

# IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CHURCH

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

## ST. MARGARET'S CHURCH

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

July 20, 2025: Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year C)

Rev. Mohan Raj Samy

Website: [iccfb.org](http://iccfb.org)

Pastor

Office: 406-622-3726

Day, Month & Date	<u>Mass Schedule for July 20 – July 27, 2025</u>
Sun July 20 <sup>th</sup>	16 <sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time: 9 am Mass @ ICC & 11 am Mass @ St. Margaret's.
Wed July 23 <sup>rd</sup>	9 am Mass @ ICC.
Thurs July 24 <sup>th</sup>	10 am Mass @ Bluffs.
Fri July 25 <sup>th</sup>	11 am The Angelus, Novena & Mass @ St. Margaret's (St. James, the Apostle).
Sat July 26 <sup>th</sup>	9 am Mass @ ICC (Sts. Joachim & Anne, Parents of Blessed Virgin Mary).
Sun July 27 <sup>th</sup>	17 <sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time: 9 am Mass @ ICC & 11 am Mass @ St. Margaret's.

### Sunday Collections:

July 13, 2025 15 <sup>th</sup> Ordinary Sunday	ICC : \$ 983.00 + \$40 (Maintenance) = \$ 1,023.00 ICC: Savings Balance: \$ 3,039.78 & Boiler Fund: \$ 49,696.29. St. Margaret's, Geraldine: \$ 110 .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!](#)

### Serving with Generosity

Jesus entered a village where a woman whose name was Martha welcomed him. She had a sister named Mary who sat beside the Lord at his feet listening to him speak. [Luke 10:38–39.](#)

It's interesting that it was Martha who welcomed Jesus, but it was Mary who sat at His feet listening to Him. As the story goes on, we discover that Martha took her responsibility of hospitality seriously; she was very busy preparing a meal. But it appears that Mary needed a different form of hospitality from our Lord Himself. As Martha prepared to feed Jesus so as to care for His physical hunger, Mary sought to be fed by our Lord so as to feed her spiritual hunger. And interestingly, it was the generosity of Martha who was diligent in preparing the meal that made it possible for her sister to receive the spiritual food she longed for.

When we read this story, we can easily become critical of Martha because she complained to Jesus about her sister. It is easy to see Martha's frustration in her words, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me by myself to do the serving? Tell her to help me." And though Martha may have been a little impatient, Jesus' response to her was gentle and corrective. "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and worried about many things. There is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part and it will not be taken from her." What was that "better part?" It was Mary's prayerful attentiveness to Jesus. She was hungry for His teaching, and Jesus offered it to her in a very personal and loving way. And though this image of Mary before Jesus is a beautiful image to ponder and to use as a model of our own prayer, there is also something important to be said about Martha's role in making Mary's prayer possible.

Because Martha was diligent in taking care of the duties of hospitality, Mary felt the freedom to sit at Jesus' feet. Perhaps the ideal response from Martha would have been to notice that Mary was being spiritually fed by our Lord and to rejoice in that fact, giving her the continued freedom to sit at Jesus' feet. If Martha would have realized this, then she would have continued working in the background so that her sister could continue listening to Jesus. But even though Martha did interrupt this sacred moment for her sister, the fact remains that her initial diligence in taking care of preparing the meal did give Mary some time alone with Jesus.

In a similar way, we will all be given various opportunities in life to take care of the daily mundane tasks that are needed within a family or community. It is easy to fall into the trap of thinking that unless everyone does their equal part, then things are not fair. But being "fair" should not be our focus. True charity, especially within the family, means that, first and foremost, we look for opportunities to better the lives of those around us. For example, spending extra time cleaning a home so that others can enjoy it more adds much too family life. Or spending hours preparing a nice meal for family or friends may afford everyone the opportunity of time well spent together. These are only a couple of the countless ways that our diligence and generosity toward others is fruitful, especially within family life.

Reflect, today, upon these two women and the unique calling they each were given at the time of Jesus' visit to their house. One was called to be fed by our Lord as she sat at His feet. The other was called to work hard so as to make it easier for her sister to receive that spiritual nourishment. Know that both of these callings are important. For that reason, if God calls you to be more like Martha at times rejoice in that fact and work hard at serving in many ways. If God calls you to be more like Mary at times, then rejoice in those moments and sit prayerfully at the feet of our Lord, being fed by His holy Words.

### Reflection by Trish - We are meant to live in a spirit of community

When the Conquistadors arrived in the Americas from Spain in early 1500's, they were surprised to find large storages of food in every indigenous community. Nearly all indigenous peoples around the world believe in responsibility to community. They believe that if someone is in need, you help them. Everyone is responsible for helping the whole community thrive. Storing the food was to ensure that if drought, flood or a disaster occurred, the whole community would still be fed.

There is a Native American story that discusses how all people are to care for one another. In this village when the hunters returned from a hunt, all the game harvested was put together and then shared with the entire community. Those too old or ill to hunt were given a share equal to everyone else. Women and children were given their share. No one was left without a just portion.

One day when the hunters returned, a young man displayed his large success and said since he was more successful than the others, he deserves a larger share. He kept a great deal of his meat for himself. That day each villager's share was a bit smaller than expected.

This practice of the young hunter continued as he began to amass a larger and larger quantity of dried meat. He espoused his great success often and liked to show off his great storage of food. During this time the elderly and ill were given less and less.

Everyone in the village felt the results of the young hunter not sharing. People in the village began to ask, "What was wrong with this young hunter? Did he not care for the rest of his tribe, his family?" Everyone knew something was wrong. It was decided that this young man must be mentally ill if he could see others suffer and continue to focus on how much he can acquire and boast of his great success.

In our society people are praised for the wealth they can attain. I have heard people say, “What is wrong with people who don’t save up more?” I once heard someone say, “The only thing that is important is to figure out how to get the most money out of every deal.”

Jesus’ preaching focused on loving one another, which includes caring for the most vulnerable, the widows, and the orphans. The prophets in the Hebrew Scriptures repeatedly preached about caring for poor and less fortunate. A seminarian once cut out all the passages in a Bible that called for caring for the poor and less fortunate. At the end he said there was little left of the Bible, in both the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament, with holes in so many pages it barely held together. It may have looked like very delicate lace with large holes between the thread.

It is interesting that in our culture many are praised for being able to quote a great number of Scripture passages. Scripture is used to justify a variety of behaviors; it is even used at times to justify violence. Practicing the teachings of scripture is more important than being able to quote Bible verses. Jesus said we are all ONE. Everyone is equal. We are to care for one another. Pope Francis said, “For the church, a preference for the poor is not optional.” No one has ever gotten poor by giving.

It is not uncommon for people to blame the poor for their situation or to label them as an affliction on society. This does not help them or our society. *Deuteronomy 15:11*, “*For there will never cease to be poor in the land; that is why I am commanding you to open wide your hand to your brother and to the poor and needy in your land.*”

What do you do for the homeless, the migrants, those who struggle with addiction, the homebound, the incarcerated, and the people that are very different from us and seem difficult to understand? I recently spoke with a woman while in the grocery store she purchased bottles of water to give to the homeless on the corner as she drove by during this hot summer weather.

*Generous and Caring Holy One,*

*We give thanks and appreciation for all you do for us*

*May we give time and resources to others in need.*