



Saint John the Baptist Preaching to the Masses in the Wilderness
Pieter Bruegel the Younger (1564–1638)

A NOTE FROM THE PASTOR

Last week I had mentioned that we would spend the next two weeks of Advent looking at the Church's intention with regards to our full, active, and conscious participation in the Mass...something that is easier said than done, and as I had mentioned in one of my homilies a few weeks back, we have a long way to go. I believe I had said that this "initiative" was actually begun by Pope Pius X at the beginning of the 20th century, and here we are over a hundred years later still wrestling with the issue and what it means.

Participation is considered under two aspects, exterior and interior, and this week we will look at the exterior dimension, without laboring under any illusion that everything that can be said will be said especially in the limited space afforded by a column in a Sunday bulletin.

To begin with we need to start with one of the most fundamental and basic realities of the Mass and that is that the Mass is wholly the action of Christ. One of the problems during the time of Pope Pius X was that the Mass was generally thought of as something that the priest did up at the altar while the laity were largely involved in some kind of devotional activity, i.e., praying the rosary, and bells were used during the Mass to signal to the people when certain things were taking place on the altar, such as the Consecration when the Host would be elevated and shown to the people. I am really generalizing here and trying to keep things brief given the limited space for these remarks, but I think if you are old enough you know what I mean. Pope Pius X was troubled by this and saw that the laity were acting as though they were mere spectators.

This brings us closer to the heart of the issue. People are not spectators. If the Mass is the action of Christ, and it is, then it is the action of His whole body which includes the baptized, and not just of the Head represented by the priest standing in the Person of Christ (*in persona Christi*). What came of the initiative of Pope Pius X in further developments was what came to be known as the "dialogue" Mass in which the people were asked to join in all the parts of the Mass that were sung, such as the Gloria and the Sanctus, as well as respond with the servers by saying "and with your spirit" when the priest said "the Lord be with you."

Unfortunately, and this I experienced when previous bishops had asked me to offer the Traditional Latin Mass, is that many folks held the so-called "dialogue" Mass in disdain thinking that it diminished the transcendent and vertical dimension of the Mass and made it far too horizontal by bringing something so holy down to earth that even lay people would participate in it. This is, as you already know, simply absurd. But nonetheless most folks simply preferred to remain mute and as a priest of 26 years I have seen this carry over into the revised Order of Mass which is what we celebrate today.

To be honest, the Second Vatican Council placed great emphasis on the participation of the laity in the Mass not

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Second Sunday of Advent

10 December 2023

Sacred Heart, Ronan
Immaculate Conception, Polson
St. Joseph Mission, Charlo

Fr. Kevin Christofferson, Pastor
Fr. Robert Brooks, Pastoral Associate

Parish Office

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This week's office hours:

Tues & Thurs 2:00-5:00 pm; Wed & Fri 10 am-12 pm

MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday

St. Joseph Mission at 4:00 pm (Dec. 16)

Confessions are available at 3:30 pm

Immaculate Conception at 6:00 pm

Rosary is prayed at 5:30 pm

Sunday

Sacred Heart at 9:00 am

Immaculate Conception at 11:00 am

Rosary is prayed at 10:30 am

Tuesday-Wednesday-Thursday-Friday

Immaculate Conception at 12:10 pm

Confessions are heard at 11:30 am and again after Mass on Wednesday during a period of Eucharistic Adoration.

Friday, December 15th, 5:00-6:00 pm

Polson Community Dinner

Hosted by Immaculate Conception every third Friday of the month in the parish hall.



On the menu: Enchiladas!

Please bring a side dish or dessert to share.



St. Lucy's Scandinavian Christmas Dinner

December 17th | Gaudete Sunday

Immaculate Conception

After 11:00 am Mass

Swedish meatballs and Hasselback potatoes are on the menu!



There will be no ENDOW classes on December 21st & 28th.

Class resumes on January 4th!

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wanting to see anyone simply be a mute spectator. In fact, this participation on the part of the laity was and is still considered to be the highest value to be sought in the Liturgy and liturgical reform. Why? Because as baptized souls the laity have a right to such a participation precisely because they are members of the Body of Christ offering with and through the priest (standing in the Person of Christ) His Eucharistic Sacrifice and themselves together with it. The action of the Mass is the action of Christ, the *whole* Christ, Head and Members of the Body.

