

# IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CHURCH, Fort Benton

## ST. MARGARET'S CHURCH, Geraldine

July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024: Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year B)

Rev. Mohan Raj Arockia

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

Pastor

Office: 406-622-3726

| Day, Month & Date           | <u>Mass Schedule for July 21<sup>st</sup> – July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024</u>  |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Sun July 21 <sup>st</sup>   | <b>16<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Sunday: 9 am Mass @ ICC &amp; 11 am Mass @ St. Margaret's.</b><br><i>(Intention: Bob Spevacek RIP, R/B Joalice Juedeman).</i> |
| Wed July 24 <sup>th</sup>   | 9 am Mass @ ICC.  |
| Thurs July 25 <sup>th</sup> | 10 am Mass @ Bluffs.  |
| Fri July 26 <sup>th</sup>   | 9 am Mass @ ICC & 11 am The Angelus, Novena & Mass @ St. Margaret's.  |
| Sat July 27 <sup>th</sup>   | 9 am Mass @ ICC (Sts. Ann & Joachim, Parents of Blessed Virgin Mary).   |
| Sun July 28 <sup>th</sup>   | <b>17<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Sunday: 9 am Mass @ ICC &amp; 11 am Mass @ St. Margaret's</b> <i>(Intention: Bob Spevacek RIP, R/B Joalice Juedeman).</i>     |

### Sunday Collections:

|                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| July 14, 2024                    | ICC, Ft. Benton: \$ 952.00 + \$ 40 (Maintenance) = \$ 992.00 |
| 15 <sup>th</sup> Ordinary Sunday | St. Margaret's, Geraldine: \$ 1,121.00                       |

Thank you to All who have generously donated. Your Generosity is very humbling.

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

### Zeal and Determination

*When he disembarked and saw the vast crowd, his heart was moved with pity for them, for they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things. [Mark 6:34](#).*

Both Jesus and the Twelve Apostles had been working very hard. The Twelve had been out on mission to many of the neighboring towns preaching, healing the sick and casting out demons. Upon the completion of their mission, they returned to Jesus and reported all that they had done. Jesus, in turn, invited them to “Come away by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while.” But the crowds heard about their departure by boat and quickly went to the other side of the Sea of Galilee so that they would arrive before Jesus and the Twelve.

The passage quoted above reveals the internal reaction that Jesus had toward the crowds as He and the Twelve disembarked from the boat. Though they had attempted to go away together to a quiet place for rest, the crowds were intent on being with them. Jesus, of course, was not upset that the crowds had spoiled His attempt to find some quiet time with the Twelve. Instead, His heart was moved with compassion. He could see that the people were hungry for more and were “like sheep without a shepherd.” For that reason, Jesus immediately began to feed them with His teachings.

A helpful point to ponder in this passage is that the people who gathered were described as a “vast crowd.” From the subsequent passage in Mark’s Gospel, we learn that when Jesus finished teaching them many things, He performed the miracle of the multiplication of fish and bread and fed 5,000 men, not counting the women and children. Given the fact that the estimated ratio at that time of adult men to women and children was at least 5:1, the crowd could have been as large as 25,000 people. For a spontaneous gathering of people in a remote area by the Sea of Galilee, that is a huge number. This is especially the case, since it is estimated that there were only about 1,500 people living in Capernaum at that time. People had flocked to our Lord from very far away.

This vast and spontaneous gathering reveals to us the hunger that Jesus instilled in the hearts of very many people. Some of these people had already heard Jesus speak and had witnessed His miracles. Others were those to whom the Twelve had just preached in the surrounding villages. The Twelve had spoken clearly and convincingly by the power of the Holy Spirit about Jesus, and many people responded, wanting to know more about our Lord.

As you ponder the enthusiasm of so many people, try to compare that with your own enthusiasm for Jesus. Are you driven to seek Him out with the same passion and zeal that consumed these first followers? Or do you find that your zeal and enthusiasm are lacking at times? This vast crowd, with their zeal and determination to seek out our Lord, should be a source of inspiration and self-examination for us all.

Reflect, today, upon this vast crowd. Try to see yourself joining them. Ponder yourself being so moved by the preaching of the Apostles that you become single-focused in your determination to be fed by Jesus’ holy teaching. If it is hard to imagine yourself acting this way, then humbly acknowledge that you may need more zeal for Jesus in your life. Pray that these holy desires become stirred up within you, and do all that you can to foster such zeal.

