



St. Joseph Catholic Church

Harlowton, Montana

Missions:

Blessed Sacrament, Shawmut

Immaculate Conception, Judith Gap

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Exaltation of the Holy Cross

September 14, 2025

We celebrate the cross—an instrument of death - because by it we pass from death to life. Jesus shows this by comparing his crucifixion to the bronze serpent. After Israel had sinned in the desert, God punished the people with deadly serpents. Yet when they repented and he showed them mercy, he did not take away the serpents. Instead, he erected an image of that punishment. If a bitten Israelite looked upon a bronze serpent, he would live. Similarly, Adam's sin and our personal sins merit death. But we fix our eyes on the crucified Lord who was "obedient unto death, even death on a cross." For "just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.

"Whenever anyone who had been bitten by a serpent looked at the bronze serpent, he lived.

First Reading: Numbers 21:4-9 *4From Mount Hor they set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; and the people became impatient on the way. 5And the people spoke against God and against Moses, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we loathe this worthless food." 6Then the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died. 7And the people came to Moses, and said, "We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD and against you; pray to the LORD, that he take away the serpents from us." So Moses prayed for the people. 8And the LORD said to Moses, "Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a pole; and every one who is bitten, when he sees it, shall live." 9So Moses made a bronze serpent, and set it on a pole; and if a serpent bit any man, he would look at the bronze serpent and live.*

Psalms 78:1-2, 34-38 R/ Do not forget the works of the Lord!

1Give ear, O my people, to my teaching; incline your ears to the words of my mouth! 2I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings from of old, 34When he slew them, they sought for him; they repented and sought God earnestly. 35They remembered that God was their rock, the Most High God their redeemer. 36But they flattered him with their mouths; they lied to him with their tongues. 37Their heart was not steadfast toward him; they were not true to his covenant. 38Yet he, being compassionate, forgave their iniquity, and did not destroy them; he restrained his anger often, and did not stir up all his wrath.

He humbled himself; because of this God greatly exalted him.

Second Reading: Philippians 2:6-11 *6who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. 8And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross. 9Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, 10that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

*Alleluia, We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you, because by your Cross you have redeemed the world Alleluia
So the Son of Man must be lifted up.*

Gospel: John 3:13-17 *13No one has ascended into heaven but he who descended from heaven, the Son of man. 14And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up, 15that whoever believes in him may have eternal life." 16For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. 17For God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through 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.**

Please join us for our monthly parish potlucks on the 4th Sunday after Mass - 9/28/25; 10/26/25; 11/23/25

Please pray for our seminarians:

Riley Helgoe
Kaleb Mitchell
Jamie Severson
Matt Keck

Dcn. John Cooney
Bret Rotz
Carter Anderson
James Semling

Jake Smith
Anthony Olmes
Shae Bills
Carson Gorton

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

Mark Your Calendars:

Youth Group has started again. We meet each Thursday from 7 to 8:30 pm. No Youth Group on Wednesday, September 18th.

No Mass on Thursday, September 18th.

Anointing of the Sick Mass

On Sunday, September 28th, we will celebrate an Anointing of the Sick Mass. For those who are affected by old age, suffering from mental illness, a serious medical condition, going in for surgery, or have a chronic condition that is getting worse, please contact Fr. Cody. Only those who have spoken with Fr. Cody in advance will be anointed.

Parish Potluck

Our next parish potluck is scheduled for Sunday, September 28th after Mass. Please plan on attending and bringing something to share.

The Chosen Movie Night is every 2nd Thursday of the month at the Harlowton Theater from 7-9 pm. Please invite people, hand out the invitation cards, and come. Free popcorn and snacks.

A new list of the cleaning or repair items that need to be done is posted on the bulletin board in the entryway of the church.

Father Cody's Corner: Basics of Catholicism Part 101: The Rite of Ordination of a Priest

The Rite of Ordination of a deacon and priest are very similar. At the beginning of the Mass, the only main difference is that the man-to-be-ordained a priest (father-to-be), processes in behind the deacons and not behind the servers. Once a deacon, always a deacon. His current status in the Church is as a deacon. Therefore, he is situated with deacons while wearing the attire of a deacon (deacon stole from shoulder to hip).