These are just some basic principles and yes, they are generalized and brief, but I think we can begin to see where this is all heading. If the Mass is the action of the whole Christ, then the Body has to do what the Head is doing and do it in a unified way, that is together and not as individuals with all of our own personal preferences and devotional inclinations. This is accomplished by opening the Roman Missal and faithfully doing what the Church says is supposed to be done and using the texts of the Mass that are assigned to each celebration during the week on special Memorials and Feasts, and also on Sundays and other Holy Days of Obligation.

I will acknowledge that with the liturgical reforms that came out of the Second Vatican Council there also came great abuse and excess and frightful liberties taken with the celebration of the Mass. But it needs to be stated clearly that correlation is not the same as causation, in other words, Vatican Two is not the problem, but poor theology and formation are and will always be a problem. But let's also make this point equally clear, when a priest or bishop changes or alters anything with the Mass, its texts, rubrics, and gestures, they impede the possibility of the laity participating in the Mass as intended by the Church precisely by withholding or making changes to parts of the Mass that they have no authority to change. The night before He died Christ instituted the Sacrifice of His Body

and Blood and then He entrusted the Mass to the Apostles with the command to "do this" in His memory. The Holy See is the only authority that can reform or modify the form of the Mass without doing violence to its essence.

Having said all of that and with what space there remains let's just say this about external participation. First and foremost, the text of the Mass is what is used for each Mass and those parts that are sung are to be sung by the laity, and where responses are expected responses are to be made. Do you know that even to this day there are many folks who do not even say "Amen" when they are shown the Body of Christ right before receiving Holy Communion? Gestures too are important, when to sit, kneel, and stand, and even in the manner of receiving Holy Communion (the norm in the U.S. being to receive standing, but due to tradition one cannot be refused Holy Communion if they choose to kneel). The point of the "externals" is not a mere matter of regulating what people do but rather to show forth our unity as a Body united to its Divine Head in an act of worship. That's why these things are important.

Next week we will continue and touch on the interior aspect of our participation in the Mass. I hope your Advent is going well and always remember that it is never too late to make that one resolution that will bring you one step closer to Christ during this Holiday Season.

God bless,
Fr. Kevin Christofferson

New in Ronan!

Mission Valley Neurodegenerative Disease Support Group

Mission Statement: The purpose of this group is to provide an opportunity for individuals and their loved ones to connect with others who are also living with PD, MS, or ALS.

Meeting Location: St. Luke Community Healthcare,
107 6th Ave SW, Ronan,
Cottonwood Conference Room, main floor across from cafeteria

Meeting Length: 1 hour (contact Monte for meeting dates)

There will be new topics of discussion at each session.

Contact person: Monte Jenkins,
406-253-3484, jenkins@ronan.net

Liturgy Calendar & Mass Intentions

Saturday, December 9th

Vigil of the Second Sunday of Advent

Intentions of Austin HagEstad, rb Michael HagEstad

Sunday, December 10th

Second Sunday of Advent

Repose of the Soul of Elmer H. Ingraham,

rb Linda Dorrington

Intentions of the Parish Faithful

Tuesday, December 12th

Our Lady of Guadalupe

Repose of the Souls of Robert & Jean Carter, rb Katie Devlin

Wednesday, December 13th

St. Lucy, Virgin & Martyr

Intentions of Linda Dorrington, rb Linda Dorrington

Thursday, December 14th

St. John of the Cross, Priest & Doctor of the Church

Repose of the Soul of Bob Colvin, rb Bruno Friia

Friday, December 15th

Repose of the Soul of Denise Nygaard, rb Katie Devlin

Humbly asking for your prayers

Maryalice Rouselle, The Clay Family, Virginia Rubel, Michael Conrad, Kaylee Martin, Dave Evertz, Steve Ducharme, Bill Nash, Donna Jacobs, Derrie Edge, Madge Vert, Heather Stocki, Betty Bjork, Vicki Weiss, Jason Avison, Floyd Smith, Nash Niemeyer, Richard Call, Bud Cheff, Jr, Donna Radtke, Bill Rueth, Monte Jenkins, Chris Skinner, the Sandler Family, Margaret Welty.

Please help to keep the list current by contacting the Parish Office. Also, out of respect for a person's privacy, please make sure that all individuals wish to be publicly identified.

