

*Saint John the Baptist* | Titian (c. 1488-1576)

**A commentary on Isaiah by Eusebius of Caesarea  
A voice of one crying in the wilderness**

*The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight the paths of our God.* The prophecy makes clear that it is to be fulfilled, not in Jerusalem but in the wilderness: it is there that the glory of the Lord is to appear, and God's salvation is to be made known to all mankind.

It was in the wilderness that God's saving presence was proclaimed by John the Baptist, and there that God's salvation was seen. The words of this prophecy were fulfilled when Christ and his glory were made manifest to all: after his baptism the heavens opened, and the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove rested on him, and the Father's voice was heard, bearing witness to the Son: *This is my beloved Son, listen to him.*

The prophecy meant that God was to come to a deserted place, inaccessible from the beginning. None of the pagans had any knowledge of God, since his holy servants and prophets were kept from approaching them. The voice commands that a way be prepared for the Word of God: the rough and trackless ground is to be made level, so that our God may find a highway when he comes. *Prepare the way of the Lord:* the way is the preaching of the Gospel, the new message of consolation, ready to bring to all mankind the knowledge of God's saving power.

*Climb on a high mountain, bearer of good news to Zion. Lift up your voice in strength, bearer of good news to Jerusalem.* These words harmonise very well with the meaning of what has gone before. They refer opportunely to the evangelists and proclaim the coming of God to men, after speaking of the voice crying in the wilderness. Mention of the evangelists suitably follows the prophecy on John the Baptist.

What does Zion mean if not the city previously called Jerusalem? This is the mountain referred to in that passage from Scripture: *Here is mount Zion, where you dwell.* The Apostle says: *You have come to mount Zion.* Does not this refer to the company of the apostles, chosen from the former people of the circumcision?

*(Continued on page 2)*

*Second Sunday of Advent*  
**7 December 2025**

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

**Fr. Kevin Christofferson, Pastor**  
**Nate McNeil, Director of Faith Formation**  
**Katie Devlin, Office Manager**

**Parish Office**  
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**This week's office hours:**  
Wednesday & Friday 9 am—12 pm | Tuesday & Thursday 2 - 5 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*

**Monday** at 10:00 am (see details below)

**Tuesday** at 8:00 am

**Wednesday** at 12:10 pm  
*Confessions are heard at 11:30 am and again after Mass during a period of Eucharistic Adoration.*

**Thursday** at 8:00 am

**SACRED HEART MASS SCHEDULE**

**Sunday** at 9:00 am

**Friday** at 9:00 am  
*Followed by a Holy Hour of Eucharistic Adoration*  
*Confession will be offered during the Holy Hour until Benediction at 10:30 am.*

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



*Solemnity of the*  
*Immaculate Conception of*  
*the Blessed Virgin Mary*

Monday, December 8th  
Holy Day of Obligation

Mass at Immaculate Conception  
at 10:00 am

(Continued from page 1)

This is the Zion, the Jerusalem, that received God's salvation. It stands aloft on the mountain of God, that is, it is raised high on the only-begotten Word of God. It is commanded to climb the high mountain and announce the word of salvation. Who is the bearer of the good news but the company of the evangelists? What does it mean to bear the good news but to preach to all nations, but first of all to the cities of Judah, the coming of Christ on earth?

*Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice. Indeed, the Lord is near.*

**GAUDETE SUNDAY  
DECEMBER 14**  
Breakfast served by the Knights of Columbus after the 11:00 Mass. The winner to the "Keep Christ in Christmas" poster contest will be announced!



## Immaculate Conception Christmas Decorating

Please stay after Mass on December 21 to help transform our sanctuary from Advent to Christmas. All help will be greatly appreciated. Call Sheila LeBrun with questions. 406-208-5788



## Did you know?



The **Immaculate Conception** refers not to the virgin birth of Christ, but to the conception of his mother, Mary.

