

# IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CHURCH, Fort Benton

## ST. MARGARET'S CHURCH, Geraldine

### June 26<sup>th</sup>, 2022: Thirteenth Ordinary Sunday (Year C)

Fr. Mohan Raj Arockia

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Pastor

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Day, Month & Date	<u>Mass Schedule for June 26<sup>th</sup> - July 03<sup>rd</sup>, 2022</u>
Sun June 26 <sup>th</sup>	<i>13<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Sunday</i> : 9 am Mass @ ICC and 11 am Mass @ St. Margaret's.
Weds June 29 <sup>th</sup>	9 am Novena & Mass @ ICC and 12 pm The Angelus, Novena & Mass @ St. Margaret's ( <i>Solemnity of Sts. Peter and Paul, Apostles</i> ).
Thurs June 30 <sup>th</sup>	9 am Mass @ ICC and 10 am Mass @ Bluff.
Fri July 01 <sup>st</sup>	9 am Mass & Benediction @ ICC
Sat July 02 <sup>nd</sup>	9 am Mass @ ICC.
Sun July 03 <sup>rd</sup>	<i>14<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Sunday</i> : 9 am Mass @ St. Margaret's and 11 am Mass @ ICC.

### Reflection by Pastor: *Dear Loving Sisters, Brothers and Children on Christ!*

For some people, commitment and freedom seem quite incompatible. Yet today's readings call for total commitment lived in total freedom. One cannot, in fact, have one without the other. Today's Mass speaks of what it means to be fully a disciple of Jesus. This is much, much more than just being what is often understood as a "good Catholic".

Today's passage opens with a very important moment in the life of Jesus. "As the time drew near for him to be taken up into heaven, Jesus resolutely took the road for Jerusalem." These opening words of today's Gospel indicate that we are moving into the second phase of Jesus' public life and the second half of this gospel. For Luke, Jerusalem is the focal point of Jesus' life. It is the center from which Jesus' great redemptive work unfolds. It is there that the disciples will form a new community to continue the work of Jesus and from Jerusalem it will spread to every corner of the world.

Jesus sets his face "resolutely" for Jerusalem because he goes there ready to undergo whatever is necessary for his work to be completed. Right away, he sets an example and a

challenge for our commitment to join in his work and to be ready to take whatever comes in our doing of it. We come now to what is really the core of today's Mass theme – our response to Jesus calling us to join him. As Jesus makes his way to Jerusalem a number of people express a desire to join him. Obviously – like many of us – they do not fully understand just precisely what “going to Jerusalem” really means for Jesus and those who go with him. We can look with profit at these three people because one or more of them represents me.

The first one courageously and generously says to Jesus, “I will follow you wherever you go.” He has a lot of enthusiasm but may not be aware of the realities facing him. Jesus pulls him up short. Even the wild animals have a place to live, he tells the man, but the “Son of Man” has nowhere to call his own. He has no house, no property, and no money. He had only Himself to offer. One needs to be aware of what is expected of a disciple. One must be ready to let go of people and things, of all strings and attachments, of all external securities and props. Am I ready for this?

The second man also wants to follow Jesus. He makes what seems a reasonable request: “Let me go and bury my father first.” The reply of Jesus sounds harsh: “Let the dead bury their own dead; your duty is to go and spread the news of the kingdom of God.” We should not conclude from this request that the man's father was already dead. He may have been saying that he would follow Jesus only after he had fulfilled his filial duties to his father. Jesus, of course, is not saying that we should not love and respect members of our family. But he is asking where our priorities in life really are. He is saying that, if we wish to be his disciple, we cannot make our own arrangements first and then, only when we are ready, go and follow him. The demands of the Kingdom, the world of truth, compassion, justice, freedom and peace, which we are called to build, come first of all. How many of us first plan our careers carefully and only then ask how we can be good Christians, when it obviously should be the other way round?

