



# 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

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

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

## Fifth Sunday of Lent

March 22, 2026

*From time immemorial God has promised, "O my people, I will open your graves and have you rise from them. Then you shall know that I am the Lord." But this will not happen before Jesus weeps. He weeps in front of discouragement: "You want to go back there?" He weeps in front of bitterness: "Could he not have done something?" He weeps in front of despair: "Lord, by now there will be a stench." This is the best moment for God to raise Lazarus from his grave, for then the event will teach us just how far we must go in trusting the power of Jesus' love for us. If you are "dead because of sin, the Spirit of the one who raised Jesus from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also, through his Spirit dwelling in you."*

*I will put my spirit in you that you may live*

**First Reading: Ezekiel 37:12-14** <sup>12</sup>Therefore prophesy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I will open your graves, and raise you from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you home into the land of Israel. <sup>13</sup>And you shall know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves, and raise you from your graves, O my people. <sup>14</sup>And I will put my Spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land; then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken, and I have done it, says the LORD."

**Psalms 130:1-8 R/ With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption.**

<sup>1</sup>Out of the depths I cry to thee, O LORD! <sup>2</sup>Lord, hear my voice! Let thy ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications! <sup>3</sup>If thou, O LORD, shouldst mark iniquities, Lord, who could stand? <sup>4</sup>But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared. <sup>5</sup>I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, and in his word I hope; <sup>6</sup>my soul waits for the LORD more than watchmen for the morning, more than watchmen for the morning. <sup>7</sup>O Israel, hope in the LORD! For with the LORD there is steadfast love, and with him is plenteous redemption. <sup>8</sup>And he will redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

*The Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you.*

**Second Reading: Romans 8:8-11** <sup>8</sup>and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. <sup>9</sup>But you are not in the flesh, you are in the Spirit, if the Spirit of God really dwells in you. Any one who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. <sup>10</sup>But if Christ is in you, although your bodies are dead because of sin, your spirits are alive because of righteousness. <sup>11</sup>If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit who dwells in you.

**Alleluia Alleluia** I am the resurrection and the life, says the Lord; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will never die. **Alleluia Alleluia**  
*I am the resurrection and the life.*

**Gospel: John 11:1-45** <sup>1</sup>Now a certain man was ill, Laz'arus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. <sup>2</sup>It was Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Laz'arus was ill. <sup>3</sup>So the sisters sent to him, saying, "Lord, he whom you love is ill." <sup>4</sup>But when Jesus heard it he said, "This illness is not unto death; it is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified by means of it." <sup>5</sup>Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Laz'arus. <sup>6</sup>So when he heard that he was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was. <sup>7</sup>Then after this he said to the disciples, "Let us go into Judea again." <sup>8</sup>The disciples said to him, "Rabbi, the Jews were but now seeking to stone you, and are you going there again?" <sup>9</sup>Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any one walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. <sup>10</sup>But if any one walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him." <sup>11</sup>Thus he spoke, and then he said to them, "Our friend Laz'arus has fallen asleep, but I go to awake him out of sleep." <sup>12</sup>The disciples said to him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover." <sup>13</sup>Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that he meant taking rest in sleep. <sup>14</sup>Then Jesus told them plainly, "Laz'arus is dead; <sup>15</sup>and for your sake I am glad that I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him." <sup>16</sup>Thomas, called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him." <sup>17</sup>Now when Jesus came, he found that Laz'arus had already been in the tomb four days. <sup>18</sup>Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles off, <sup>19</sup>and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them concerning their brother. <sup>20</sup>When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary sat in the house. <sup>21</sup>Martha said to Jesus

“Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.”<sup>22</sup> And even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you.”<sup>23</sup> Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.”<sup>24</sup> Martha said to him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.”<sup>25</sup> Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live,<sup>26</sup> and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?”<sup>27</sup> She said to him, “Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, he who is coming into the world.”<sup>28</sup> When she had said this, she went and called her sister Mary, saying quietly, “The Teacher is here and is calling for you.”<sup>29</sup> And when she heard it, she rose quickly and went to him.<sup>30</sup> Now Jesus had not yet come to the village, but was still in the place where Martha had met him.<sup>31</sup> When the Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary rise quickly and go out, they followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to weep there.<sup>32</sup> Then Mary, when she came where Jesus was and saw him, fell at his feet, saying to him, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.”<sup>33</sup> When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled;<sup>34</sup> and he said, “Where have you laid him?” They said to him, “Lord, come and see.”<sup>35</sup> Jesus wept.<sup>36</sup> So the Jews said, “See how he loved him!”<sup>37</sup> But some of them said, “Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?”<sup>38</sup> Then Jesus, deeply moved again, came to the tomb; it was a cave, and a stone lay upon it.<sup>39</sup> Jesus said, “Take away the stone.” Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, “Lord, by this time there will be an odor, for he has been dead four days.”<sup>40</sup> Jesus said to her, “Did I not tell you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?”<sup>41</sup> So they took away the stone. And Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, “Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.<sup>42</sup> I knew that thou hearest me always, but I have said this on account of the people standing by, that they may believe that thou didst send me.”<sup>43</sup> When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, “Laz’arus, come out.”<sup>44</sup> The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with bandages, and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Unbind him, and let him go.”<sup>45</sup> Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what he did, believed in him;

**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 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Mass - 4/26/26; 5/24/26; 6/28/26**

**Please pray for our seminarians:**

Riley Helgoe  
Bret Rotz  
Carter Anderson  
James Semling  
Ryan Frampton

Jake Smith  
Anthony Olmes  
Shae Bills  
Carson Gorton  
Mason Yochum

Dcn. Kaleb Mitchell  
Jamie Severson  
Matt Keck  
Liam Aippersbach,

*Congratulations to Fr. Dillon Armstrong on his ordination to the priesthood! Please keep him in your prayers.*

**Mark Your Calendars:**

**The next Chosen Movie night is on Thursday, April 9th at 7 pm at the Harlowton Theater. All are welcome to attend!**

**No daily Mass on Thursdays, March 26th and April 2nd.**

**Our next parish potluck is scheduled for today, March 22<sup>nd</sup> after Mass. Please join us for some great food & fellowship.**

**No Church Fathers Series on Thursday March 26th and April 2nd. For many reasons Youth Group is cancelled for the rest of March with the plan to resume with an Easter party in April.**

**The Easter Sunday Mass is at 12:00 pm on Sunday, April 5th.**

**Father Cody’s Corner: Basics of Catholicism Part 128: The Conditions That Invalidate a Marriage**

Now that we have discussed the process of declaring a marriage invalid, called an annulment, I want to take some time to discuss the conditions that the judges and lawyers are looking for to declare a marriage invalid. The Church has quite a lofty ideal for marriage. For a valid marriage, both persons of the couple come to the marriage fully understanding the vows they are about to exchange, the implication of the vows, and come with full consent of the will. This means that anything that strays from this ideal would be grounds for an invalid marriage. What exactly does this look like?

**Lack of Form:** Catholics are required to be married in the Catholic Church. Once someone is baptized in the Catholic Church, they are expected to also have their marriage validated by the Church. When this doesn’t happen, the marriage is declared invalid. Many

situations prompt this case. The most common situation is when two people are married by a Justice of the Peace or by a friend. These marriages didn't happen in the church and are therefore invalid. A few exceptions exist. A couple can ask for permission to have their marriage celebrated by a Protestant minister instead of a Catholic witness. The Church can grant this permission when asked for in advance. Since the minister is merely a witness of the vows, we can allow for Protestant ministers and even lay Catholics to witness the marriage. This permission is never allowed for Justices of the Peace or non-ordained persons from other religions.

**Radical Sanation:** An exceptionally rare case to the Lack of Form situation is when a couple gets married outside the Church for political, social, or other extenuating circumstances but would have been married in the Church had these situations not existed. For instance, let's say the couple wanted to get married in the Catholic Church but the parents were vehemently opposed to it. What are they to do? In cases in which the couple would have been married in the Church given normal circumstances but couldn't, the Church can heal that marriage immediately without any public process to allow the couple to be able to participate in the Sacraments without causing public scandal.