The first parts of the rite are the same. Following the proclamation of the Gospel, the man is called to orders. Everyone, hopefully, claps as a sign of their assent to his ordination. The Bishop preaches. Following the homily, the man makes his priestly promises. These promises are very similar to the ones for deaconate while adding to them the promises specific to the priest including offering Mass, forgiving sins, and celebrating the Sacraments according to the Rites of the Church. Then the man is called forward, lies prostrate on the cathedral floor while the Litany of Saints is sung. The Prayer of Ordination that follows is quite intricate and long. The prayer draws upon Old Testament imagery of Moses and Aaron, the first priests, and their role. Then it follows through salvation history making the point that God called men to the priesthood to continue the priesthood of Christ and to bring people to salvation. At this moment, he is a priest. His soul is configured to Jesus Christ the high priest.

Now the first significant change. After the Prayer of Ordination and the laying on of hands, the other priests come forward and lay their hands on the newly ordained priest. I have been asked what we say at this moment. The answer is nothing. We do not say anything. We just lay our hands on his head inducting him into the presbyteral order.

Once the laying on of hands concludes, he is vested in priestly vestments. He takes off the deacon stole to assume his new role. The priestly stole, a sign of the office of priest, drapes around the neck and hangs down the front of the man. The chasuble, a sign of the Mass, fully covers the man to show that he is covered in Christ. The chasuble is open on the sides to allow movement but is far more restricting than the deacon's dalmatic. The chasuble usually has only one stripe down the front.

One of the most important differences happens next. The bishop, taking the Sacred Chrism Oil, anoints the hands of the newly ordained priest consecrating his hands for the sacred ministry of celebrating the Sacraments. This is the only rite in the Church during which the hands are anointed with Chrism Oil. Since his hands are now oily and he is about to touch some precious items, a server brings him a towel called a manutergium. Manutergium is just the Latin word for hand towel. This towel is given to his mother. The tradition holds that she is buried with this towel so that when she goes before God she can say "See Lord, I gave you a priest."

~ Fr. Cody

The Promised Land: Scott Hahn Reflects on the Exaltation of the Holy Cross

[Listen Here: The Promised Land: Scott Hahn Reflects on the Exal - St. Paul Center](#)

Readings: Numbers 21:4b-9; Psalm 78:1bc-2, 34-35, 36-37, 38; Philippians 2:6-11; John 3:13-17

Today's feast embodies a great mystery. Like the people of Israel in the first reading, we are called to a long journey to the Promised Land of heaven. Like them, we can lose patience and fall into sin, sin that can literally kill us (Numbers 21:4-5). Like them, our only hope for salvation is to cling to God's merciful provision.

Pope Benedict XVI summed it up beautifully in a 2008 homily given in Lourdes:

"The Gospel for this feast reminds us of the meaning of this great mystery: God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that men might be saved (Jn 3:16).

The Son of God became vulnerable, assuming the condition of a slave, obedient even to death, death on a cross (cf. Phil 2:8). By his Cross we are saved. The instrument of torture which, on Good Friday, manifested God's judgment on the world, has become a source of life, pardon, mercy, a sign of reconciliation and peace. "In order to be healed from sin, gaze upon Christ crucified!" said Saint Augustine."

By raising our eyes towards the Crucified one, we adore him who came to take upon himself the sin of the world and to give us eternal life.

And the Church invites us proudly to lift up this glorious Cross so that the world can see the full extent of the love of the Crucified one for all, for us men. She invites us to give thanks to God because from a tree which brought death, life has burst out anew.

