

# 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday

I N O R D I N A R Y T I M E

"When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain and after he had sat down, his disciples came to him." Mt 5:1

## ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

SERVING ST. MARY'S/ MALTA, SACRED HEART/ DODSON, ST. FRANCIS /SACO

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 1ST, 2026

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Please check our website for additional information.

Weekly bulletins are posted in full color with several additions – check them out here: <https://www.saintmarysmalta.org/bulletins>

**Confession** – Friday's 9-10am, Saturday's 11-noon or contact Fr. Felix directly for an appointment.

**Adoration** – every Friday 9:00-10:00am immediately following daily Mass.

#### **MASS SCHEDULE:**

Saturday vigil – Malta 5:00pm    Sunday – Saco 8:30am, Malta 10:30am, Dodson 12:30pm

Daily Mass (Monday thru Friday) – Malta 8:30am

## **Homily by Fr. Felix:**

*IV Sunday in Ordinary Time (A): Zephaniah 2:3; 3:12–13, 1 Corinthians 1:26–31, Matthew 5:1–12*

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

In a world that measures happiness by power, success, wealth, and recognition, today's readings present a radically different vision, one shaped by humility, dependence on God, and faithfulness of heart. God reveals His saving power through humility, poverty of spirit, and trust in Him. The Beatitudes show that true blessedness is found when human weakness becomes the place where God's grace reigns.

In the first reading, we hear God's promise to preserve a humble and lowly people who seek refuge in the name of the Lord. This remnant is not defined by strength or prestige but by trust. They are those who do no wrong, speak no lies, and live quietly under God's protection. Zephaniah reminds us that God's saving work often begins not with the powerful majority but with a faithful few who remain humble and obedient.

In the second Reading, St. Paul reminds the Corinthian community that not many among them were wise, powerful, or noble by worldly standards. Yet God chose what is foolish, weak, and lowly to reveal His wisdom and power. So that no one might boast before God. Human pride is dismantled at the foot of the Cross, where salvation is revealed as pure gift. Paul's words challenge us to root our lives in Christ alone who became for us wisdom from God, as well as righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. True Christian life begins when self-reliance gives way to God-dependence.

In today's Gospel from Matthew, Jesus proclaims the Beatitudes at the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount. This is not merely a

moral teaching but a revelation of the heart of God and the identity of the Kingdom. The Beatitudes describe not an idealized future group, but the very character of Christ Himself.

Blessed are the poor in spirit. Poverty of spirit is not material deprivation alone, but an interior attitude of humility, knowing that everything we are and have comes from God. Such people are open, receptive, and free. They do not cling to control but allow God to reign in their lives.

Blessed are the meek... the merciful... the pure of heart... the peacemakers. These are not signs of weakness but marks of spiritual strength. They reflect a heart transformed by grace, capable of love even in suffering, hope even in persecution. Jesus does not deny the reality of pain or injustice; rather, He promises that God's final word belongs to mercy, consolation, and justice.

The Beatitudes overturn worldly logic. They proclaim that the poor inherit the Kingdom, the mourners are comforted, and the persecuted rejoice. This is possible only because God Himself enters human suffering in Christ and transforms it from within.

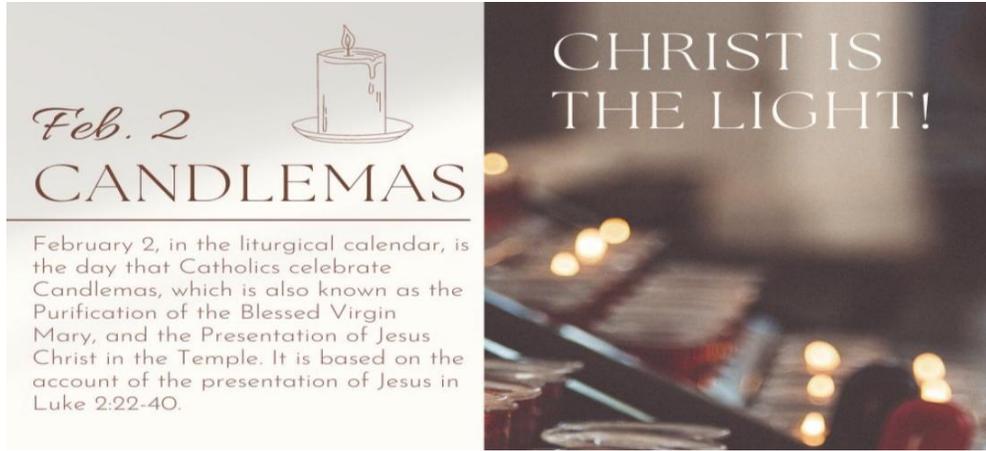
Dear friends, today's readings call us to live as the humble remnant in our own time, to trust God more than ourselves, to boast not in achievements but in the Lord, and to embrace the Beatitudes as the path to authentic happiness. Holiness grows quietly in hearts that surrender daily to God's grace.