**Previous Marriage:** Another very common situation that immediately invalidates a marriage is if the person was previously married. In the event that someone is married and then marries another person without being granted an annulment from the previous marriage, the second marriage is automatically invalid. Jesus makes it clear that you can only be married once. These situations are some of the easiest to work with because their situations are very clear. Did you get married in the Church as a Catholic or not? ~ Fr Cody

## **At Lazarus's Tomb: Scott Hahn Reflects on the Fifth Sunday of Lent**

[Listen Here: At Lazarus' Tomb: Scott Hahn Reflects on the Fifth Sunday of Lent - St. Paul Center](#)

Readings: Ezekiel 37:12–14; Psalm 130:1–8; Romans 8:8–11; John 11:1–45

As we draw near to the end of Lent, today's Gospel clearly has Jesus' passion and death in view.

That's why John gives us the detail about Lazarus' sister, Mary - that she is the one who anointed the Lord for burial (see John 12:3, 7). His disciples warn against returning to Judea; Thomas even predicts they will "die with Him" if they go back.

When Lazarus is raised, John notices the tombstone being taken away, as well as Lazarus' burial cloths and head covering - all details he later notices with Jesus' empty tomb (see John 20:1, 6, 7).

Like the blind man in last week's readings, Lazarus represents all humanity. He stands for "dead men" - for all those Jesus loves and wants to liberate from the bands of sin and death.

John even recalls the blind man in his account today (see John 11:37). Like the man's birth in blindness, Lazarus' death is used by Jesus to reveal "the glory of God" (see John 9:3). And again like last week, Jesus' words and deeds give sight to those who believe (see John 11:40).

If we believe, we will see—that Jesus loves each of us as He loved Lazarus, that He calls us out of death and into new life.

By His Resurrection Jesus has fulfilled Ezekiel's promise in today's First Reading. He has opened the graves that we may rise, put His Spirit in us that we may live. This is the Spirit that Paul writes of in today's Epistle. The same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead will give life to we who were once dead in sin.

Faith is the key. If we believe as Martha does in today's Gospel—that Jesus is the resurrection and the life—even if we die, we will live.

"I have promised and I will do it," the Father assures us in the First Reading. We must trust in His word, as we sing in today's Psalm—that with Him is forgiveness and salvation. ~ Dr. Scott Hahn

## **Suggested Prayer of the Faithful page 319 March Magnificat**

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

**Trusting God sent his only Son into the world so that we might have life, and life to the full. Trusting in the Father, we pray:**

*For those preparing to be received into the Church this Easter: that they would remain faithful to Christ all the days of their life.*

*For those who hold public office: that they may imitate the goodness of God by securing justice and peace for the oppressed.*

*For an increase of vocations to the priesthood and the consecrated life, especially from our own parish community.*

*For the poor, the sick, the hungry, the unemployed, and those who suffer from want of love and affection: that God may shower his love and mercy upon them.*

*For all who are close to death, and for the repose of the souls of all the faithful departed: that they may see the glory of God.*

*For the grace this week to live with greater faith in Jesus and in the life to come.*

**Loving Father, your mercy is great and your love is without compare. Turn with compassion to those who bow before you and respond favorably to these our petitions. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## **Intercessions page 322 March Magnificat**

**As we rejoice in the promise of life, we pray for those who are preparing to receive the gift of life through the sacraments of initiation at Easter and for the communities of faith that will receive them:**

**R/ Grant new life, O Lord.**

*Give them the faith to acknowledge Christ as the resurrection and the life,*

*— we pray. R/*

*Free them from sin and grant them growth in the holiness that leads to eternal life,*

*— we pray. R/*

*Protect them from all snares and temptations of the evil one,*

*— we pray. R/*

*Fill them with the hope of the life-giving Spirit and prepare them to celebrate in spirit and in truth the glory of Christ's death and Resurrection,*

– we pray. R/

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

**O God, the source of all life, preserve us from the temptation to seek life in ourselves alone, and grant us faith to seek life in Jesus Christ through our participation in the mystery of the cross, through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## **MEDITATION OF THE DAY**    **Our Suffering and Christ's Compassion** *pages 329-330 March Magnificat*

Happiness and suffering are inseparable. Some fear to make such an affirmation, because the world would look upon them as fools. How can we say that happiness and suffering are inseparable? Is it not just the other way around?

