The Elect” ahead of their baptisms at the Easter vigil and the Sacrament of Initiation in May.

To Be Baptized at Easter Vigil	To be confirmed with the Church in May 03
Kevin Johnson	Lewis Johnson
Hunter Aragon	Kevin Johnson
Brooke Aragon	Blaine Roberts
Banks Kassmier	Hunter Aragon
Regina Kassmier	Brooke Aragon
Kip Jaynes	Banks Kassmier
Wyatt Johnson	Regina Kassmier
	Kip Jaynes
	Landen Langer

EASTER DECORATION: The Worship Commission will be using Easter/spring plants and flowers to decorate the altar for Easter. We greatly appreciate all who have donated flowers in memory of loved ones in the past. It creates a beautiful as well as meaningful worship space. We will decorate on Saturday morning April 4 so we will need the flowers by that time. Thank you. *Worship commission members.*

[St. Margaret's Bulletin](#)

[Holy Week Schedule:](#) Holy Thursday 6:00 pm in Fort Benton

Good Friday 5:15 in Geraldine & 7pm in Fort Benton

Decorating for Easter Sunday will take place after Good Friday service. Everyone is invited to stay and help transform our environment.

Easter Vigil Service 6 pm in Fort Benton

Easter Sunday 9 am in Geraldine & 11 am in Fort Benton.

Sunday, April 12 package cookies for college students and military personal after 11:00 am Mass.

[Reflection by Trish—Holy Week](#)

The last few days of Jesus' life sum up the information we need to live a life united with God. Jesus' actions and example are powerful expressions of how to live our lives. Holy

Thursday—The Last Supper painting by Leonardo Da Vinci completed in 1497 is a painting of Jesus and his apostles. It does not depict what the Passover meal Jesus shared with the apostles would have looked like. In the painting everyone is sitting on one side of a table in chairs. Scripture says they were reclining at table. They would have been sitting on cushions on the floor next to short tables scattered around the room as was the custom at the time. The Passover meal was always shared with families. Women and children would have participated in the ritual. An integral part of the Passover ritual is women lighting candles and saying a prayer at the beginning.

Why is washing the feet so symbolic? We know that at that time nearly everyone walked barefoot or in sandals wherever they went. We may think of walking on dusty trails. These folks walked the roads where donkeys and horses walked. There was dust, animal waste and refuse. With everyone reclining at table, the dirty feet were very evident to all around them.

Washing of feet was a task lowly servant performed. Yet, Jesus volunteered to wash the feet before the ritual meal began. Jesus says we are to participate in serving others where it may not be comfortable or easy. When we say someone else can take on that role or fulfill that function because it is disagreeable, Jesus says maybe it can be a way for you to serve others. Jesus exemplified service, humility, and love. Taking care of others' needs is a way to open our hearts and show compassion.

At our Holy Thursday church services, we see people sitting in chairs and someone kneeling before them washing clean feet. This may appear humbling but now imagine really cleaning feet. Jesus washed the feet of Peter, who three times would deny he knew Jesus. He washed the feet of Judas who was selling Jesus to the Romans. Jesus says no one is better than anyone else. We are to do what we can to serve others.

Jesus did not exclude anyone. He showed mercy and love to all. Good Friday—When Jesus was arrested, flogged with a whip, and hung on the cross, he did not respond with vengefulness, anger, or hatred. Jesus gave up trying to control what he could not. Jesus prayed for strength and to be in union with God. Jesus forgave those who condemned him and tortured him. Jesus understands distress, pain, agony, and betrayal. Jesus walks with us when we find ourselves in these situations.

Jesus' example tells us that sometimes we need to accept the circumstances of our lives and focus on being in union with God. We will all suffer. It may never make sense to us, but it is a reality of human life. By joining with the Great Mystery that accompanies us on our journey, we can find strength. By not turning to hatred, we can find The Divine Holy One in the midst of misery. God did not forsake Jesus when he was on the cross. God was preparing for the big transformation that would take place.

Holy One who is always with us

Help us recognize how we are to serve.

Help us discern a way to forgive those that cause us anguish.

May we be a source of compassion and mercy.