



St. Joseph Catholic Church

Harlowton, Montana

Missions:

Blessed Sacrament, Shawmut

Immaculate Conception, Judith Gap

Father Cody Williams, Pastor

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Feast of the Holy Family

December 28, 2025

The feast of the Holy Family inspires us to have confidence that God himself takes an interest in the generation of human life, and blesses the loving union of man and woman. "The family is the original cell of social life. It is the natural society in which husband and wife are called to give themselves in love and in the gift of life.... The family is the community in which, from childhood, one can learn moral values, begin to honor God, and make good use of freedom" (CCC 2207). The grace of the Incarnate Word sanctifies and protects family life, making it a true path to holiness. "The family of Nazareth is holy because it was centered on Jesus" (Pope Francis).

Those who fear the Lord honor their parents.

First Reading: Sirach 3:2-7, 12-14 ²For the Lord honored the father above the children, and he confirmed the right of the mother over her sons. ³Whoever honors his father atones for sins, ⁴and whoever glorifies his mother is like one who lays up treasure. ⁵Whoever honors his father will be gladdened by his own children, and when he prays he will be heard. ⁶Whoever glorifies his father will have long life, and whoever obeys the Lord will refresh his mother; ⁷he will serve his parents as his masters. ¹²O son, help your father in his old age, and do not grieve him as long as he lives; ¹³even if he is lacking in understanding, show forbearance; in all your strength do not despise him. ¹⁴For kindness to a father will not be forgotten, and against your sins it will be credited to you;

Psalms 128:1-5 R/ Blessed are those who fear the Lord and walk in his ways.

¹Blessed is every one who fears the LORD, who walks in his ways! ²You shall eat the fruit of the labor of your hands; you shall be happy, and it shall be well with you. ³Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house; your children will be like olive shoots around your table. ⁴Lo, thus shall the man be blessed who fears the LORD. ⁵The LORD bless you from Zion! May you see the prosperity of Jerusalem all the days of your life!

Family life in the Lord.

Second Reading: Colossians 3:12-21 ¹²Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, and patience, ¹³forbearing one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. ¹⁴And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. ¹⁵And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. ¹⁶Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, as you teach and admonish one another in all wisdom, and as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God. ¹⁷And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. ¹⁸Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. ¹⁹Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them.

²⁰Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. ²¹Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.

Alleluia, Alleluia Let the peace of Christ control your hearts; let the word of Christ dwell in you richly. **Alleluia, Alleluia**

Take the child and his mother, and flee into Egypt.

Gospel: Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23 ¹³Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there till I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." ¹⁴And he rose and took the child and his mother by night, and departed to Egypt, ¹⁵and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfil what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt have I called my son." ¹⁹But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, ²⁰"Rise, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead." ²¹And he rose and took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. ²²But when he heard that Archelaus reigned over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. ²³And he went and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, "He shall be called a Nazarene."

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 - 12/28/25; 1/25/26; 2/22/26

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 notes for the Church Fathers series are available on the info table at the front of the church as well as on our website.

Mass for the Solemnity of Mary Mother of God is on 12/31 at 8:30 pm. No Mass or Adoration 1/1/2026.

No Youth Group on 1/1. We meet at the Church again on 1/15.

The last part of the Fall portion of the Church Fathers series is on Thurs. Jan 15. The Spring portion begins on Jan 29 at 5 pm.

The next Chosen Movie Night is on Thursday, Jan 8th at 7pm at the Harlowton Theater. Invite your friends and family to join us

We will have our monthly potluck today Sunday, December 28, 2025 following Mass.

We are at 65% of our ACA goal with only \$4025 left to go. Please consider making a donation to the Annual Catholic Appeal to support both our parish and the Diocese.

As the winter season approaches, just a quick reminder. If you would like to receive texts or emails about Mass cancellations due to weather, please send your phone number or email address to stjosephmt@gmail.com.

Father Cody's Corner: Basics of Catholicism Part 116: All Male Priesthood Common Misconceptions

Men are better leaders

Many people argue today that the reason for an all-male priesthood is that men are better leaders. Honestly, I know many women who would be better pastors than some men. I also know some men who would make better pastors than some women. Jesus didn't create an all-male priesthood with the belief that men are better leaders. The major problem that comes from this type of teaching is that it diminishes the role of women in the Church. Did you know that women can become Cardinals? Did you know that women can be administrators of parishes, lead religious communities, take on roles of leadership in the Vatican and much more? The Church is not against women in leadership or from women taking on roles in the Church. Quite the opposite. When men and women work together in leadership in their parish, then the parish flourishes. Too often we get caught in strife and disagreements leading to the frustration of an all-male priesthood. The church is working to evaluate and encourage ways to promote lay leadership and especially the roles of women in the church.

