

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CHURCH, Fort Benton

ST. MARGARET'S CHURCH, Geraldine

JANUARY 23rd, 2022: The Third Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year C)

Fr. Mohan Raj Arockia

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Pastor

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Day, Month & Date	<u>Mass Schedule for January 23rd–January 30th, 2022</u>
Sun Jan 23 rd	<u>Third Sunday in Ordinary Time:</u> 9 am Mass @ ICC & 11 am Mass @ St. Margaret's.
Weds Jan 26 th	9 am Novena & Mass @ ICC and 12pm The Angelus, Novena & Mass @ St. Margaret's. (Sts. Timothy & Titus, Bishops).
Thurs Jan 27 th	9 am Mass @ ICC and 10 am Mass @ Sunrise Bluff.
Fri Jan 28 th	9 am Mass @ ICC (St. Thomas Aquinas, Priest & Doctor of the Church).
Sat Jan 29 th	9 am Mass @ ICC
Sun Jan 30 th	<u>Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time:</u> 9 am Mass @ ICC & 11 am Mass @ St. Margaret's.

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

Today's Gospel passage is in two distinct parts. It begins with the opening paragraph of Luke's account. It is addressed to a friend, Theophilus (beloved of God). Luke implies that Theophilus has already been instructed orally in the message of Jesus but Luke will now present him with an accurate and orderly account of Jesus' life and teaching. Luke clearly acknowledges that he himself never saw Jesus. His gospel was written at least 50 years after Jesus' death and resurrection. Yet he wants to assure his friend that what he writes is accurate and is based on the experiences of people who did know Jesus personally.

Luke very deliberately has Jesus start his work here. His public life will be a single, direct journey from Nazareth to Jerusalem, the focal point of the story told by Luke in his gospel and in the Acts. Unlike the other accounts, there will be no going back and forth between Galilee and Jerusalem. And it is in Jerusalem, the city of peace that Jesus will

suffer and die. It is here that he will rise to life and become our Lord and Savior. And it is from here too that his disciples will go forth to every corner of the world with the Good News. So it is that on this first day Jesus goes into the synagogue “as he usually did” on the Sabbath day. There were no priests in the synagogue, which was simply a prayer hall. The priests were in the Temple, the only place where sacrifice was held. Every male Jew had a right to read the Scriptures and to speak to the assembly.

As Jesus stood up to read, a passage from the prophet Isaiah was given to him. It was a passage about the coming Messiah. What happens now, of course, is that Jesus is announcing that he himself is that Messiah. He applies the words of the prophet to himself. “The spirit of the Lord has been given to me [at his baptism], for he has anointed me.” “He has anointed me.” That is a way of saying “I am a king.” A king was proclaimed by anointing. We remember the prophet Samuel anointing David as king. The Greek for Messiah is *Christos* and it means “the anointed one.” Savior King, Messiah, and Christ – they all mean the same thing.

How do Jesus’ words reach us today? The answer, I believe, is in today’s Second Reading. The problem with our Christian living is that it is so individualistic. We try to manage things on our own. And that is even true of the way we try to live our Christian lives. But it is not the picture that Paul describes here. He sees the multiplicity of Christians as living members of one Body. Each member interacts in a constant giving and receiving. And each member gets the same respect.

That is how the words of Jesus in today’s Gospel become living realities. For it is in mutual giving and receiving as one Body that we enable each other to experience the enrichment (overcoming our poverty), the vision (banishing our blindness), and the freedom (removing the oppressions and addictions) which Jesus wishes us to have. Finally, we cannot help noticing the contrast between the proclamation of the Law in the First Reading and that of Jesus in the Gospel. The Law was essential for dignity, human rights and freedom but there is a new ingredient in what Jesus gives – compassion. That’s what makes the difference.

January 16th , 2022

(Maintenance) = \$ 1,187.00
St. Margaret's, Geraldine: \$ 202.00

St. Margaret's Bulletin

Women's Luncheon date has changed due to scheduling conflicts Women's Luncheon is Sunday, January 30 following 11:00 am Mass. If you would like to bring a dish for the luncheon, please contact Trish Eklund. Please join us for laughter, good food and comradery. Comradery means community, fellowship and companionship.

Gifts for the Church—I am late in writing a Christmas wish list for the church. Perhaps this could be our Valentine suggestion list. St. Margaret's Church could use a fabric steamer to soften creases in banners when we hang them. A 3-step ladder would be appreciated by many.

Reflection by Trish—What do we really know?

Did you know that for hundreds of years, if not thousands of years, humans had a different sleep pattern than they have had for the past 200 years? Research has shown that a night's sleep in one long period is a very recent phenomenon. A great deal of research has been done showing that humans went to bed at dusk and slept for about 4 hours - called the first sleep - and then they were up for an hour or two, returning to bed for the second sleep.

During the waking hour or two they were often active: reading, writing, visiting or it was a time for prayer and reflection. There are many references to "the first sleep" in diaries, journals, and other writings. The tribe in Nigeria presently refers to a first and second sleep. This pattern of sleep began slowly to subside as artificial light began to appear on streets and people began staying up later at night.

Today we think it is the norm to sleep 8 hours without a break in the middle. Most of us thought this was the norm since the beginning of time. Our ideas of what the past was like are often based on what we have experienced or what we know in the present. Much like our perceptions of sleep, our perceptions of church history are based on our present experiences. Yet our church and religious tradition is over 2,000 years old.

Much of what we experience has not been the experience of the church in years past. Historical marriage in our church would not be recognized by contemporary people. At the time of Jesus and for almost two thousand years after, marriage was an arrangement of property. The wife was the property of the husband. In the 8th century, a ban on clerical polygamy was enacted by the Catholic Church.

1,547 years after Jesus' death the church declared marriage a Sacrament, a bond not to be broken. Still, the relationship was about property. It was not until the present era that we began to experience a discussion in the church regarding equality between the male and female in marriage.

Celibacy and male priests were not the standard practice in the early church. St. Peter was married; his mother-in-law is referenced in Scripture. In the year 352 the church declared women could no longer be ordained. In the 14th century, a Bishop complained that women were still being ordained. In the 15th century 50% of the priests were married; it was normal to have both celibate and married priests. Six Popes were married and had children, with the last being Pope Felix in 1439.

As the Catholic Church became intertwined with the Kings and Queens in Europe during the Middle Ages, many of the ordained sought to gain finances and status by ensuring close ties with the royalty. And some Royalty sought control over the church. In the 11th century the church declared children of priests could not inherit property. In 1563, the Council of Trent declared all ordained must be celibate (celibacy in monks and nuns has been a tradition since the time of Jesus) to minimize conflicts over wealth and inheritance and to keep the focus on serving the faithful.

There are many interesting articles and books on the history of the Catholic Church, and that history can be surprising. Our history is filled with wonderful saints, inspirational people, corruption, and greed. Our Church has always been made up of people, and as we know, all people have failings and faults along with positive traits. Despite the challenges, the church has continued through the ages to be held up by the faith of the people and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Holy Spirit, continue to ignite the flame of compassion, understanding and forgiveness in the people of your church.

