

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CHURCH, Fort Benton

ST. MARGARET'S CHURCH, Geraldine

SEPTEMBER 19th, 2021: 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year B)

Fr. Mohan Raj Arockia

Website: iccfb.org

Pastor

Office: 406-622-3726

Day, Month & Date	<u>Mass Schedule for September 19th – September 26th, 2021</u>
Sun Sep 19 th	Twenty-Fifth Sunday In Ordinary Time (B); 9 am Mass @ ICC & 11 am Mass @ St. Margaret's.
Tues Sep 21 st & Weds 22 nd	<i>Fall Presbyteral Assembly</i>
Thurs Sep 23 rd	<i>Fall Presbyteral Assembly</i>
Fri Sep 24 th	9 am Mass @ ICC & 12 pm The Angelus, Novena and Mass in Geraldine.
Sat Sep 25 th	9 am Mass @ ICC.
Sun Sep 26 th	Twenty-Sixth Sunday In Ordinary Time (B); 9 am Mass @ ICC & 11 am Mass @ St. Margaret's.

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

What does it mean and look like for you and me to be great in today's world.

Jesus answers that question by taking a little child in his arms and saying to the disciples, "Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me." I want us to be careful here. Jesus does not say that greatness is in being a child and he doesn't say that greatness is in being childlike. Greatness is in welcoming the child.

Now that doesn't sound too difficult or challenging. Who wouldn't welcome a little child? But Jesus isn't talking about the child. He's talking about what the child represents. We've so romanticized and sentimentalized children and childhood in today's culture that it can be difficult to understand what Jesus is getting at.

The child is a symbol for something else. The child is a symbol of vulnerability, powerlessness, and dependency. The child in Jesus' day had no rights, no status, and no economic value. The child was a consumer and not a producer. Greatness,

Jesus says, is in welcoming and receiving into our arms one like this, regardless of his or her age.

Greatness is found not in what we have accomplished and gained for ourselves but in what we have done and given to “the least of these” (Mt. 25:40), the hungry, thirsty, naked, sick, and imprisoned; the symbolic children in each of our lives. Greatness never puts itself in a position of superiority over another. It is not about me; my nation, my tribe, my people, my religion, my politics, my bank account, my house, my job, my accomplishments, my reputation, my status. Our greatness is revealed in our service and care of others regardless of her or his ability or willingness to pay, repay, or return the favor. When Jesus talked about loving others even when they don’t love you (Lk. 6:32), doing good to those who do not do good to you (Lk. 6:33), lending without expectation of repayment (Lk. 6:34), and inviting to supper those who cannot invite you back (Lk. 14:12), he was describing greatness.

Greatness comes to us when we share with others who have nothing to share with us. Think of the young boy who shared his five loaves and two fish with 5000 people who contributed nothing but their hunger (Jn. 6:9). He was great. Last week I sat in a meeting with ten or twelve people gathered around a table at the food pantry listening to them discuss how they could better feed the hungry in Uvalde. They are the great ones.

Greatness comes when we forgive one who has neither asked for our forgiveness nor changed his or her behavior. Those who refuse to carry bitterness or envy toward another are great. When we respond to the needs of others, when we refuse thoughts and actions of hatred or prejudice then greatness comes. When we overcome fear, tear down walls, and make room for one who is different, vulnerable, in need, then we are great.

Greatness is not something to be achieved or earned. It is a quality that arises within us when our lives are in balance and we step into our better selves. That’s the life Jesus offers us. That’s the life I want us to live. I want us to be great, don’t you? This kind of greatness happens in the simple, ordinary, and mundane. It often goes unnoticed and unnamed but it’s there. Greatness is always a choice set before us.

I wonder who the child is that Jesus will set before us. I wonder which greatness you and I will choose.

<u>Sunday Collection:</u>	ICC: \$ 781.00
September 12 th , 2021	St. Margaret’s, Geraldine: \$ 259.00

LECTORS AND HOME/HOSPITAL MINISTERS

Beginning in October we will start a new way of scheduling ministers for Sundays. Please note the sign-up sheets posted in the vestibule. You are asked to sign up for a Sunday that you will be available rather than being assigned to a day only to find you will be gone. Two people are needed each Sunday for both Lector and Home/Hospital. If you have not done these ministries before but would like to volunteer, please let Father Mo know. We are short of Home/Hospital ministers so please consider this. Thanks, Joanne

St. Margaret's Bulletin

Jim Burtchett turns 80 years old this week. We will have cake after 11:00 Mass Sunday, September 19 to celebrate Jim's birthday and to thank him for mowing our church lawn this summer.

Tuesday, September 21 gathering to sew at 9:30 am at the church. We will continue to work on sewing the velveteen drapes for the church basement.

Reflection by Trish—Kingdom Come

If you pray the Lord's Prayer you say:

“Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name;

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven...”

When we pray “your kingdom come,” we think how wonderful it would be if the kingdom came. What if one morning we woke up and we were in God's kingdom here on earth? I think it is important to point out that each of us has a responsibility to make the kingdom present now. We are called to affect the area we are in, the people we come in contact with, and the encounters we experience. We are to bring mercy, forgiveness, justice, and a caring presence wherever we are.

We are to bring the Holy One's presence to the here and now. We are to make God's kingdom present each day and in each situation. We are to be the hands that do good work. The mouth that speaks only goodness. The ears that listen and hear what people are saying. The eyes that look to see the needs of others. And the heart that opens with mercy

and compassion for others. We are to be there for those who are marginalized, vulnerable and who others ignore or do not see.

Your kingdom come - what a powerful statement. We long for peace, for calm, for our needs to be met. There will always be different personalities, different opinions, and different paths that people choose. There will be times we are puzzled by others or times when others don't seem to understand us.

God's kingdom comes when we learn to be in the midst of chaos, noise and conflict with a peace-filled heart. We make it through these difficulties by being open. Don't judge others. Don't declare enemies of those who don't follow our understanding or path. We need to talk, share ideas and know that we may have to change as much as we want the other to change. Compromise, consensus, and sometimes agreeing to disagree will be the path through the challenge.

Now is the time to help make the Kingdom of God be present by the way we interact and the example we show. Each time you pray the Lord's Prayer, be mindful that each of us has the responsibility to make the kingdom come. We have the responsibility to lead by example how to show strength through humility, how to overcome wrongs by being loving, how to be restorative instead of punitive. We can help others find their strength by giving them opportunities. By trusting others, we help others learn to trust. Through listening, we help others know that someone values them and cares.

God's kingdom is present when someone shows us mercy, love, and forgiveness. God's kingdom is present in the beauty of nature and the works of those who work for justice. The kingdom is not far away or something we are waiting for. God's kingdom is present when anyone shows love to their neighbor.

Great Mystery, help me become aware of the moments when your kingdom is present to me, when others treat me with mercy and compassion. Help me be mindful that the Great Love is always with me. Help me be aware of opportunities to make the kingdom present for those I encounter.