Celibacy in the priesthood was an economic decision from the Middle Ages

Yes and no. Celibacy in the priesthood traces its origin to the first priests of the early church. Even some of the greats like St. Augustine had to give up his wife to become a bishop. Today, priests are paid significantly less than their Protestant counterparts. Usually priests are given a stipend for living expenses which is about 30-40% of Protestant Pastors. Most of the Catholic Churches today could not afford a full-time priest if they gave a living wage and especially a wage that could support a family. But this is not the point. Celibacy was encouraged by Jesus as sign for the coming of the Kingdom. Priests stand as a sign of hope for the coming of that Kingdom. Celibacy is a gift and a gift to the Church. Priests want an undivided heart when serving their people and the people want the same. We don't want to hear that our priests are unavailable to come visit because they have other family obligations or that they don't have time. We want the radical availability of priests which comes with celibacy. ~ Fr. Cody

Saving Family: Scott Hahn Reflects on the Feast of the Holy Family

Listen Here: [Saving Family: Scott Hahn Reflects on the Feast of the Holy Family - St. Paul Center](#)

Readings: Sirach 3:2–6, 12–14; Psalm 128:1–5; Colossians 3:12–21; Matthew 2:13–15, 19–23

Underlying the wisdom offered in today's Liturgy is the mystery of the family in God's divine plan.

The Lord has set father in honor over his children and mother in authority over her sons, we hear in today's First Reading. As we sing in today's Psalm, the blessings of the family flow from Zion, the heavenly mother of the royal people of God (see Isaiah 66:7, 10–13; Galatians 4:26).

And in the drama of today's Gospel, we see the nucleus of the new people of God—the Holy Family—facing persecution from those who would seek to destroy the child and His Kingdom.

Moses, called to save God's first born son, the people of Israel (see Exodus 4:22; Sirach 36:11), was also threatened at birth by a mad and jealous tyrant (see Exodus 1:15–16). And as Moses was saved by his mother and sister (see Exodus 2:1–10; 4:19), in God's plan Jesus too is rescued by His family.

As once God took the family of Jacob down to Egypt to make them the great nation Israel (see Genesis 46:2–4), God leads the Holy Family to Egypt to prepare the coming of the new Israel of God—the Church (see Galatians 6:16).

At the beginning of the world, God established the family in the “marriage” of Adam and Eve, the two becoming one body (see Genesis 2:22–24). Now in the new creation, Christ is made “one body” with His bride, the Church, as today's Epistle indicates (see Ephesians 5:21–32).

By this union we are made God's chosen ones, holy and beloved. And our families are to radiate the perfect love that binds us to Christ in the Church.

As we approach the altar on this feast, let us renew our commitment to our God-given duties as spouses, children and parents. Mindful of the promises of today's First Reading, let us offer our quiet performance of these duties for the atonement of our sins.

Suggested Prayer of the Faithful page 425 December Magnificat

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

We receive the life of today through the Church, for she is the mother of our new birth in grace. As joyful members of God's family, we now pray:

For the Church: that her members will be strengthened, purified, and renewed through the grace of Christ's Body and Blood.

For those charged with protecting society: that they may build a world in which family life is revered, protected, and promoted.

For the universal respect of human persons: that the culture of life transform every human heart.

For blessings on all families: that the love, the unity, and the self-donation of the Holy Family may overflow into all aspects of family life.

For families who suffer from financial hardships: that they may find in the Birth of Jesus a sign of certain hope.

For family members who are alienated or estranged: that the unfailing power of the mercy of Jesus will reunite and reconcile loved ones.

Loving Father, bless us with your love, which we profess to be the bond of perfection. Let the peace of Christ console the hearts we offer to you with thankful prayer. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Intercessions page 428 December Magnificat

Let us adore the Son of the living God and beg him:

R/ Sanctify us, Lord Jesus, by your obedience!

Son of God and Son of Man, you were born into a human family:

– strengthen the bonds of love and reverence in every family. R/

Eternal Word of the Father, you subjected yourself to Mary and Joseph:

– teach us humility. R/

Creator of the universe, you were known as the son of a carpenter:

– teach us to embrace the work you entrust to us. R/

Personal intentions Our Father....

God and Father of all, you gave us the Holy Family to serve as an example of love and obedience. Grant to all people, in family homes or alone, the grace to hold in honor the bonds of love and respect which bind the human race chosen for adoption as your children, through Jesus Christ your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen.

Intercessions page 437 December Magnificat

God's love endures for ever. Let us pray:

R/ Hear your children, O Lord.

For all grandparents:

– make them strong, loving, and wise. R/

For all families blessed with living grandparents:

– fill them with respect and love for the aging. R/

For all the elderly abandoned by their families:

– fill them with peace of heart and grant them the companionship of others in their loneliness. R/

For all our family members who have died:

– bring them in joy to your eternal home. R/

Personal intentions Our Father....

May the Lord of peace himself give us peace at all times and in every way. The Lord be with us all. Amen. (cf. 2 Thes 3:16)

Marian Antiphon