Grace be to you and peace. We give thanks to God always for you all; Making a remembrance of you in our prayers without ceasing. 1 Thessalonians 1:2

The Holy Father's prayer intention for December

For persons with disabilities: We pray that people living with disabilities may be at the center of attention in society, and that institutions may offer inclusive programs which value their active participation.

Please pray for our seminarians!

Dillon Armstrong, John Cooney, Kaleb Mitchell, Riley Helgoe, Brett Rotz, Anthoney Olmes, James Semling, Jamie Severson, Carter Anderson, Shae Bills, Lane Buus, Matt Keck.





Second Sunday of Advent

Entrance Antiphon:

*O people of Sion, behold,
the Lord will come to save the nations,
and the Lord will make the glory of his voice heard
in the joy of your heart.*

Collect:

*Almighty and merciful God,
may no earthly undertaking hinder those
who set out in haste to meet your Son,
but may our learning of heavenly wisdom
gain us admittance to his company.
Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever*

Readings:

FIRST READING: Is 40:1-5, 9-11

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Ps 85:9-10-11-12, 13-14: *Lord, let us
see your kindness, and grant us your salvation.*

SECOND READING: 2 Pt 3:8-14

ALLELUIA: *Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths:
all flesh shall see the salvation of God.* -Cf. Ps 85:8

GOSPEL: Mk 1:1-8

ROSARY GROUP

St. Joseph Hospital
Chapel

Friday at 9:00 am

DIVINE MERCY RADIO 90.7 FM

*DMR is a locally
owned, listener
supported non-
profit 501(c)3*



All homilies are
available on YouTube
and can be found by
searching the full name
Fr. Kevin Christofferson.

The Lake Funeral Home, Shrider-Thompson Funeral Home, Partners in Home Care/Hospice, and Providence St. Joseph Medical Center would like to invite you to our Candle Lighting Ceremony.

Candle Lighting Ceremony

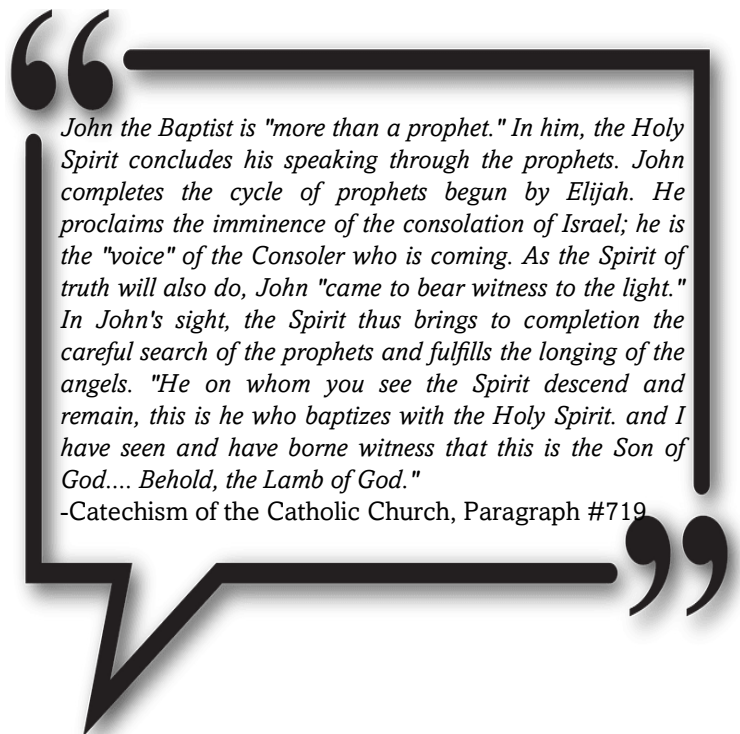
Sunday, December 10, 2023 at 2:00 PM

The Lake Funeral Home

101 6th Ave East, Polson

This is an ecumenical ceremony which will allow the natural feelings of sadness, along with the joy and happiness of the holidays, to help all of us reflect on the memories we cherish. We look forward to sharing this special ceremony with you.

Refreshments and drinks will be served afterwards.