On this wood Jesus reveals to us his sovereign majesty, he reveals to us that he is exalted in glory. Yes, "Come, let us adore him!" In our midst is he who loved us even to giving his life for us, he who invites every human being to draw near to him with trust. ~ Dr. Scott Hahn

Suggested Prayer of the Faithful page 177 September Magnificat

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

In the cross of Christ one finds the deep serenity that is the source of generous dedication to the poor and the needy. In this peace we now pray:

The cross is the tree of victory: that Catholics be heroic in preaching Christ crucified and in witnessing to the world the redemptive value of suffering.

The cross is the support of the just: that the power of the cross of Jesus Christ will establish true peace and justice in the world.

The cross is the tree of life: that all persons embrace a genuine respect for human life from conception to natural death.

Christ from the cross draws us to himself: that Jesus Crucified will draw close to himself the poor, the sick, the persecuted, the marginalized, and all who suffer.

The cross is the door through which the grace of forgiveness enters into the world: that all whose lives are marked by alienation or division will come to true reconciliation in Christ.

The cross shows us the road of life: that we may embrace the cross in our life as the sure promise of newness, purification, and perfection.

Loving Father, let your Church be the living sign of the cross, for the way of the cross is the way that leads to the victory of love over hatred, of generosity over selfishness, of peace over violence. Through Christ our crucified Lord. Amen.

Intercessions page 180 September Magnificat

To Christ our Lord most high, we pray:

R/ We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you, because, by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world!

You emptied yourself and took the condition of a slave to set us free: R/

You became obedient even unto death to deliver us from the fruits of disobedience: R/

You arose from the dead to raise us out of the shadow of death into endless light: R/

Personal intentions

Our Father....

Lord Jesus Christ, by your death on the cross, you triumphed over sin and death. Raise our fallen world to the glory no human wisdom can expect, who live and reign with the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

MEDITATION OF THE DAY “Why We Exalt the Holy Cross” pages 185-186 September Magnificat

To our limited human reason, Jesus on the cross may appear vanquished. On the contrary he is the all-powerful conqueror over sin and Satan. He is the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world, as his resurrection was to demonstrate in a visible and striking manner: victory over death, which is the consequence of sin, is the sign of victory over sin.

This admirable contrast of power in immolation is to be found in all souls in whom the image of the Crucified is profoundly imprinted: in Mary, Mother of Sorrows, in the persecuted apostles, who were considered the refuse of this world (1 Cor 4:13). This should teach us the marvelous fruitfulness of suffering when supernaturally endured in union with the Savior....

It is clear that our Savior's passion was a true sacrifice, the greatest of all sacrifices.... On the cross, Jesus was at once priest and victim, for he was offering himself up voluntarily. From the time he prayed at Gethsemane until he expired, all his words and acts were expressions of this voluntary oblation which is, as it were, the soul of this sacrifice of adoration, supplication, reparation, and thanksgiving....

Each day as we assist at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass let us learn to live by the sacrifice of the cross which is perpetuated in substance on the altar. Let us especially ask for an understanding of the cross and for a love of those crosses which Providence has reserved for us from all eternity until we enter heaven. Let us remember this law of Christian life: Unless the grain of wheat falling into the ground die, itself remaineth alone. But if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit (Jn 12:24).

Let us often repeat the seven last words of Christ, which are, so to speak, his testament, and let us ask Mary to enable us to understand them: “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. - This day thou shalt be with Me in paradise. - Woman, behold thy son. Behold thy mother. - My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me? - I thirst. - It is consummated. - Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit.” ~ Father Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, o.p. Father Garrigou-Lagrange († 1964) was a prolific Dominican theologian and spiritual writer. He was the theology doctoral advisor of the future Saint John Paul II

Intercessions page 189 September Magnificat

To the Lord who is enthroned in glory, we pray:

R/ We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you, because, by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world

You suffered for us and now you live for ever to make intercession for us: R/

You were insulted for our sake and now you reign for ever in glory: R/

You were delivered up for us and now you are raised up for ever upon the throne that is yours at the right hand of the Father: R/

Personal intentions

Our Father....

Peace to all who are in Christ! Amen. (cf. 1 Pt 5:14)

Marian Antiphon

We are all called to be great saints. Don't miss the opportunity. ~ Mother Angelica

