

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

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER (Year A)

Rev. Mohan Raj Samy

Website: iccfb.org

Pastor

Office: 406-622-3726

Day, Month & Date	<u>Mass Schedule for April 26 – May 03, 2026</u>
Sun April 26 th	<i>Fourth Sunday of Easter: 9 am Mass @ ICC & 11 am Mass @ St. Margaret's.</i>
Wed April 29 th	<i>9 am Mass @ ICC.</i>
Thurs Apr 30 th	<i>10:30 am Mass @ Bluffs.</i>
Fri May 01 st	<i>11 am Regina Coeli, Novena & Mass @ St. Margaret's.</i>
Sat May 02 nd	<i>9 am Mass @ ICC.</i>
Sun May 03 rd	<i>Fifth Sunday of Easter: 9 am Mass @ ICC & 11 am Mass @ St. Margaret's.</i>

Sunday Collections: April 19, 2026: Third Sunday of Easter (Year A)

ICC: \$ 1,373.00 & \$ 80 (Maintenance) = \$ 1,453.00. Boiler Fund: \$.00. St. Margaret's, Geraldine: \$ 542.00
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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!

Good Shepherd Sunday

“When he has driven out all his own, he walks ahead of them, and the sheep follow him, because they recognize his voice. But they will not follow a stranger; they will run away from him, because they do not recognize the voice of strangers.” [John 10:4–5](#).

Young children are often frightened by strangers. Infants, for example, form a strong bond with their mothers who feed them, hold them close, talk to them, and lavish love upon them. It often happens that when other family members, such as grandparents or even the father, attempt to hold the child, tears emerge until the child is placed once again in the familiar and safe arms of his or her mother.

An infant's reaction to strangers can teach us much about today's Gospel on Jesus, the Good Shepherd. Like an infant, sheep become familiar with the voice and presence of their shepherd. The shepherd lives with the sheep night and day. He calls to them, speaks to them, keeps them safe, and leads them to green pastures and water. If a stranger were to call them, they would not listen, similar to how an infant reacts to a stranger.

Jesus' teaching is in response to the criticism He received from the Pharisees after He healed a man born blind. After healing the man, Jesus said, "I came into this world for judgment, so that those who do not see might see, and those who do see might become blind" ([John 9:39](#)). When the Pharisees heard Jesus say that, they inquired whether He was suggesting that they were blind, to which Jesus replied, "If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you are saying, 'We see,' so your sin remains" ([John 9:41](#)).

An infant's unfamiliarity with a stranger is instinctive and innocent, yet it teaches us about the deeper spiritual reality Jesus describes. Just as sheep recognize the voice of their shepherd and follow him because they trust in his care, so too does a soul attuned to God respond to His voice. In contrast, the Pharisees, who prided themselves on their religious knowledge, failed to recognize Jesus as the true Shepherd. This failure was not innocent ignorance; it was willful blindness rooted in their rejection of His divine mission. The healed blind man perceived Jesus' voice with the simplicity of faith, while the Pharisees, claiming to 'see' with their own wisdom, remained in sin because they refused to hear and follow the voice of the Good Shepherd.

The Pharisees saw Jesus as a stranger to their religious beliefs and practices. They labeled Him an imposter. Unlike the innocent reaction of an infant or the natural response of sheep, the Pharisees' unfamiliarity with Jesus was a sin stemming from pride. It was a blindness of their own making that closed their hearts to the comforting and supernaturally familiar voice of God. To recognize Jesus' voice is to respond to the call of grace, trust in His teachings, and follow into the fullness of life He offers. Only by humbly admitting our need for His guidance can we, like the sheep, allow Him to lead us to green pastures and salvation.

Reflect today on the fact that God calls out to you day and night. Do you recognize His voice? Or do you, like the Pharisees, turn away from Him? Following the Good Shepherd begins with an intimate familiarity with His divine presence in our lives. We must become as familiar with Him as an infant is with its mother or as sheep are with their faithful shepherd. Failure to recognize the Good Shepherd's voice leaves us lost and unable to care for ourselves. Jesus desires to lead us, care for us, and bring us to the abundant pastures of new life. Become familiar with Him and listen to His voice alone, and like the blind man, you will begin to see in ways you never have before, through the eyes of faith.

St. Margaret's Bulletin

May 3, first Sunday in May, Mass will be at 11:00 am in Geraldine. We will have 11:00 am Mass for every Sunday in May. The Bishop will be in Fort Benton on May 3rd for Confirmation and First Communion.

Update on funds for Elevator/Lift - We have collected \$10,000 currently. Several of the grants that have been explored report that we will need matching funds to qualify for their grants. If you have been thinking about giving now is a good time.

Reflection by Trish - The Green the Color of Hope

Spring has begun in Montana. The grass is bright green, young calves are frolicking in the pastures, daffodils are blooming and tulips are budding. In our yard I have seen robins, red winged black birds, curlews, and other birds. The robins are building nests in the tree out our bedroom window. Nature is calling me to think about planting the garden. My rhubarb and asparagus are starting to show. Yes, the promise of more new life to come fills my heart.

Green is the color of the cloth on the altar of our church a majority of the time. Green is the color of hope. Green is the color of promise. In our agricultural community, we never know what the future holds for our crops, but this time of year everyone is hopeful as we watch the young shoots sprout from the earth.

We see new life, more hours of sunlight, animals, birds building nests, plants, and other signs of spring. We find we have more to smile about, a lighter heart, a brighter perspective. Yes, the soil smells different now than it did in the winter.

Meister Eckart, (1260-1322, priest, theologian, philosopher and mystic) preached that all people are blessed with divine powers and beauty. Our job is to cultivate that seed within us so that the divine image in us can grow and thrive and prosper. Our spiritual journey is about nourishing, watering, and caring for this Divine, God seed, in all of us.

We have a responsibility of justice making and compassion for a better world for all.

Julian of Norwich (born 1342, saw 15 visions of God's love) uses the term "greening" to describe the process of spiritual growth and renewal. Greening symbolizes the deepening of our relationship with God. Just as nature undergoes cycles of growth, spiritual development is a continuous journey toward whole and divine love. Our souls experience transformation and healing through God's grace. God's love nurtures and sustains us.

In her writing, "greening" is a metaphor for hope. Indicating that despite struggles, there is always potential for renewal and reconciliation with God. An opportunity to become more alive in faith. One of her best-known quotes is, "All will be well. And all will be well. And all matter of things will be well."

The mystics through the ages tell us the presence of God is in everyday life and nature. During the spring season as we see the world around us sprouting buds, grass, blossoms, may we cultivate the Divine Presence within ourselves. Spending quiet time observing nature can nourish our spiritual growth. Pausing to call on the sacred spark within us to grow allows compassion and mercy to continue to bloom larger, filling our soul and stretching our abilities.

There is hope. No matter what is happening in our world, country, communities or families, now is the time to rest in the Divine Presence so we find the hope that the natural world reveals to us as new life springs forth. Remember the Divine is within you. We can't change the whole world, but we can have an impact on those we encounter and circumstances we find ourselves in.

Divine Mystery, you are present in all of nature and all people,

Help us to call on your presence within us

So we can trust that All will be well.