### [Formed.org](#)

**Available now on Formed:** *A Warrior for Christ: The Life of Joe Reali* is a new 30-minute documentary produced by Knights of Columbus honoring the legacy of this devout young man whose life was suddenly cut short in 2015. The documentary explores how Joe lived his faith in every aspect of his life and shared Christ with countless people he encountered.

### [Diocesan Council of Catholic Women \(DCCW\) 2024 Convention](#)

Diocesan Council of Catholic Women (DCCW) 2024 Convention will be held in Laurel, MT October 11-12, 2024. All women of the Diocese are invited to join in the conference hosted by St Anthony's Parish in Laurel. The National Council of Catholic Women Leadership Training Development team will be the main speakers for the weekend. A poster with more information is posted on the bulletin board in the vestibule of the church or contact Cecilia Dostal (VCCW President) at (406) 836-0184 or [kalakamt@yahoo.com](mailto:kalakamt@yahoo.com)

### [St. Margaret's Bulletin](#)

#### [Reflection by Trish - Both/And](#)

It is not uncommon for two children to agree to play together. Perhaps they collectively make up scenario that they will play pretending they are in another time and place. Things may go well for some time, and then a conflict occurs. They argue and their frustrations increase; anger may take over each of their emotions. In time it comes to the attention of an adult. Now they are yelling and accusing the other. When an adult intervenes, they each want the adult to justify their feelings. They each want the adult to say the other is at fault, since they think the cause of the dispute is not their fault.

Sometimes the adult simply says, "You are done arguing and need to separate. Each of you are to go to your own space." The adult refuses to listen to the case each one wants to present to justify themselves. The adult says it does not matter; you are done fighting about this. The adult is implying both at fault. It's time for the kids to go their separate ways and find peace.

It is human nature to want to see life in black and white terms. We like to know what is right or wrong, good or bad, belong or should be excluded. Scripture tells us that we are NOT to look at life and separate, divide, or exclude. We are to look at all things with a both/and attitude. St. Paul says we are all saints and sinners. Each and every one of us can be loving and caring while also having the ability to be hurtful and violent to another. Most everything on earth is a clash of conditions: helpful and unhelpful, living and dying, endearing and maddening.

Faith is full of contradictions and mystery. Jesus is both human and divine, physical and spiritual, killed yet alive, powerless yet powerful. God is in all and all are in God. We need to recognize the evil around us and embrace the good in everyone. We need to set boundaries that are healthy for our emotional and spiritual well-being, and know everyone is a child of God and belongs.

Many people are drawn to groups, churches, or belief systems that define things in black and white terms because it is easy. You know where you stand, you can know the answer, you don't have to spend so much time grappling with issues and feel the pain of growing spiritually and ideologically. It is important to know there are no easy answers in life when you embrace the teaching of the Scriptures.

Our lives are not to be filled with either/or. We are to embrace both/and. We are not to ask, "Are you for me or against me? Are you in or out?" We are to recognize that we are all, everyone, in this life together to work things out.

We certainly feel the pain of being stretched when we work to let loose of a grudge. It takes a long time and great deal of persistence to free ourselves of the grip of hatred, jealousy, revenge or more, and fill the gap with acceptance. We have been wronged and we can't hold onto it. We must embrace forgiveness.

It is not easy to die, let loose, of what we want in order to accept what is best for the greater community. When we begin to open up to a difficult belief it can be like labor pains or giving birth trying to embrace all races, sexual orientations, variety of life styles, ideologies, people's demeanor, attire and personalities. It is painful and difficult to continue growing. It does not happen quickly or easily, yet it is part of our life journey.

There is no end to work we are called to do. But through recognizing the need for growth, the understanding that we are never fully evolved, helps us remember it is not either/or but both/and. Our faith calls us to hold the paradoxes, the mysteries in our hands at the same time.

We are to love our enemy, forgive the one who does harm (recognize the bad situation and love the individual), help those that seem to live socially irresponsible, and to embrace everyone as a child of God. It is in giving that we receive, in dying to our own desires we find life, in forgiving we find peace. When we put ourselves last we find fulfillment.

*Great Mystery we call God,*

*it is by allowing myself to recognize that faith is full of paradoxes*

*and to hold both sides of the paradox at the same time*

*that I am able to grow, move forward and discover more about You.*