In the Constitution "Ineffabilis Deus" of December 8, 1854, Pius IX pronounced and defined that the **Blessed Virgin Mary** "in the first instant of her **conception**, by a singular privilege and grace granted by God, in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Savior of the human race, **was preserved exempt from all stain of original sin.**"

Reference: Catholic Encyclopedia

Want a great opportunity to volunteer and help the needy in our community? Helping Hands has the perfect opportunity for you! We have Holiday Helping Hands which is replacing the annual Bell Ringing with the Salvation Army.

100% of the money collected will stay in Lake County! Immaculate Conception Church Day will be Friday, December 12 at Super One.

To sign up please call Toni Whealon at 406-253-2096, or find the sign-up sheet at the church entrance in Polson. If you would like a different day we can arrange that too. Help our neighbors in need.



### Liturgy Calendar & Mass Intentions

#### Sacred Heart & St. Joseph Mission

**Sunday, December 7<sup>th</sup>** *Second Sunday of Advent*  
Sick & Shut-Ins of the Parish

**Friday, December 12<sup>th</sup>**  
Repose of the Soul of Ann Koberg, rb Katie Devlin

#### Immaculate Conception

**Saturday, December 6<sup>th</sup>** *Vigil of the Second Sunday of Advent*  
Repose of the Soul of Teri Hughes, rb Pat Hughes

**Sunday, December 7<sup>th</sup>** *Second Sunday of Advent*  
Intentions of the Parish Faithful

**Monday, December 8<sup>th</sup>** *Immaculate Conception of the B.V.M.*  
Intentions of the Parish Faithful

**Tuesday, December 9<sup>th</sup>**  
Repose of the Soul of Jean Carter, rb Katie Devlin

**Wednesday, December 10<sup>th</sup>**  
For human rights to be enshrined in law

**Thursday, December 11<sup>th</sup>**  
Intentions of Bishop Vetter

## PRAYER CORNER

### *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, 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, Carolyn Fyant, Diana Cote, Shawna Lehner, Bill Efinger.



*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.*

### The Holy Father's prayer intention for December

#### **For Christians in areas of conflict:**

Let us pray that Christians living in areas of war or conflict, especially in the Middle East, might be seeds of peace, reconciliation, and hope.

### *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.

## Memorials This Week

### Saint Juan Diego December 9



### Our Lady of Loreto December 10



### Pope St. Damasus I December 11



### Our Lady of Guadalupe December 12



### St. Lucy December 13

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.



## 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 11:1-10

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17

SECOND READING: Rom 15:4-9

ALLELUIA: *Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths:  
all flesh shall see the salvation of God.* (Lk. 3:4,6)

GOSPEL: Mt 3:1-12

Catechism of the Catholic Church:

*We can therefore hope in the glory of heaven promised by God to those who love him and do his will. In every circumstance, each one of us should hope, with the grace of God, to persevere "to the end" and to obtain the joy of heaven, as God's eternal reward for the good works accomplished with the grace of Christ.* (CCC 1821)



The Knights of the Columbus would like to offer transportation services to Sunday Mass for parishioners who need assistance. Please call the parish office or John Winegart at (406) 270-6655, if you need help or know of anyone needing help getting to Mass.



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.*



Tired of those secular “Christmas cards”? Put *Christ* back in *Christmas* with some new greeting cards, sold by your local Polson chapter of the Knights of Columbus! Cards will be made available at the church entrance at the weekend Masses at Immaculate Conception



## 2026 Summer Camp Season CAMPS SCHEDULE

|                                   |                                     |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>June 14-19</b> Junior High #1  | <b>July 12-17</b> High School #2    |
| <b>June 21-26</b> High School #1  | <b>July 19-24</b> Junior High #2    |
| <b>July 5-10</b> 5/6th Grade Boys | <b>July 26-31</b> 5/6th Grade Girls |

Registration for **families who live within the Diocese of Helena** opens **Jan 5<sup>th</sup>**. Opens for all other registrants Jan 9th.



