



St. Joseph Catholic Church

Harlowton, Montana

Missions:

Blessed Sacrament, Shawmut
Immaculate Conception, Judith Gap

Father Joseph Paddock, Pastor

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Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

July 26, 2026

God says to Solomon, "Ask something of me and I will give it to you." "The Lord was pleased that Solomon" asked for an understanding heart instead of for long life or riches - for health and wealth can easily be lost, whereas "all things work for good for those who love God." The desire of Solomon is what characterizes the heart of the man who sells all he has to buy the treasure-bearing field. The desire of Solomon is what sets apart the merchant who risks his whole livelihood to buy what he judges to be the "pearl of great price." They can make these sacrifices with certainty because that treasure, that pearl corresponds to the very call and purpose of God in their lives. And what is that purpose? To be conformed to the image of his Son - in all his glory.

You have asked for wisdom.

First Reading: 1 Kings 3:5, 7-12 ⁵At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, "Ask what I shall give you." ⁷And now, O LORD my God, thou hast made thy servant king in place of David my father, although I am but a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. ⁸And thy servant is in the midst of thy people whom thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered or counted for multitude. ⁹Give thy servant therefore an understanding mind to govern thy people, that I may discern between good and evil; for who is able to govern this thy great people?" ¹⁰It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. ¹¹And God said to him, "Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches or the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, ¹²behold, I now do according to your word. Behold, I give you a wise and discerning mind, so that none like you has been before you and none like you shall arise after you.

Psalms 119:57, 72, 76-77, 127-130 **R/ Lord, I love your commands.**

⁵⁷The LORD is my portion; I promise to keep thy words. ⁷²The law of thy mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver pieces. ⁷⁶Let thy steadfast love be ready to comfort me according to thy promise to thy servant. ⁷⁷Let thy mercy come to me, that I may live; for thy law is my delight. ¹²⁷Therefore I love thy commandments above gold, above fine gold. ¹²⁸Therefore I direct my steps by all thy precepts; I hate every false way. ¹²⁹Thy testimonies are wonderful; therefore my soul keeps them. ¹³⁰The unfolding of thy words gives light; it imparts understanding to the simple.

God predestined us to be conformed to the image of his Son.

Second Reading: Romans 8:28-30 ²⁸We know that in everything God works for good with those who love him, who are called according to his purpose. ²⁹For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the first-born among many brethren. ³⁰And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Blessed are you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth;
for you have revealed to little ones the mysteries of the kingdom. **Alleluia, Alleluia**
He sells all that he has and buys the field.

Gospel: Matthew 13:44-52 ⁴⁴"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. ⁴⁵"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, ⁴⁶who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it. ⁴⁷"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net which was thrown into the sea and gathered fish of every kind; ⁴⁸when it was full, men drew it ashore and sat down and sorted the good into vessels but threw away the bad. ⁴⁹So it will be at the close of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous, ⁵⁰and throw them into the furnace of fire; there men will weep and gnash their teeth. ⁵¹"Have you understood all this?" They said to him, "Yes." ⁵²And he said to them, "Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old."

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.**

Youth Group meets each Thursday from 7 to 8:30 pm.

Please join us for our monthly parish potlucks on the 4th Sunday after Mass - 7/26/26; 8/23/26; 9/27/26

Mark Your Calendars:

Our next parish potluck will be on Sunday, July 26, 2026 following Mass. Come welcome our new priest, Fr. Joseph Paddock.

Please pray for our seminarians:

Riley Helgoe	Jake Smith	Anthony Olmes
Jamie Severson	Carter Anderson	Shae Bills
Matt Keck	James Semling	Carson Gorton
Liam Aippersbach	Ryan Frampton	Mason Yochum

Congratulations to Fr. Kaleb Mitchell & Fr. Dillon Armstrong on their ordination to the priesthood! Please keep them in your prayers

Treasures of the Kingdom: Scott Hahn Reflects on the Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Listen Here: [Treasures of the Kingdom: Scott Hahn Reflects on the Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time - St. Paul Center](#)

Readings 1 Kings 3:5, 7–12; Psalm 119:57, 72, 76–77, 127–130; Romans 8:28–30; Matthew 13:44–52:

What is your new life in Christ worth to you?

Do you love His words more than gold and silver, as we sing in today's Psalm? Would you, like the characters in the Gospel today, sell all that you have in order to possess the kingdom He promises to us? If God were to grant any wish, would you follow Solomon's example in today's First Reading - asking not for a long life or riches but for wisdom to know God's ways and to desire His will?

The background for today's Gospel, as it has been for the past several weeks, is the rejection of Jesus' preaching by Israel. The kingdom of heaven has come into their midst; yet, many cannot see that Jesus is the fulfillment of God's promises, a gift of divine compassion given so that they - and we - might live.

We, too, must ever discover the kingdom anew. We are called to find it as a treasure, a pearl of great price. By comparison with the kingdom, we must count all else as rubbish (see Philippians 3:8). And we must be willing to give up all that we have—all our priorities and plans—in order to gain it.

Jesus' Gospel discloses what Paul in today's Epistle calls the purpose of God's plan (see Ephesians 1:4): for Jesus be the firstborn of many brothers.

His words give understanding to the simple, the childlike. As Solomon does today, we must humble ourselves before God, giving ourselves to His service. Let our prayer be for an understanding heart, one that desires only to do His will.

We are called to love God, to delight in His law, and to forsake every false way. And we are to conform ourselves daily ever more closely to the image of His Son.