May the Eucharist we celebrate strengthen us to live this Gospel paradox, to be poor yet rich in faith, weak yet strong in love, humble yet blessed in Christ, who alone is our true happiness. Amen.

# ANNOUNCEMENTS:

**Considering donating to the church?** If you're interested in exploring donation options beyond regular Mass Offerings, please reach out to a Finance Council Member for further discussion. We truly appreciate your ongoing generosity, which plays a vital role in helping our church thrive.

Please make sure **doors latch** when leaving the church to keep the warm air in. Sometimes this requires a good slam to get it to latch. Thank you.



**If you would like to have another Priest perform a service (funeral, wedding, baptism, ect.) in our Parish, please contact Fr. Felix so he may grant his permission.**

**Week of January 25th, 2026 Donations: Malta \$2,735, Saco \$315, Dodson -no count this week**

A **Carroll College Scholarship**, given in memory of the deceased priests of the Diocese of Helena and the Diocese of Great Falls- Billings, is being offered to one prospective student from our Parish.

Please email or call the office at, [office@saintmarysmalta.org](mailto:office@saintmarysmalta.org) or (406) 654-1311, with a recipient's name to be considered for the scholarship. DEADLINE: March 1<sup>st</sup>.

The **2026 SEARCH** date has been set:  
**March 20th, 21st, and 22<sup>nd</sup>**  
 For more information, please contact  
 Dianne Salsbery, Becky Bruce, or Alora Jesson

## Prayer Requests

*If you have a prayer request, please contact  
**Dianne Salsbery at 406-654-4675.**  
 Names will be listed in the bulletin for a minimum of 30 days.*

**Please pray for** –Kylie Starkey, Chuck Nurville, David Cochran, Dawn Goodheart Jones, the family of Skyla Sisco, Leona Kienenberger, the families of Staci French, Carletta Benson, Joe Simanton, Judy Henry, Adalyn McCollom, Gloria Combs, Corky LaBrie, Dianne Salsbery, Bob Kaluza, Tammy Peterson and those from our area serving in the military.

**For the repose of the souls of** – Skyla Sisco, Staci French, Shirley Eklund, Alvina Doucette, Derek Davis, KJ Wilke, Jim Robinson, David Williamson, Lee Stevens and all souls in need and pray also for their families that they find comfort and peace.

## Next weeks Ministry Volunteers: February 7 & February 8

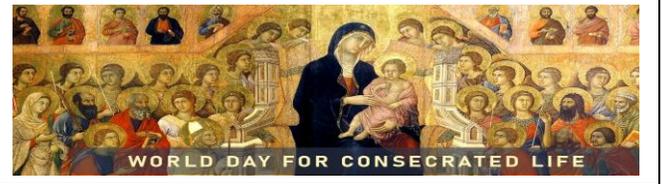
	Sacristan	Lector	Hospitality	Money Counter
<b>Saturday, 5:00 PM</b>	Diane Liebel	Clay Jesson Mary LaFond	Alora Jesson	
<b>Sunday, 10:30 AM</b>	Cheryl Moore	Margaret Hanson Ryan Lankford		Cathy Salsbery - Money Counter Deb Sjostrom - Money Counter

**Mass Intentions** - to schedule an intention,  
please fill out an envelope at the back of the church.  
Each Intention is \$10

Saturday 1.31.26	For Lisa Webb r/b Regina Webb
Sunday 2.1.26 10:30 Malta	- For fallen away Catholics r/b Cummings
8:30am Saco	- For spiritual awakening r/b Lana Fortin
12:30 Dodson	- For the faithful in our Parish
Monday 2.2.26	For the repose of the soul of John Depuydt r/b the Howells
Tuesday 2.3.26	For Dallas and Cyra Rushton and family r/b Mears Family
Wednesday 2.4.26	For the injured r/b Lana Fortin
Thursday 2.5.26	For the souls in purgatory r/b Cummings
Friday 2.6.26	For my family r/b Lana Fortin
Saturday 2.7.26	For the repose of the soul of Derek Davis r/b Lana Fortin
Sunday 2.8.26	For the faithful in our Parish

