



Christ and the Lepers
Gebhard Fugel (1863-1939)

A NOTE FROM THE PASTOR

Our faith calls us to live the Gospel not only in prayer but also in the way we build families, workplaces, and societies. The Church’s social doctrine is rooted in four permanent pillars and is often expanded with three complementary principles that help us apply the Gospel to today’s challenges. Over the course of the next few weeks, we will look at the principle elements of Catholic social teaching a bit more deeply. By way of overview, and a preview, there are four “pillars” of the Church’s social teaching, and three complimentary principles. They are all worth knowing and understanding since they provide a sound basis for making prudential judgments, and personal judgments when we analyze our nation’s public and domestic policies. Be forewarned! Catholic social teaching is not neatly left or right, liberal or conservative, it is Catholic, and as such becomes part of what forms our consciences as disciples of Christ.

The Four Permanent Pillars

- **Human Dignity** – Every person is created in the image and likeness of God and must be respected as an end in himself or herself, never merely as a means. This is the *foundation* of the whole social doctrine.
- **The Common Good** – The sum of social conditions that allow individuals and groups to achieve their fulfillment more fully and more easily. It calls us to promote the welfare of the whole people, present and future.
- **Solidarity** – A Christian virtue that binds the whole human family together, urging us to stand with the poor, the vulnerable, and all our neighbors, near or far.
- **Subsidiarity** – Decisions belong to the most local level possible; larger institutions intervene only when the lower level cannot protect dignity or the common good.

These four pillars are inseparable; each gains its full meaning only in relationship to the others. Granted, integrating these four pillars is not easy and it does require some effort, but apply the effort we must. Related to these four pillars are the three complementary principles which also require our weighty consideration.

The Three Complementary Principles

- **Participation** – Because every person possesses dignity, each is called to take an active, generous role in the life of the Church and society. The Catechism teaches that participation is a moral duty flowing from human dignity.

(Continued on page 2)

Twenty-Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time

12 October 2025

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

Fr. Kevin Christofferson, Pastor
Fr. Robert Brooks, Pastoral Associate
Nate McNeil, Director of Faith Formation
Katie Devlin, Office Manager

Parish Office

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This week’s office hours:

Monday & Wednesday & Friday 9:00 am—12:00 pm

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday at 6:00 pm

Confessions are available at 5:00 pm
Rosary is prayed at 5:30 pm

Sunday at 11:00 am

Rosary is prayed at 10:30 am

Tuesday-Wednesday-Thursday at 12:10 pm

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

SACRED HEART MASS SCHEDULE

Sunday at 9:00 am

Friday at 9:00 am, followed by a Holy Hour

Mass is offered at St. Joseph Mission in Charlo the **third Saturday** of each month at 4:00 pm.



Annual Sacred Heart & Immaculate Conception Harvest Dinner

Sunday, October 19th

Begins at 4:00 pm

Served at the Sacred Heart Parish Hall



SACRED HEART
Parish hall grounds
Fall Cleanup



Tuesday, October 21st, 10:00 am
(gloves & clippers are helpful)

(Continued from page 1)

- **Universal Destination of the Earth's Goods** - All earthly resources are meant for the whole human family. Private property has a social dimension; the poor have a right to what they need for a decent life.
- **Human Rights (and Corresponding Duties)** - Rights such as life, food, shelter, education, health care, religious freedom and conscience arise from the inherent dignity of the person, and each right carries a duty to respect the same rights of others.

Together, these seven principles give us a "grammar of care" for judging personal choices, public policies, and community initiatives. Next week we will look more closely at human dignity and its implications. In the meantime, if you are so inclined, try to commit to memory these pillars and principles, and then use them to exercise the muscle between our ears as we ponder the daily news.