If we do this, we can approach His altar as a pleasing sacrifice, confident that all things work for the good—that we whom He has justified will also be glorified. ~ Dr. Scott Hahn

Suggested Prayer of the Faithful page 356 July Magnificat

(Each local community should compose its own Universal Prayer but may find inspiration in the texts proposed here.)

Renewing our trust in the Father's love, we turn to him with our needs:

That the Church may stand as a living witness to the truth of Jesus Christ, and the peace that comes from the forgiveness of sins.

That the peace of Christ will banish violence from our midst and defend us against every evil.

That God may bless and strengthen all families in faith, hope, and love.

That young people entrust themselves to the joy of the Gospel, and oppose the currents of secularism and materialism.

For all who have stopped practicing the faith: that through our prayers and the intercession of the saints they be drawn back to the sacraments.

For the grace this week to live with deeper dedication to the treasure of our Catholic faith.

Loving Father, when we call, you answer us. You build up strength within us. Help us now in our need. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Intercessions *page 359 July Magnificat*

In trust, we pray:

R/ You are our light and our salvation!

For the gift of discernment:

– that we may recognize what is truly of value. **R/**

For the gift of wisdom:

– that we may make our decisions according to God's will. **R/**

For a spirit of detachment:

– that we may be free to abandon what does not serve God's kingdom. **R/**

Personal intentions **Our Father....**

God of light, you illumine our path to your kingdom by the light of your holy Word. Pour forth your Spirit into our hearts, that we may read with understanding and live with fidelity through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

MEDITATION OF THE DAY Searching for the Kingdom of Peace pages 364-365 July Magnificat

Our peace doesn't come from the world, from exterior circumstances. It comes from our communion in faith and love with Jesus, the Prince of Peace. It is the fruit of prayer. God is an ocean of peace, and each time we are in intimate union with him through prayer, our hearts find peace again. Sometimes, praying until peace comes back is an urgent duty.... The quest for interior peace is much more than the search for peace of mind. It really is about something else: opening ourselves up to God's actions. The more we reach out toward peace, the more the grace of God is capable of acting in our lives. [As] a tranquil lake perfectly reflects the sun, so is a peaceful heart receptive to the action and movement of the Spirit....

Only a peaceful heart is capable of truly loving. Remaining calm in the face of trouble, uneasiness, and interior disturbances is necessary in order for God to act in our lives. We can still grow in love, and our lives can have the fruitfulness we are called to have, if we can accomplish this inward peace.... The only time we have good discernment is when we are at peace. When we're preoccupied by worry, disturbed by events in our lives, our emotions can get the best of us and we don't have an objective grasp on reality—we are tempted to see everything in black and white and question everything in our life.

When a problem has robbed us of our peace, the most important thing is not to resolve the problem in the hope of regaining our peace, but to regain a minimum of peacefulness, and then to see what we can do to face the problem. We will avoid making irrational choices for all the wrong reasons. How do we get back this minimum level of peace? Essentially through prayer, listening to the Word, and believing that God will never abandon us. ~ Father Jacques Philippe Father Philippe is a member of the Community of the Beatitudes and a renowned spiritual director.

Intercessions *page 367 July Magnificat*

Through Christ, who is the wisdom of God made manifest on the cross, let us pray:

R/ Show us your ways! Teach us your paths!

For the grace of true and loving obedience, we pray: R/

For the grace of genuine self-denial, we pray: R/

For the grace of final perseverance in the ways of Christ, we pray: R/

Personal intentions **Our Father....**

May God keep us firm to the end, irreproachable on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. (cf. 1 Cor 1:8)

Marian Antiphon

Mass Announcements National Make-A-Will Month August 1-31-2026

"This August is National Make-a-Will Month. Preparing your will is a sacred act that allows you to protect all God has placed in your care today, including your loved ones, and share in His blessings for years to come.

We want to make sure everyone in our community has the opportunity to plan ahead this month. To help remove barriers, the Foundation for the Diocese of Helena is sharing a secure guided tool called FreeWill. In just 20 minutes, you can create or update your will to secure lasting care for your family, community, and the local parishes or ministries that have shaped your faith.

This resource is sponsored by the Foundation, and it is completely free for us to use. You can learn more and start your plan by visiting FreeWill.com/FDOH.

If you haven't yet, we invite you to prepare a will this August and enjoy the lasting peace it brings!"

Talking Points / FAQs

□ **Why August?** August is nationally recognized as National Make-A-Will Month. It's an opportunity to reflect on how you will protect what has been placed in your care for years to come.

□ **Why should Catholics think about having a will?** The Church has long taught that we are stewards of what God has given us. A will is a practical and faithful way to act on that belief. It allows you to name the people who depend on you, pass on the values that have shaped your life, and ensure that what you have been entrusted with is cared for with intention. It is, in many ways, a final act of stewardship.

□ **Who is this for?** This invitation is for any adult member of the parish community who does not yet have a will, whose will may be outdated, or who wishes to reflect on how their estate plans align with their faith and values.

□ **What is FreeWill, and how does it work?** FreeWill is a free, secure online tool that guides you through preparing an estate plan. You answer a series of straightforward questions about your wishes and intentions, and the tool helps you produce a will that reflects your choices. You can complete it on your own, at your own pace, from home.

□ **Is this really free?** How long does it take? Yes, completely free. There is no cost for parishioners to create an estate plan using FreeWill. Most people complete theirs in about 20 minutes. You can also start and return to it at any time, so there is no pressure to finish in one sitting.

□ **What kinds of things can I include in my will?** A will allows you to name guardians for children or dependents in your care, specify how your belongings and assets should be distributed, name a trusted person to carry out your wishes, and include a planned gift for any causes or communities that have shaped your life.