## Join us for Family Camp!

June 28-30

Registrations open  
March 2nd, 2026

## Camp Rates

Early Bird  
(Register before Jan 25th)  
**\$425**  
Standard Rate:  
**\$450**

# ANNUAL CATHOLIC APPEAL

FUNDING THE MINISTRY OF THE DIOCESE OF HELENA

## HABEMUS PAPAM



### ACA 2025 PARISH PROGRESS

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

**50.3%**

Goal: \$29,700  
Committed: \$14,937

SACRED HEART

**57.0%**

Goal: \$9,100  
Committed: \$5,190

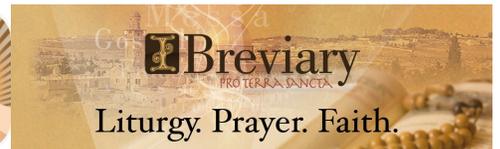


PrayAsYouGo.org is a daily online resource that offers guided prayer sessions to help individuals grow in their spiritual life. Each session typically includes scripture, reflective music, and prompts for prayer, making it easy to integrate spiritual reflection into your day. Designed for those on the 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.

All parish communications are now through Evangelus! If you have accidentally opted out of text messages, you may text “Unstop” to **1-866-498-2036 (Immaculate Conception)** or **1-866-953-1870 (Sacred Heart)**. If you have not yet opted in for messages and would like to, please text “YES” to the appropriate number above. Please contact the parish office if you need assistance.



Consider adding these numbers to your phone contacts so you always know when you are receiving a message from the parish!



Liturgy. Prayer. Faith.

Hallow

The #1 Catholic  
Meditation App



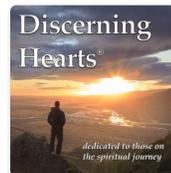
Protect Your Family | Guard Your Heart  
Internet Accountability and Filtering



Call **406-442-4130** or visit [www.cssmt.org/mental-health/](http://www.cssmt.org/mental-health/) to get started today!



Payments to **Immaculate Conception** may be made online at [GiveCentral.org](http://GiveCentral.org) (click on the big orange “Find Your Charity” button and type in our zip code, 59860).



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

### Parish Offertory Progress Report Fiscal Year beginning July 1<sup>st</sup>

**Immaculate Conception**  
\$82,251 of \$183,150 (45%)  
**Sacred Heart/St. Joseph**  
\$19,065 of \$48,393 (39%)

**I.C. Building Fund Progress:**  
\$1,350 of \$12,000 (11%)  
**S.H. Building Fund Progress:**  
\$1,920 of \$1,349 (142%)



**Thank you for your generosity!**

## ADVENT REFLECTION

### **Part Two: The Watchful Heart** *Preparing a Dwelling for Christ*

Advent is a season of holy watching. If in the first week we listen to the cry, “Prepare the way of the Lord,” then in the second movement of Advent the Church teaches us how to prepare—by cultivating a heart that is awake, attentive, and uncluttered. The early Christians understood watching not as a passive waiting but an active, interior readiness. Saint Augustine preached, “He who came in humility shall yet come in glory; let us, then, not fall asleep in the meantime, but keep our hearts attentive, lest when He comes He find us unprepared.”

This “attentiveness of heart” is a dominant theme throughout Scripture. It echoes in the prophets and flowers fully in the Gospel. Watching is never presented as fear-driven or exhausting. Rather, it is the posture of lovers—those who wait for Someone they desire. Jesus Himself said, “Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” The Christian who watches does so because he treasures Christ more than anything the world offers.

Advent invites us to rediscover this treasure. In a world full of noise, distractions, and ceaseless motion, Christ quietly asks, “Will you make room for Me?” Teresa of Avila, whose life was a fire of longing for God, once wrote, “The Lord walks among the pots and pans.” For her—and for us—God is not waiting for extraordinary conditions; He is seeking hearts that turn toward Him even in the midst of daily duties, ordinary struggles, and tired evenings. Watching begins not by escaping life, but by recognizing that Christ is already drawing near—in prayer, in people, in silence, and in the circumstances of every day.

