

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

September 14, 2025: The Exaltation of the Holy Cross, Feast (Year C)

Rev. Mohan Raj Samy

Website: iccfb.org

Pastor

Office: 406-622-3726

Day, Month & Date	<u>Mass Schedule for September 14 – September 21, 2025</u>
Sun Sep 14 th	The Exaltation of the Cross, Feast: 9 am Mass @ ICC & 11 am Mass @ St. Margaret's.
Sep 15 – 17	Presbyteral Assembly in Great Falls.
Thurs Sep 18 th	10 am Mass @ Hospital.
Fri Sep 19 th	11am The Angelus, Novena & Mass @ St. Margaret's.
Sat Sep 20 th	9 am Mass @ ICC.
Sun Sep 21 st	25 th Sunday in Ordinary Time: 9 am Mass @ICC & 11 am Mass @ St. Margaret's.

Sunday Collections:

September 07, 2025 23 rd Ordinary Sunday	ICC : \$ 1,767.00 + \$40.00 (Maintenance) = \$ 1,807.00 ICC: Savings Balance: \$ 3,364.78 & Boiler Fund: \$ 54,659.29. St. Margaret's, Geraldine: \$ 1,680.00
--	---

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

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

The Transforming Power of the Cross

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him. [John 3:16–17](#).

If Jesus would never have given His life on a cross for the salvation of the world, then a cross would never have been seen in “exultation.” Today, the Cross is seen as a holy and blessed object. We hang crosses in our homes, wear them around our neck, keep them in our pocket on the end of the rosary, and spend time in prayer before them. The Cross is now an exalted image by which we turn to God in prayer and surrender. But that is only the case because it was on a cross that we were saved and brought to eternal life.

If you step back and consider the amazing truth that one of the worst instruments of torture and death is now seen as one of the holiest of images on earth, it should be awe inspiring. Comprehending this fact should lead us to the realization that God can do anything and everything. God can use the worst and transform it into the best. He can use death to bring forth life.

Though our celebration today, the “Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross,” is first and foremost a feast by which we give glory to the Father for what He did in the Person of His divine Son, it is also a feast by which we must humbly understand that God can “exalt” every cross we endure in life and bring forth much grace through them.

What is your heaviest cross? What is the source of your greatest suffering? Most likely, as you call this to mind, it is painful to you. Most often, our crosses and sufferings are things we seek to rid ourselves of. We easily point to crosses in life and blame them for a lack of happiness. We can easily think that if only this or that were to change or be removed, then our life would be better. So what is that cross in your life?

The truth is that whatever your heaviest cross is, there is extraordinary potential for that cross to become an actual source of grace in your life and in the world. But this is only possible if you embrace that cross in faith and hope so that our Lord can unite it to His and so that your crosses can also share in the exaltation of Christ’s Cross. Though this is a profoundly deep mystery of faith, it is also a profoundly deep truth of our faith.

Reflect, today, upon your own crosses. As you do, try not to see them as a burden. Instead, realize the potential within those crosses. Prayerfully look at your crosses as invitations to share in Christ’s Cross. Say “Yes” to your crosses. Choose them freely. Unite them to Christ’s Cross. As you do, have hope that God’s glory will come forth in your life and in the world through your free embrace of them. Know that these

“burdens” will be transformed and become a source of exaltation in your life by the transforming power of God.

St. Margaret's Bulletin

Raffle Prizes—it is time to begin gathering raffle prizes. We will begin selling tickets the first of October. Harvest Dinner is Sunday, November 9. Please inform Trish Eklund of prizes gathered. She will post the list of prizes weekly on our Facebook page and on the church bulletin board.

Reflection by Trish - Suffering

I recently visited with a woman who has been ill for many years. She has good days and bad days. Somedays she can leave home with help and some days she can only manage to sit in her recliner. She seems to always have smile on her face. She seems to accept her limitations and celebrate the blessings in her life.

Everyone has struggles in their life. As I looked over a gathering of friends, I saw those grieving the loss of loved ones; coping with changing health; worrying about loved ones; and aching for family or friends with addiction, mental illness, or chronic health issues.

There are financial burdens, employment burdens, relationship burdens and more. Suffering is inherent in life, and no one enjoys it.

Pope Francis said: “Without faith suffering can feel overwhelming and purposeless. We want a savior who will take suffering out of the world by power, by destroying those who cause it. Jesus’ response to suffering is to embrace it. He turns suffering into a blessing by enduring it with love. If we blame God for permitting suffering, we are blaming Jesus for accepting the cross.”

We have choices when we are suffering. We can try to find someone or something to blame. We can ignore it and refuse to acknowledge the present reality. We can isolate ourselves or draw into ourselves. Or, we can accept the situation as ours. Then we can begin to cope and find a path forward.

We humans try to avoid suffering, doing all we can to not to accept difficulties. Jesus had many difficulties when he was preaching. He was often ridiculed. Scripture tells us people tried to throw him over a cliff. By accepting our difficulties and hardships, our crosses, we can begin to work through them and begin to transform them. Jesus showed us how to embrace suffering with the belief that it can be transforming. It can be an opportunity to grow. Jesus says he will journey with us, helping to lighten the burden.

Pope Francis emphasized that faith can lead to compassion and understanding in the face of suffering.

Community support can help to alleviate feelings of isolation when we are suffering. A burden shared is divided, a joy shared is multiplied. A friend who felt supported by her community when her husband died had a friend tell her, “Thank you for letting us help. It was a gift for us to be with you when you were vulnerable and burdened.” When we let people know we are suffering, when we show our vulnerability and weakness, we allow others an opportunity to give.

Jesus tells us that we are all One. When one person suffers, we all suffer. When one person has joy, we can all share the joy. God does not want us to suffer. The Great Mystery does not give us burdens, but they seem to be a part of life. When burdened, try to find something to be grateful for in the midst of the difficulty. Confide in someone to help lift the weight you carry. Trust that there will be transformation and a resurrection will come. Lean into the Great Love to find strength. You are not alone.

Divine Companion, assure me that this transition can be a source of growth.

Help my eyes to see beyond today

Believing that joy will come again.

Comfort me O Lord.