God bless,
Fr. Kevin Christofferson

P.S. On Monday, October 20th, I am heading over to Bozeman to catch my flight to Guatemala on the 21st. I will be out for the next two weeks and will be home in time for the weekend of November 1st and 2nd. All Souls falls on a Sunday this year and so you know what that means? Right? No Gloria is sung! Just checking to make sure you are tracking.



Please plan on attending the Life Chain in Polson on Saturday, October 18th, at 12:45 p.m. We will meet at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church and march to Highway 93 for one hour of prayer and public witness to end abortion in Montana.

Congratulations to the Venters & Shima families!

Julia Marie Venters
To be baptized at Immaculate Conception
this Saturday!



Thompson Joseph Shima
To be baptized at Immaculate Conception
this Sunday!

Liturgy Calendar & Mass Intentions

Sacred Heart & St. Joseph Mission

Sunday, October 12th *Twenty-Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time*
Sick & Shut-Ins of the Parish
Friday, October 17th
Intentions of Bishop Vetter

Immaculate Conception

Saturday, October 11th *Vigil of the 28th Sunday in Ordinary Time*
Repose of the Soul of Teri Hughes, rb Pat Hughes
Sunday, October 12th *Twenty-Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time*
Intentions of the Parish Faithful
Tuesday, October 14th
Intentions of Those Who are Enslaved & End to Slavery
Wednesday, October 15th
Intentions of Our Parish Prayer List
Thursday, October 16th
Repose of the Souls of the Parish Faithful

Humblly 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, Heather Stocki, Betty Bjork, Jason Avison, Nash Niemeyer, Richard Call, Bud Cheff, Jr, Bill Rueth, Monte Jenkins, Chris Skinner, Ryan Johnson, Vicki Whalen, Laurel Cheff, Zane Kelly, Rod Clairmont, David Jenkins, Bruce Simpson, Debbie Tschida, Grace Shafer, Carolyn Fyant, Diana Cote.

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 October



For collaboration between different religious traditions: Let us pray that believers in different religious traditions might work together to defend and promote peace, justice, and human fraternity.

Please pray for our seminarians!

Dcn. Kaleb Mitchell, Riley Helgoe, Brett Rotz, Anthony Olmes, James Semling, Jamie Severson, Carter Anderson, Shae Bills, Matt Keck, Carson Gorton, Jake Smith, Ryan Frampton, Liam Aippersbach, Mason Yochum.

Twenty-Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Entrance Antiphon:

*If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities,
Lord, who could stand?
But with you is found forgiveness,
O God of Israel.*

Collect:

*May your grace, O Lord, we pray,
at all times go before us and follow after
and make us always determined
to carry out good works.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever*

Readings:

First Reading: 2 Kgs 5:14-17
 Responsorial: Ps. 98:1,2-3,3-4
R. The Lord has revealed to the nations his saving power.
 Second Reading: 2 Tm 2:8-13
 Alleluia: *In all circumstances, give thanks, for this is the will of
God for you in Christ Jesus. - 1 Thes 5:18*
 Gospel: Lk 17:11-19

Catechism of the Catholic Church:

Thanksgiving characterizes the prayer of the Church which, in celebrating the Eucharist, reveals and becomes more fully what she is. Indeed, in the work of salvation, Christ sets creation free from sin and death to consecrate it anew and make it return to the Father, for his glory. the thanksgiving of the members of the Body participates in that of their Head. (CCC 2637)



Christ has no body now on earth but yours, no hands, no feet but yours. Yours are the eyes with which Christ looks out his compassion to the world. Yours are the feet with which he is to go about doing good. Yours are the hands with which he is to bless us now.

— Saint Teresa of Avila —

AZ QUOTES



St. Ignatius of Antioch, Bishop & Martyr
 Memorial October 17th

See that you all follow the bishop, even as Jesus Christ does the Father, and the presbytery as you would the apostles; and reverence the deacons, as being the institution of God. Let no man do anything connected with the Church without the bishop. Let that be deemed a proper Eucharist, which is administered either by the bishop, or by one to whom he has entrusted it. Wherever the bishop shall appear, there, let the multitude of the people also be; even as wherever Jesus Christ is, there is the Catholic Church. (Letter to the Smyrnaeans, Chapter 8).