John the Baptist is "more than a prophet." In him, the Holy Spirit concludes his speaking through the prophets. John completes the cycle of prophets begun by Elijah. He proclaims the imminence of the consolation of Israel; he is the "voice" of the Consoler who is coming. As the Spirit of truth will also do, John "came to bear witness to the light." In John's sight, the Spirit thus brings to completion the careful search of the prophets and fulfills the longing of the angels. "He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit. and I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.... Behold, the Lamb of God."

-Catechism of the Catholic Church, Paragraph #719

Food Pantry Necessities

Peanut butter and cereal are a constant need; as well as oats, flour and rice. Clients tend to prefer healthy options for food that are not so loaded with sugar. The Food Pantry will also accept money donations as well. Charitable donations may be left in the basket at the entrance of the church.

The Food Pantry also utilizes plastic grocery bags!

Parish Offertory Progress Report

Fiscal Year beginning July 1st

Immaculate Conception

\$80,705 of \$185,000 (44%)

Sacred Heart/St. Joseph

\$17,481 of \$44,500 (39%)

I.C. Building Fund Progress:

\$4,295 of \$20,000 (21%)



Thank you for your generosity!



BECAUSE
HE FIRST
Loved
US...

A CAMPAIGN FOR CATHOLIC LIFE

Campaign Prayer

O Lord, my God, teach my heart this day
where and how to see You, where and how to find You.

You have made me and remade me,
and You have bestowed on me
all the good things I possess, and still I do not know You.
I have not yet done that for which I was made.

Teach me to seek You,
for I cannot seek You unless You teach me,
or find You unless You show Yourself to me.

Let me seek You in my desire;
let me desire You in my seeking.
Let me find You by loving You;
let me Love You when I find You.

AMEN



CSSM
CATHOLIC SOCIAL SERVICES
of Montana

Mental Health Services

NEW Counseling Program Available!

To get started, you can call (406)442-4130 or visit www.cssmt.org.

**Do you enjoy knitting, crocheting,
macrame, or any other crafts**

projects involving *yarn*?

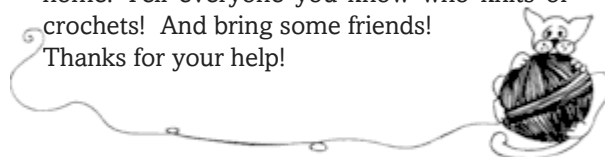
**Do you have a family member or
friend who enjoys knitting? Need a
Christmas gift idea?**

The Knitters & Crocheters Club has been
gifted with many skeins of new yarn, yarn of
all colors, brands and weight. All are invited
to come to Immaculate Conception Church
and pick up any amount of yarn that they
would like to have. **There is no cost!** Free
will donations to support Immaculate
Conception will be accepted.

Saturday, December 16th,

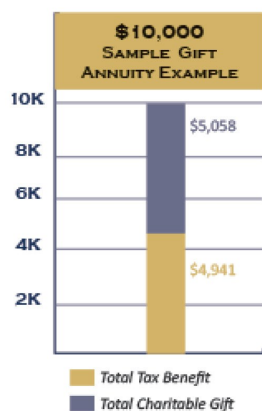
Open from 8:00 am till 1:00 pm.

Please bring shopping bags to haul your yarn
home. Tell everyone you know who knits or
crochets! And bring some friends!
Thanks for your help!



Could you benefit from a 40% Montana Tax Credit?

Imagine if you gave a gift to benefit your parish or favorite Catholic ministry and received nearly HALF of it returned to you
in tax credits! Annuities allow you to make your donations work for you.



Montana is a unique state, committed to giving back to its nonprofits through the Montana Endowment Tax Credit. This piece of our tax code allows you to give to an endowment through a planned gift (charitable annuity), and be able to claim a tax credit of 40% of the total charitable gift.

The Foundation for the Diocese of Helena offers annuities that support 164 different endowments within our Diocese, including one for every parish as well as many Catholic ministries.

Each household is eligible for up to a \$10,000 Montana tax credit per spouse (\$20,000 total). Donate appreciated stock and your tax savings in capital gains could be even more!

**For more information and your own
personalized annuity illustration,
contact the Foundation at (406)389-7050.**

*Due to the planned gift requirement of annuities, we regret that annuities cannot be used for
donations to the Because He First Loved Us Campaign for Catholic Life.*



FOUNDATION
for the Diocese of Helena