**Daily Readings for the Week of  
February 1st:**

<b>Sunday:</b>	Zep 2:3; 3:12-13/Ps 146:6c-7, 8-9a, 9b-10/1 Cor 1:26-31/Mt 5:1-12a
<b>Monday:</b>	Mal 3:1-4/Ps 24:7, 8, 9, 10/Heb 2:14-18/Lk 2:22-40 or 2:22-32
<b>Tuesday:</b>	2 Sm 18:9-10, 14b, 24-25a, 30-19:3/Ps 86:1-2, 3-4, 5-6/Mk 5:21-43
<b>Wednesday:</b>	2 Sm 24:2, 9-17/Ps 32:1-2, 5, 6, 7/Mk 6:1-6
<b>Thursday:</b>	1 Kgs 2:1-4, 10-12/1 Chr 29:10, 11ab, 11d-12a, 12bcd/Mk 6:7-13
<b>Friday:</b>	Sir 47:2-11/Ps 18:31, 47 and 50, 51/Mk 6:14-29
<b>Saturday:</b>	1 Kgs 3:4-13/Ps 119:9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14/Mk 6:30-34
<b>Next Sunday:</b>	Is 58:7-10/Ps 112:4-5, 6-7, 8-9/1 Cor 2:1-5/Mt 5:13-1



**Finance Council members include:**

- Mike Ereaux** 406-658-2613 (H), 406-654-7803 (C), [7mfe7195@itstriangle.com](mailto:7mfe7195@itstriangle.com)  
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**Bonnie Lankford** 406-390-2276, [Bonnie4339@hotmail.com](mailto:Bonnie4339@hotmail.com) (Dodson)

*Meetings are generally the 3rd Thursday of the month. If interested in serving please contact a member of the finance council.*

**Parish Council members include:**

- Alora Snider**— 406-399-1675, [alora\\_lynn\\_09@hotmail.com](mailto:alora_lynn_09@hotmail.com)  
**Shawn Bleth**— 406-654-7303, [shawn.bleth@gmail.com](mailto:shawn.bleth@gmail.com)  
**Nancy Ereaux**—406-658-2613  
**Jeff Van Heel**—406-266-1133  
**Joy DePuydt**—406-674-5560, [joyful@itstriangle.com](mailto:joyful@itstriangle.com) (Saco)  
**Leona Kienenberger**—406-383-4459, [leona\\_kienenberger@yahoo.com](mailto:leona_kienenberger@yahoo.com) (Dodson)

*"What do you call the lettering on an invitation to a baby's first Sacrament?"*



**"The Baptismal font."**



Inside of every Catholic church, there is a Baptismal font. The Baptismal font is typically a pedestal that holds holy water in it, and it's used for the Sacrament of Baptism.

**Prayers of the Faithful** For those consecrated in God by the vows of chastity, poverty and obedience that they may seek to live their baptismal promises more intensely and have the grace to persevere in their commitment to the Lord and serve with open hearts and willing spirits. We pray to the Lord....

# Weekly Prayer

## Sunday's Readings

### First Reading:

I will make of you a great nation,  
and I will bless you;  
I will make your name great,  
so that you will be a blessing. (Gn 12:2)

### Psalm:

Lord, let your mercy be on us, as we place our trust in you. (Ps 33)

### Second Reading:

Bear your share of hardship for the gospel  
with the strength that comes from God.  
He saved us and called us to a holy life. (2 Tm 1:8-9)

### Gospel:

Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother,  
and led them up a high mountain by themselves.  
And he was transfigured before them;  
his face shone like the sun. (Mt 17:1-2)

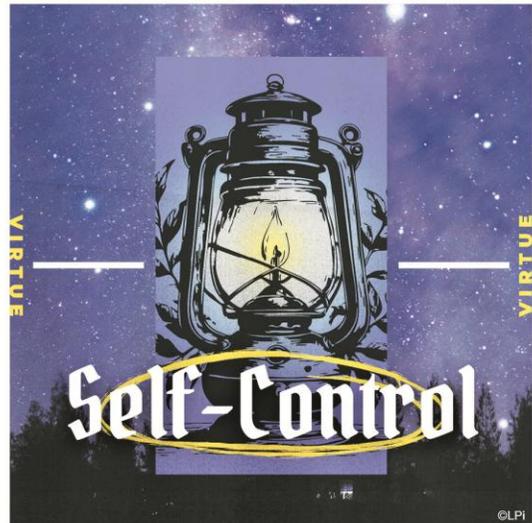
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## Live The Liturgy Inspiration of the Week

“Go forth,” God told Abram. We hear that message again in the Transformation: go forth. We cannot always remain where we are comfortable. We cannot always remain where things are simple. We must go forth.