The third man says he wants to follow Jesus but wants to say goodbye to his family and friends first. It is not unlike the previous case. I want to make all my own arrangements first. I want to have some fun in life. But to be a disciple of Jesus, I cannot hesitate. The call is NOW, today and the response must also be now, today. We are not meant to take all these images with absolute literalness but they are intended to help us reflect on the various things – material, emotional, intellectual – which prevent us from an unconditional following of Jesus. We have so many desires and attachments in life. We have so many fears and anxieties. Much of the time we are only living half a life or we are living other people's lives and not our own. And so we find this freedom in people such as Jesus, in Elisha, in Paul. They said an unconditional ‘Yes’ and did not look back. Can I not do the same?

<p>Corpus Christi Sunday June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2022</p>	<p>ICC, Fort Benton: \$ 893 .00 + \$ 340.00 (Maintenance) = \$ 1,233.00</p> <p>St. Margaret's Church, Geraldine: \$ 238.00</p>
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### *Quotes on Discipleship!*

- ❖ Discipleship is the art and science of helping people find, follow and fully become like Jesus. Discipleship happens as God's people show love, share truth and live life with one another, making new disciples along the way.
- ❖ Discipleship is a daily discipline; we follow Jesus a step at a time, a day at a time.
- ❖ It is a lesson we all need - to let alone the things that do not concern us. He has other ways for others to follow Him; all do not go by the same path. It is for each of us to learn the path by which He requires us to follow Him, and to follow Him in that path.

### *Reflection by Trish—Life isn't about Me*

When visiting our son's family, I observed our grandchild having a very difficult day. It seemed the child was frustrated and unable to be pleasant to anyone. The child upset their younger siblings, disrespected their parents, and claimed that everyone was against them.

When the child was sent to their room they shouted, "Fine, I will stay in my room and never come out. You think everything is my fault. No one cares about me." And off the child stormed. At one point when I was in Sunday school, I thought perhaps if I lived as a hermit there would be a possibility of me living a life. Without people around I would not get in trouble. With all the rules that we are to follow and all the sins we are to avoid, I thought isolation might be my only chance of living up to the high standards.

Scripture call us to reach out to the human family. Prophets in the Hebrew Scriptures were told to engage with the population to help them turn their hearts to God. The prophets told cities and towns they needed to care for one another; they needed to stop being selfish, greedy and self-righteous.

Jesus preached compassion, forgiveness, and mercy for all. It is difficult to be a force for compassion and mercy as a hermit. Often our problems stem from us wanting to control

outcomes, protect an image, feeling we deserve more, or have people do what we want. It is difficult to be compassionate when we become fearful of other's ideas, afraid of change that is out of our control, or reluctant to face difficulties. With this fear and resistance, we turn inward believing we can protect ourselves from what might happen. Frustration, pessimism, anger, pride, and unkindness seep through us when we feel like this, and it impacts others.

We sin when we are being ungracious, not opening our hearts to others especially when they are different from ourselves, wanting things our way without thoughts of compromise or wanting to control people and situations. Sin is allowing fear and frustration to take hold of us so that our hearts are hard. In these situations our frustration increases and we are unable give mercy or compassion.

When we are feeling agitated, fearful, or frustrated, it is good to pause and try to recognize what is causing these emotions. What situation do we want to avoid dealing with?

What is changing that is causing dread or anxiety? My grandchild did not want to discuss what was causing their agitation. Likely they did not know at the time why they felt out of sorts. It seemed to them that others were causing their frustration. Later, when the child was calmer, they may have been better able to identify the source of their discontent.

There are no bad emotions, but what we do with our emotions is important. Rather than acting like my grandchild, slow down, sit with the Spirit of God within you, open your heart to peace in the midst of chaos, and ask for strength to be calm to the uncertain future. Embrace the present situation; what is happening IS happening, and most often we can't change that. Ask God to bless it and give you strength to walk through it to openness, forgiveness, and compassion. Slamming doors and being curt with people does not change or help a situation. Accepting the present reality with grace and prayer helps us move through it.

*Spirit of God present in everyone gives me strength and courage to accept the difficulties and deal with the emotions these situations bring.*