Kaleb Mitchell ordained to the transitional diaconate
 October 2nd, 2025.

Pray for our seminarians!
 (See bottom of page 2)



PARISH WEBSITE



DIOCESE OF HELENA WEBSITE



Download the **myParish app** on your App store or Google Play store on your iOS or Android!



ROSARY GROUP

St. Joseph Hospital Chapel

Fridays at 9:00 am

DIVINE MERCY RADIO 90.7 FM



*DMR is a locally owned, listener supported non-profit 501(c)3
 PO Box 568
 Polson, MT 59860*



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

Don't forget to bring your food pantry items for our local charities!

Polson Loaves & Fishes
 904 1st St E, Polson

Ronan Bread Basket
 10 6th Ave SW, Ronan
 (across from St. Luke's Hospital)

Find donation bins at the churches' entrances.





FROM 9/24/2025 TO 11/2/2025!

You can protect mothers and children by joining this worldwide mobilization effort to pray and fast for an end to abortion!

Through prayer and fasting, peaceful vigils and community outreach, 40 Days for Life has inspired 1,000,000 volunteers!

With God's help, here are the proven results in previous coordinated campaigns:

- Over 16,500 babies saved from abortion
- Over 250 abortion workers converted
- 150 abortion centers closed

Here's how to take part in 40 Days for Life in our community:

- **Vigil location:** Outside BLUE MOUNTAIN CLINIC – 610 N. California St. (near the corner of W. Broadway & California St.), Missoula
- **Vigil hours:** 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM (Mon. – Sat.)
- **Local contact:** Brad Tschida (406-546-4349) betschida54@gmail.com / Diane Rotering (406-274-3639) roteringd@gmail.com
- **Learn more ...** get involved ... and sign up for prayer times by visiting our campaign at the web address shown below!

PLEASE VISIT: 40daysforlife.com/Missoula

- **Vigil location:** Outside ALL FAMILIES HEALTHCARE – 737 Spokane Avenue, Whitefish
- **Vigil days:** Monday through Saturday
- **Local contact:** Mike Hanson (406-314-7826) mikester55@hotmail.com
- Find information for this campaign and more events at the web address below:

PLEASE VISIT: 40daysforlife.com/Whitefish



Visit HopeAfterAbortion.com for more information.



Call 406-442-4130 or visit www.cssmt.org/mental-health/ to get started today!



Payments to Immaculate Conception may be made online at GiveCentral.org (click on the big orange "Find Your Charity" button and type in our zip code, 59860).

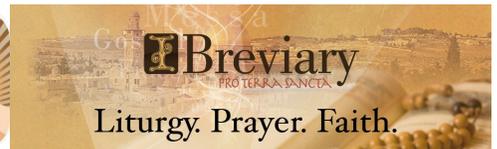


For more information or to apply visit: www.wwme.org
Or call: Paul & Tracy at 307-689-2820

restore communication
rekindle romance
renew commitment
Oct. 3-5, 2025
Missoula, MT

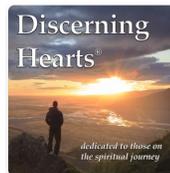


PRAY as YOU GO PrayAsYouGo.org is a daily online resource that offers guided prayer sessions to help individuals grow in their spiritual life. Each session typically includes scripture, reflective music, and prompts for prayer, making it easy to integrate spiritual reflection into your day. Designed for those on the go, it provides a simple way to stay connected to God amidst daily activities. Whether at home, work, or on the move, Pray As You Go supports deepening your relationship with God through accessible, reflective prayer.



Hallow

The #1 Catholic Meditation App



Discerning Hearts Catholic Podcasts
Available on your favorite podcast streaming apps!

