



# St. Joseph Catholic Church Harlowton, Montana

## Missions:

Blessed Sacrament, Shawmut

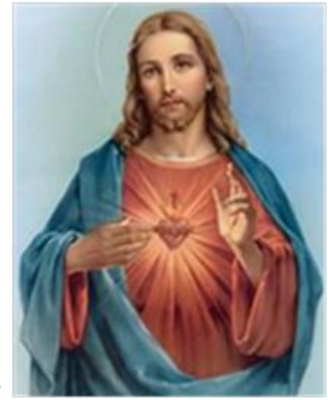
Immaculate Conception, Judith Gap

Father Cody Williams, Pastor

Phone: 406-465-7895 406-266-4811 406-632-5538

[fcwilliams@holycrossmt.org](mailto:fcwilliams@holycrossmt.org)

[stjosephmt.org](http://stjosephmt.org)



## Third Sunday in Ordinary Time January 26, 2025

*Saint Luke writes his Gospel so that the reader will "realize the certainty of the teachings" received. That certainty flows from the man in the synagogue who reads the scroll of Isaiah and promises that he will bring glad tidings to the poor, proclaim liberty to captives, give sight to the blind, and let the oppressed go free. Only God can work such wonders; that is why rejoicing in the Lord in our midst must be our strength. As the eyes of all those assembled in the synagogue looked intently at Jesus, they became an image of what we must do as members of the body of Christ—unite ourselves to him in faith and love*

*They read from the book of the Law and they understood what was read.*

**First Reading: Nehemiah 8:2-4, 5-6, 8-10** *2And Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly, both men and women and all who could hear with understanding, on the first day of the seventh month. 3And he read from it facing the square before the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law. 4And Ezra the scribe stood on a wooden pulpit which they had made for the purpose; and beside him stood Mattithi'ah, Shema, Anai'ah, Uri'ah, Hilki'ah, and Ma-asei'ah on his right hand; and Pedai'ah, Mish'a-el, Malchi'jah, Hashum, Hash-bad'danah, Zechari'ah, and Meshul'lam on his left hand. 5And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was above all the people; and when he opened it all the people stood. 6And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God; and all the people answered, "Amen, Amen," lifting up their hands; and they bowed their heads and worshiped the LORD with their faces to the ground. 8And they read from the book, from the law of God, clearly; and they gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading. 9And Nehemi'ah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, "This day is holy to the LORD your God; do not mourn or weep." For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law. 10Then he said to them, "Go your way, eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions to him for whom nothing is prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord; and do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength."*

**Psalms 19:8-10, 15 R/ Your words, Lord, are Spirit and life.**

*7The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; 8the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes; 9the fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever; the ordinances of the LORD are true, and righteous altogether. 14Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my rock and my redeemer.*

*You are Christ's body and individually parts of it.*

**Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 12:12-30** *12For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. 13For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body -- Jews or Greeks, slaves or free -- and all were made to drink of one Spirit. 14For the body does not consist of one member but of many. 15If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. 16And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. 17If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? 18But as it is, God arranged the organs in the body, each one of them, as he chose. 19If all were a single organ, where would the body be? 20As it is, there are many parts, yet one body. 21The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." 22On the contrary, the parts of the body which seem to be weaker are indispensable, 23and those parts of the body which we think less honorable we invest with the greater honor, and our unpresentable parts are treated with greater modesty, 24which our more presentable parts do not require. But God has so composed the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior part, 25that there may be no discord in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. 26If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together. 27Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. 28And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, then healers, helpers, administrators, speakers in various kinds of tongues. 29Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? 30Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?*

**Alleluia, alleluia.** The Lord sent me to bring glad tidings to the poor, and to proclaim liberty to captives. **Alleluia, alleluia.**  
Today this Scripture passage is fulfilled.

**Gospel: Luke 1:1-4, 4:14-21** **1** Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the things which have been accomplished among us, **2** just as they were delivered to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word, **3** it seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, **4** that you may know the truth concerning the things of which you have been informed. **14** And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee, and a report concerning him went out through all the surrounding country. **15** And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all. **16** And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up; and he went to the synagogue, as his custom was, on the sabbath day. And he stood up to read; **17** and there was given to him the book of the prophet Isaiah. He opened the book and found the place where it was written, **18** "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, **19** to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." **20** And he closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant, and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. **21** And he began to say to them, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

**12:00 noon Sunday Mass at St. Joseph Catholic Church, Harlowton, MT.**

**Daily Mass on Thursdays at noon at St. Joseph Catholic Church, Harlowton, MT.**

**\*\*\*Confessions before Sunday Mass beginning at 11:30 am or by appointment. Please join us to pray the rosary for our nation and community 1/2 hour before Sunday Mass.**

**Sunday Mass at 9 am at St. Bartholomew, White Sulphur Springs & 4:30pm at Holy Cross, Townsend.**

**\*\*\*Eucharistic Adoration on Thursdays – join us anytime between 12:30–3:30 pm.**

**Please join us for our monthly parish potlucks on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Mass – 1/26/25; 2/23/25; 3/23/25**

### **Please pray for our seminarians:**

Riley Helgoe  
Kaleb Mitchell  
Jamie Severson  
Matt Keck  
Jake Smith

Deacon. Dillon Armstrong  
Bret Rotz  
Carter Anderson  
James Semling

John Cooney  
Anthony Olmes  
Shae Bills  
Carson Gorton

\*\*\*Mark Bruschwein is no longer with our diocese but will be continuing his studies in Spain.