It is not I who say this, but Jesus in the Beatitudes. Open the Gospel to the Sermon on the Mount. What does he tell us? "Blessed are those who weep; blessed are the poor; blessed are those who suffer." There, then, is the affirmation that true happiness and suffering are inseparable. The wisdom we receive straight from the Divine Master is regarded as foolishness. The wisdom of the world is exactly opposed to the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus says, "Blessed are the pure"; the world says, "Blessed are they who indulge in loose living." Jesus says, "Blessed are those who weep"; the world says, "Blessed are those who laugh and amuse themselves." Jesus says, "Blessed are the meek, the merciful"; the world says, "Blessed are those who impose themselves on others and dominate them." Jesus says, "Blessed are the poor"; the world says, "Blessed are the rich." Jesus says, "Blessed are those who suffer"; the world says, "Blessed are those who enjoy themselves."

We must not be afraid to say what Jesus said and to affirm it after him.... The only truly happy people are those who have chosen Jesus and his cross on earth. They are the thieves of happiness, because they are already happy a hundredfold here below, and what shall this be for all eternity! To think of heaven is not egotism; it is to plunge ourselves, with delight, into the infinite justice and love of God.

In spite of that, remember that Jesus is filled with compassion for those who suffer. He has borne all our sufferings. He has endured them himself at Gethsemane and on Calvary, but he knows that they are necessary to us, so "he sends them to us as if with an averted gaze," says little Thérèse, as if he did not have the courage to watch us suffer. But he sees at the same time the happiness it will merit for us, the glory it acquires for his Father, for him, for us, and the graces it merits for souls; so in love, in mercy, in tenderness, he hesitates no longer to lay it upon our poor shoulders, while continuing to sustain it himself, making himself our Simon of Cyrene. ~ Father Jean du Cœur de Jésus d'Elbée  
Father d'Elbée († 1982) was a member of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

### **Intercessions** *page 333 March Magnificat*

**Lord, you are our hope. We pray:**

**R/ Give us the joy of praising you!**

*Jesus, Son of God, transfigured on the mountain,  
– you showed us that the cross is the road to glory. R/*

*Jesus, gift of God, source of life,  
– you slake our thirst for true life. R/*

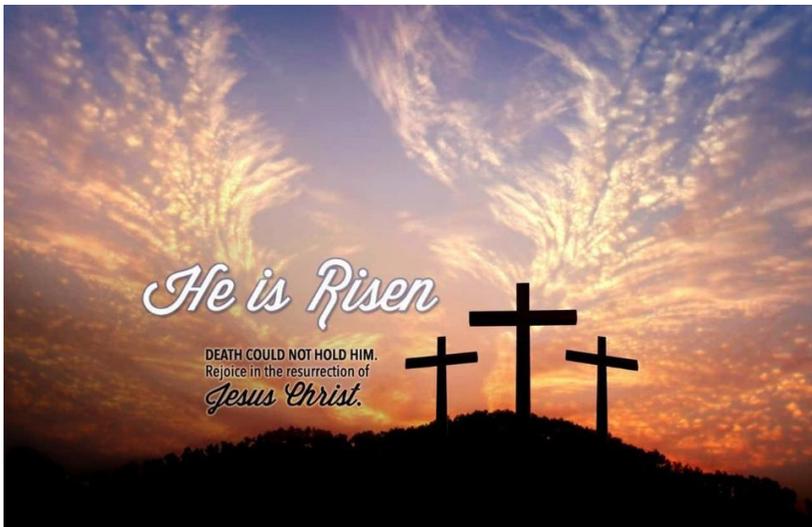
*Jesus, grain of wheat fallen to the ground,  
– you do not remain alone but bear much fruit. R/*

*Jesus, raised from the earth once more,  
– you draw all peoples to you by your love. R/*

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

**May the Lord lead us safely to his heavenly dwelling place. Amen.**

**Marian Antiphon**



Easter Sunday Mass – Sunday, April 5, 2026 at 12pm

A graphic for Options Clinic. It features a baby in a white blanket. The text reads: "Thank YOU!!", "Your church raised", "\$544.19", "Options clinic", "Change for Life", "Together, we are Offering Hope &amp; Building Families.", and "optionshelena.org". The background is purple and white.