Parish Offertory Progress Report
Fiscal Year beginning July 1st

Immaculate Conception
\$56,606 of \$183,150 (31%)
Sacred Heart/St. Joseph
\$12,277 of \$48,393 (25%)

I.C. Building Fund Progress:
\$750 of \$12,000 (6%)
S.H. Building Fund Progress:
\$1,270 of \$1,349 (94%)



Thank you for your generosity!



A CATHOLIC PRIMER on *In Vitro* Fertilization

Today, for a wide range of possible reasons, more and more couples are experiencing the pain of infertility. Many, understandably, deeply desire to have biological children and turn to biomedical technologies like *in vitro* fertilization (IVF) to try to fulfill their dreams. As Catholics, however, our faith teaches that these popular procedures are not the answer. In fact, they are harmful and wrong, and even tragically result in the deaths of many innocent children while they are young embryos. It is important to consider these realities when thinking about infertility treatments.

What is IVF?

In vitro fertilization is the most popular type of assisted reproductive technology, a medical procedure women undergo to become pregnant. *In vitro* means “in glass.” In the IVF process, a woman’s ovaries are typically hyper-stimulated to yield multiple eggs, which are then harvested and fertilized with sperm in a laboratory. Some of the embryos created are transferred into her womb with the intention that at least one of the embryos will grow to full term. Many of the embryos that are transferred do not survive, though, and most of the remaining embryos are either killed in the process (some intentionally, some unintentionally) or are frozen in cryopreservation. Often, the process involves a couple’s own egg and sperm cells. Sometimes, however, they come from third parties. In either case, this process frequently incorporates a form of eugenics in which only certain embryonic children are chosen for implantation based on desirable characteristics,

health outcomes, or both, and those who fail the quality control checks are killed.

Why is IVF wrong?

Even though IVF can help create new life, there are multiple factors that make it contrary to God’s plan for marriage and children, therefore rendering it morally wrong. For example, as mentioned above, it often includes the death or freezing of embryonic children. And although preserving embryos by freezing them does not kill them, it could be compared to placing innocent children in prison. Creating embryonic children to be frozen and participating in their deaths are both profound violations of their dignity. As another example of why IVF is wrong, it also often includes immoral behavior by the man to obtain sperm.

Furthermore, according to God’s plan, marriage is an exclusive, lifelong union between a man and a woman that reflects the absolute and unfailing love with which God loves us. Sexual intimacy has two aspects—the power to unite (unitive) and the potential to create new life (procreative). These aspects belong together and should not be separated. And every child, as a human being, has the right to be conceived through a natural act of mutual, self-giving love within marital intercourse. But IVF separates conception from the spouses’ intimate, sexual union, and the children conceived through IVF are instead created through technological manipulation. IVF also intrudes on the exclusive nature of the couple’s union by introducing other people into the act of conception itself (as opposed to other treatments, discussed

below, which may help conception to occur within marital intercourse).

Additionally, every human being is a gift made in God's image with infinite dignity, so people should not be treated like objects or property. No matter how sincerely the children are loved and wanted, the process still treats them like products that can be bought and ordered. And in cases where a third party's eggs or sperm are used, or where a woman acts as a gestational surrogate and carries the child, these people are also treated like property in a transaction and as means to an end, rather than as people to be respected.

But isn't it good to help bring more children into loving families?

The powerful desire to procreate children is natural and good. Children themselves are among the greatest goods and are a blessing from God. Like all human beings, they are also a gift. In marriage, we are called to be open to receiving such a beautiful gift. But no one has an absolute "right" to obtain a child, just like we do not have a "right" to demand any other gift, no matter how deeply and sincerely we desire it. Even though children are a great good, this does not make IVF (with all its problems as discussed above) morally acceptable.

Are there any acceptable medical treatments for couples struggling with infertility?