## Observances for the week of March 1, 2026

- Sunday:** 2nd Sunday of Lent  
**Tuesday:** St. Katharine Drexel, Virgin  
**Wednesday:** St. Casimir  
**Saturday:** Sts. Perpetua and Felicity, Martyrs  
**Next Sunday:** 3rd Sunday of Lent;  
Daylight Saving Time begins



## Virtues, Explained!

Self-control flows from the cardinal virtue of temperance, and it's really all about boundaries. Through self-control, a gift of the Holy Spirit, we avoid surrendering too much of ourselves to our passions.

## Blessing of Hope

In Your goodness Lord, bless us.  
Help us to know Your abundance  
and Your gifts.  
Help us to hear Your voice and  
know Your assurance.  
Help us remember what You have  
done,  
and look forward to what You will  
do.  
Amen.

# Worship & Meditation

## Readings for the week of March 1, 2026

### Sunday:

Gn 12:1-4a/Ps 33:4-5, 18-19, 20, 22/  
2 Tm 1:8b-10/Mt 17:1-9

### Monday:

Dn 9:4b-10/Ps 79:8, 9, 11 and 13/  
Lk 6:36-38

### Tuesday:

Is 1:10, 16-20/Ps 50:8-9, 16bc-17, 21 and  
23/Mt 23:1-12

### Wednesday:

Jer 18:18-20/Ps 31:5-6, 14, 15-16/  
Mt 20:17-28

### Thursday:

Jer 17:5-10/Ps 1:1-2, 3, 4 and 6/Lk 16:19-31

### Friday:

Gn 37:3-4, 12-13a, 17b-28a/Ps 105:16-17,  
18-19, 20-21/Mt 21:33-43, 45-46

### Saturday:

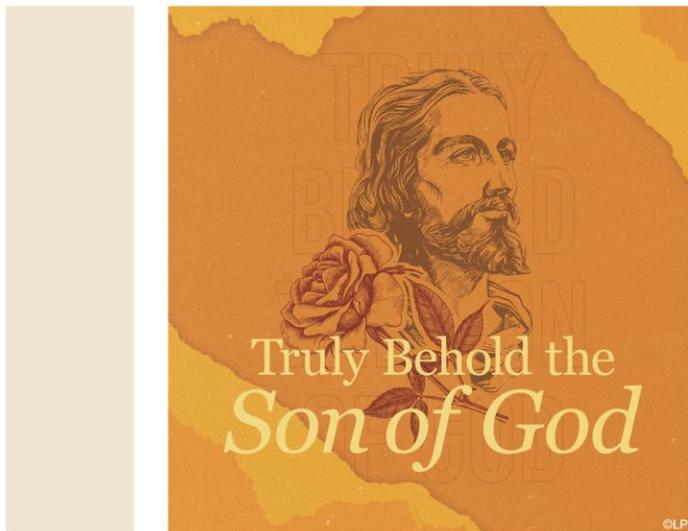
Mi 7:14-15, 18-20/Ps 103:1-2, 3-4, 9-10,  
11-12/Lk 15:1-3, 11-32

### Next Sunday:

Ex 17:3-7/Ps 95:1-2, 6-7, 8-9/Rom 5:1-2,  
5-8/Jn 4:5-42 or 4:5-15, 19b-26, 39a,  
40-42



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## Gospel Meditation

### Encourage Deeper Understanding of Scripture

When I sit down to answer emails or write a Gospel reflection or return a phone call, I sometimes wonder: Does any of this humdrum work matter? Maybe you ask the same thing about your daily labor. Today's Gospel, the Transfiguration, offers a surprising answer.

Jesus leads Peter, James, and John up a mountain. There, **“his face shone like the sun face and his clothes become white as light” (Matthew 17:2)**. That detail regarding his clothes is worth considering.