## **Mark Your Calendars:**

The Catholicism 201 series continues on Thursdays at 5pm. Come join us either online or in person.

**Please join us for our Parish Potluck today after Mass.**

The Options clinic baby bottle drive has begun. Option Clinic is a non-profit organization in Helena who supports women with pregnancies and other pregnancy related health issues. Please consider picking up a baby bottles, filling it with some coins, cash, or checks, and returning them by Feb. 9<sup>th</sup>. (A flier is attached.)

The deadline for early registration for the Fatima/ Lourdes Pilgrimage is Friday, January 31<sup>st</sup>. If you would like more information, please contact Fr. Cody.

Please make sure to only use the sand and kitty litter for de-icing our sidewalks and staircase.

The next Chosen Movie night is Thursday, February 6<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm.

If you are not in our flocknote account, thought that you should have received a message, or would like to receive message about Mass cancellations and other events, send Fr. Cody an email with your preference of either an email or text message.

For the rest of the month, Youth Group will be on Thursdays at 7 pm.

## Father Cody's Corner: Basics of Catholicism part 73 Types of Sins

The Catholic Church teaches that there are two types of sins: mortal and venial. In the 1<sup>st</sup> Letter of St. John, he speaks about deadly and not deadly sins. Non deadly sins can be healed through prayer and working with the person. He claims that deadly sins cannot be helped. Although we would argue that he is wrong, I want to expand upon his reasoning and the challenges with mortal and venial sins.

What is a mortal sin? A mortal sin or deadly sin is often described as “breaking our relationship with God.” There is some truth to this definition. We must remember however, God never breaks his relationship with us. He can't. His love for us is so great that should he cease to love us or to break off his relationship with us, we would cease to exist. Therefore, we can never assume that any sin we commit would sever our relationship with God from God's perspective. From our perspective it gets far more serious. When we commit a mortal sin, several changes happen in our relationship with God. The first change is that we lost communion with God. We have done something to violate our relationship with God and therefore can no longer be in communion with him. Although we speak of excommunication as a serious condition the Church can place upon a person, the reality is that we put ourselves in that state and the Church acts to show the gravity of our action. All mortal sins are excommunications; they take us out of communion with the people around us, the Church, and God. The second change is with our faith lives. Mortal sins damage our willingness to follow God's will, cause prayer to become less desirable and sometimes even excruciatingly hard, damages our relationship with others and the Church, and can greatly limit the amount of grace that comes into our lives. When our souls are tainted with the effects of mortal sins, we block the graces and things of God causing us to pull away from him. I hope through this explanation that you realize the gravity and power of a mortal sin.

Mortal sins usually fall into a few different categories. Yet, the most important starting point is the feeling of the damage in our relationship with God caused by the sin. Most people have not built a spiritual life strong enough to realize the effects of these sins. Other characteristics may indicate a mortal sin plaguing a soul. Behaviors such as a refusal or strong distaste for anything that deals with God, a pulling away from the Church, spiritual people, or a strong resentment to the Church and increasingly sinful behaviors or a continual turning towards sinful behaviors or things that are against God.

The vast majority of mortal sins can be summed as a violation of the 10 Commandments. Other mortal sins include physical harm to a priest, bishop, or the pope, desecration of the Sacraments, or gross violation of a church. This list does not exhaust the possibilities but should help you start pondering mortal sins. In the next part I will go into more detail on the specific conditions that lead to a mortal sin. ~ Fr. Cody

### **New Day Dawns: Scott Hahn Reflects on the Third Sunday in Ordinary Time**

Listen Here: <https://stpaulcenter.com/studies-tools/sunday-bible-reflections/>

Readings: [Nehemiah 8:2–6, 10](#); [Psalms 19:8–10, 15](#); [1 Corinthians 12:12–30](#); [Luke 1:1–4, 4:14–21](#)

The meaning of today's liturgy is subtle and many-layered.

We need background to understand what's happening in today's First Reading.

Babylon having been defeated, King Cyrus of Persia decreed that the exiled Jews could return home to Jerusalem. They rebuilt their ruined temple (see [Ezra 6:15–17](#)) and under Nehemiah finished rebuilding the city walls (see [Nehemiah 6:15](#)).