Yes, there are ethical fertility treatments of which the Catholic Church approves. These can take many forms but are collectively referred to as "restorative reproductive medicine."

Restorative reproductive medicine investigates and seeks to heal the root causes of the couple's infertility (which can vary) rather than ignoring or bypassing the causes of infertility like IVF does. In fact, restorative reproductive medicine is often more successful than IVF. Many in the health care industry, however, do not know how to pursue these options, and it may be challenging to find a doctor who practices restorative reproductive medicine. A number of national Natural Family Planning (NFP) education organizations can assist married couples with a list



of medical professionals who provide Restorative Reproductive Medicine (RRM); please see uscgb.org/topics/natural-family-planning/nfp-national-providers.

What if the ethical treatments don't work?

Unfortunately, even after pursuing restorative reproductive medicine, some couples may still experience infertility. This cross can be deeply painful, and the grief may be overwhelming. It is crucial to note that these couples are not alone. God is with them and has a beautiful plan for their lives, and the Church desires to walk with them. "To couples who cannot have children," Pope St. John Paul II assured, "you are no less loved by God; your love for each other is complete and fruitful when it is open to others."¹

Adoption and foster care are some ways married couples can cultivate and share their love that is fruitful and open to others. There is so much need for open hearts and homes. Pope St. John Paul II described adoption as "a great work of love," assuring parents that "[w]hen it is done, much is given, but much is also received. It is a true exchange of gifts."² There are also other ways couples can cultivate and share love, such as through service and participation in parish life.

Reflecting on the healed wounds of the Risen Christ, we can see that even our most difficult trials can be the place where God shows the power

of his love. He makes all things beautiful. He makes all things new. He is the reason for hope and joy even in the darkest moments.

For more from the USCCB on infertility, visit usccb.org/topics/natural-family-planning/infertility. Your diocese may have additional ministries or resources for couples experiencing infertility as well.

My child was conceived through IVF. I love them. God loves them. Does the Church love them?

Absolutely!

Every human being is created in the image and likeness of God and is equally loved by Him—and is equally worthy of the love of fellow Christians. That love does not depend on the circumstances of a person’s conception or birth. In fact, this is why we also care about the little brothers and sisters who were also created with IVF but who died or were frozen as young embryos.

Can I serve as a surrogate to help someone I love to have a child?

For many of the same reasons described above, participation in surrogate childbearing is wrong. Again, it intrudes into the unique and sacred space of the marriage bond and treats the women and children involved like objects—even if that is not the intention. In surrogacy contracts, even in cases of “altruistic” surrogacy where no money is exchanged, the nature of the process means that a woman is valued according to her capacity

for production and output; she is not treated as a mother who loves and nurtures her child as he or she grows in the womb.

Surrogacy is also especially harmful to the rights of the child, who bonds with and comes to know the voice of his or her mother before he or she is even born. But in a surrogacy arrangement, that child is then taken away from his or her mother at birth. That is different from adoption because, in surrogacy, a child is procreated specifically for this unfortunate situation. Whereas, in the case of infant adoption, the separation is decided as the best outcome for the wellbeing of a child who is already in existence in the womb.

Where can I read more about what the Church says on IVF and infertility?

- *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 2373 – 2379.
- *Donum vitae*, Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 1987
- *Dignitas personae*, Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 2008
- *Life-Giving Love in an Age of Technology*, USCCB, 2009
- “Children as Commodities?” USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities, 2014
- “Seven Considerations While Navigating Infertility,” USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities, 2016

For more information, visit usccb.org/prolife/reproductive-technology.

¹ Pope John Paul II, “Homily at the Mass for the Families on February 13, 1982,” (Vatican City: *Libreria Editrice Vaticana*, 1982).

² Pope John Paul II, “Address to the Meeting of the Adoptive Families Organized by the Missionaries of Charity on September 5, 2000,” (Vatican City: *Libreria Editrice Vaticana*, 2000).

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