The Fathers of the Church often use the image of the soul as a house. Some rooms are tidy and warm; others are cluttered, locked, neglected, or dim. Saint Catherine of Siena urges us to go “into the cell of self-knowledge,” not to shame ourselves but to clear space: space for grace, space for love, space for Christ. She teaches that a heart divided cannot watch well. We become drowsy in spirit when we hold too many competing loves—comfort, reputation, control, resentment. Advent is Christ’s gentle knock upon the door of each room, asking permission to enter, to heal, to reorder, and to reign.

But watching is difficult not because God is far away, but because we are often distracted, scattered across too many concerns. Pope Francis frequently warns against what he calls “spiritual worldliness”—the subtle absorption into a life where God is present in theory, but marginalized in practice. Advent asks us to reverse this drift: to consciously place Christ again at the center, so that our choices, priorities, and desires gradually revolve around Him. To watch is to love; and love pays attention.

The saints remind us that watchfulness is born from desire. Saint Alphonsus Liguori writes with pastoral tenderness, “If you desire Jesus, He is already near. This desire is the beginning of His coming.” Advent is not about generating artificial intensity; it is about awakening desire: Lord, I want You to come into my life more fully. When we pray like this, God never delays. He begins immediately—even if we do not yet see the fruit.

Francis de Sales, ever practical and gentle, instructs us to begin not with heroic resolutions but with small steps of fidelity: a moment of silence before the day begins, a pause to acknowledge God’s presence between tasks, a word of kindness where resentment once lived. These are small acts of watching, but they clear a path for Christ as surely as the great prophets did.

And so Advent’s second movement invites us to cultivate a watchful heart: a heart that knows Christ is near, desires Him deeply, and opens space for Him daily. The One we await is not distant. He comes quietly, gently, persistently. Watching prepares us not merely for Christmas Day, but for a renewed life in the ongoing presence of Christ—Emmanuel, God-with-us.

## SCRIPTURE FOR PRAYER AND REFLECTION

### 1. Luke 12:35–37

“Stay dressed for action and keep your lamps burning, and be like men waiting for their master to come home from the wedding feast... Blessed are those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes.”

### 2. Romans 13:11–12

“You know the time; it is the hour now for you to wake from sleep... The night is far gone; the day is at hand. Let us then cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light.”

### 3. Psalm 27:7–8, 13–14

“You have said, ‘Seek my face.’ My heart says to You, ‘Your face, Lord, I seek.’ ... I believe I shall see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait for the Lord; be strong; let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord.”

### 4. Revelation 3:20

“Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.”

### Questions for Reflection:

Where is my heart distracted or spiritually “drowsy”?

*What competes with Christ for my primary attention and desire?*

Which “rooms” of my inner house have I not allowed Christ to enter?

*Are there habits, grudges, comforts, or fears that keep Him outside?*

Do I desire Christ?

*What increases this desire? What weakens it?*

How attentive am I to God’s presence in small daily moments?

*Where have I noticed Him recently?*

What prevents me from watching well—fear, routine, exhaustion, or spiritual indifference?

*How might Christ want to awaken me?*

### A Challenge for the Coming Week:

Practice the “Three Watchful Moments” each day of this week:

#### Morning:

Spend 2 minutes in silence before anything else. Simply pray:

“Lord, I watch for You. Open my heart today.”

#### Midday:

Pause for one intentional act of attention: acknowledge God’s presence, or choose a hidden act of charity.

#### Evening:

Review the day and identify one moment where Christ knocked, and whether you opened the door.

*These three small acts will train the heart in watchfulness and slowly make space for Christ’s coming—both at Christmas and far beyond it.*