The stage was set for the renewal of the covenant and the re-establishment of the Law of Moses as the people's rule of life. That's what's going on in today's First Reading, as Ezra reads and interprets (see [Nehemiah 8:8](#)) the Law and the people respond with a great “Amen!”

Israel, as we sing in today's Psalm, is rededicating itself to God and His Law. The scene seems like the Isaiah prophecy that Jesus reads from in today's Gospel.

Read all of Isaiah 61. The “glad tidings” Isaiah brings include these promises: the liberation of prisoners (61:1); the rebuilding of Jerusalem, or Zion (61:3–4; see also [Isaiah 60:10](#)); the restoration of Israel as a kingdom of priests (61:6; [Exodus 19:6](#)); and the forging of an everlasting covenant (61:8; [Isaiah 55:3](#)). It sounds a lot like the First Reading.

Jesus, in turn, declares that Isaiah's prophecy is fulfilled in Him. The Gospel scene, too, recalls the First Reading. Like Ezra, Jesus stands before the people, is handed a scroll, unrolls it, then reads and interprets it (compare [Luke 4:16–17, 21](#) and [Nehemiah 8:2–6, 8–10](#)).

We witness in today's Liturgy the creation of a new people of God. Ezra started reading at dawn of the first day of the Jewish new year (see [Leviticus 23:24](#)). Jesus also proclaims a “sabbath,” a great year of Jubilee, a deliverance from slavery to sin, a release from the debts we owe to God (see [Leviticus 25:10](#)).

The people greeted Ezra “as one man.” And, as today's Epistle teaches, in the Spirit the new people of God—the Church—is made “one body” with Him.

***Celebrating Marriage with Bishop Austin Vetter, Cathedral of St. Helena, Friday, February 14, 2025 begins with 6:00pm Mass. See poster at the entrance of the church for details.***

**Suggested Prayer of the Faithful** *(Each local community should compose its own Universal Prayer but may find inspiration in the texts proposed here.)* **page 375 January Magnificat**

***We wait for the Lord with courage, firm in our belief that we will see the bounty of the Lord. In faith, we pray:***

*That all bishops, priests, and deacons be ever more fervent in proclaiming the Kingdom of God.*

*That, in a world torn by strife, God's people may shine forth as a prophetic sign of unity and concord.*

*For lawmakers: that they may have the courage to enact laws in accord with the true good of the human person.*

*That many young people respond to Christ's call to follow him in the consecrated life and in the priesthood.*

*For those who experience anguish or sorrow in their lives: that the Lord may relieve their burdens and give them joy.*

*For the grace this week to be ever more attentive to Jesus Christ, the Word of God.*

***Loving Father, through the gift of your Son a light has arisen in our lives. May we be true to that Light. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.***

**Intercessions** *page 378 January Magnificat*

***To the Lord of mercy, we pray:***

***R/ Jesus, we trust in you.***

*Because of the goodness of your Father: R/*

*Because you came among us and experienced the trials of the world: R/*

*Because of the saving power of your Gospel: R/*

***Personal intentions***

***Our Father....***

***God our Father, you led the Israelites across the desert to a land of milk and honey. Lead us also, your people, to the land of everlasting joy, where we may behold your face for ever. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.***

**MEDITATION OF THE DAY** **How to “Realize the Certainty” of Christ’s Teaching**

*page 384-385 January Magnificat*

The Church is designed for the people that we are: people of flesh, people of spirit, people of grace. Without prayer we run the risk of seeing the Church merely as a social body and not the Body of Christ...a body whose limbs we are, each with its vital value for the others. Without prayer we won't know how obedience to its living laws differs from mere discipline. Without prayer it will be difficult for us to see that the Church is Jesus Christ. We will not perceive the kind of commerce that we are invited to take part in within her. To see that as we move from one person to another in our dealings within the Church we are always Jesus Christ moving from Jesus Christ to Jesus Christ.

Without prayer we will not live the Church. We will not live from her as one can live from the discourse at the Last Supper and the Priestly Prayer of Jesus (cf. Jn 14:1–17:26).... Without prayer the Church may give us all the treasures that we ask of her: the life of God through baptism, the blood of Christ through penance, the whole Christ in Communion, the seal of unity in the Blood of all the Masses and their unending sacrifice—all this will be given to us but, without prayer, we will only keep a small part of it. Without prayer we can be learned in the teachings of the Church or some particular area of those teachings, we can learn them and remember them but, without prayer, they will not have brought us the fuller life that they were destined to bring.... Without prayer we will see like people who are short-sighted and obey like servants who are paralyzed. Above all, without prayer, the Gospel will be words but we will risk failing to meet the Person who is speaking, the Person who is training us, the Person whom we are following. ~ Venerable Madeleine Delbr l

Madeleine Delbr l († 1964) was a French laywoman and writer devoted to caring for the poor and to evangelizing culture.