We know Jesus' body is inseparably united to the divine nature. But his clothing? That's something made by human hands. It's an artifact. And yet it shines with the same uncreated light. What does this detail mean? The early Church noted that Adam and Eve's first act after the Fall was to make clothing. This clothing symbolizes all human labor that supports our dignity. In Jesus' glorified garments, we see not just the redemption of our body, but of human effort to protect and uplift human dignity.

Parents, your family is your work. Baristas, plumbers, nurses, accountants — your labor, your emails, your phone calls, your spreadsheets — can all become radiant when offered to God in love. The question isn't just do I believe in Jesus' glory, but do I believe he can share it with the work of my hands?

**Lenten Challenge:** Identify the “artifact” you are making to uplift the dignity of others: your job, your home, your relationships. Consciously bring it to the Lord this Sunday at Mass. Offer it to share in His glory. It will begin to shine.

— *Father John Muir*

## ( PRACTICING ) CATHOLIC

**Mini Reflection:** It's not our job to bring the world to the Truth. It's our job to bring the Truth into the world. What a tragedy it would be, if Truth only lived on the mountaintop.

### Three Tents

You guys, I was *such* a good Catholic at the National Eucharistic Congress.

Mass every day? Check. Rosary every day? Check (and check — we said a lot of rosaries). Deep thoughts and deep conversations about God with total strangers? Check. Hours in adoration reflecting on the state of my soul? Check.

When I went to Indianapolis in the summer of 2024 to cover the NEC for our archdiocesan newspaper, I knew it would be a fun and spiritually rich experience. But I didn't expect that it would make me think differently about my whole life (and afterlife). And when people ask me why — “What happened in Indianapolis that changed you?” — I can only tell them this: I spent time with God.

Of course, I do all these things in my regular life at home, too. I try to be a good Catholic here. But good grief, it's a lot harder. In Indianapolis, I didn't have a calendar full of appointments and to-do lists that filled me with dread. I didn't have the world crowding around me, grasping at my attention and my will.

Indianapolis was the mountain, and if I could have, I would have built three tents.

So I understand Peter's feelings at the Transfiguration. He's thrilled — he sees it all clearly now. Here is the fullness of Truth, revealed in all its glory, and he's ready to start bringing groups of tourists up to see it. He's ready to bring people to Christ. But in the blood-soaked, fear-filled days to come, Peter will realize that it's not his job to bring the world to the Truth. His job is to bring the Truth into the world.

What a tragedy it would be, if Truth only lived on the mountaintop.

So build three tents, strong and durable shelters for the Truth to dwell. But build them in your heart. And then, the Transfiguration won't be just an event, something that happened at a certain time and a certain place. It'll be a reality that lives within us all. And we will bear it with us wherever we go.

— Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

## Why do we do that? Catholic Life Explained

### Question:

What is the Christian attitude towards violent conflicts?

### Answer:

In the Beatitudes, Jesus teaches us “Blessed are the peacemakers” and to “love your enemies.” All human beings are made in God's image and likeness. We are one human family — brothers and sisters despite what divides us. Christians have the obligation to prioritize peaceful means to resolve conflicts. War wreaks a toll on a nation. Civilians bear a disproportionate burden of this cost during the war itself and as the nation rebuilds. However, those in authority have the obligation to protect the innocent.

During the gradual fall of the Roman Empire, theologians began to theorize that war could be just if it was a defensive measure of last resort. The “Just War Theory” was later expanded by St. Thomas Aquinas, who also included moral obligations during the war itself, including the protection of civilians. Those in public authority have the obligation to carefully examine their motives, agendas, and rationale for violent force. Should a cause be just, those who fight and defend under such circumstances must be valued and honored. They deserve our support both during and after the war.

Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured before them; his face shone like the sun and his clothes became white as light. And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, conversing with him.  
- Mt 17:1-3

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## Questions of the Week

Invite Parishioners to Reflect and Respond to Scripture

### First Reading:

Trusting in the Lord, Abram is obedient to the directive to leave his land and home. When have others had to place their trust in you?

### Second Reading:

Paul instructs Timothy to draw on the strength God gives us when facing hardships. Can you think of a difficult time when you relied on God's strength to help you?

### Gospel:

In the transfiguration of Jesus, Peter, James, and John are fearful when they hear God's voice speak from the cloud. As the season of Lent continues, what are some fears you are facing?



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## Prayer

Lord, help me when I am afraid.

## Mission for the Week

When I am afraid, I will remember that God is always with me.

## Sharing the Gospel

Peter, James, and John had walked up the mountain with Jesus. When they got to the top, Jesus looked different. Rays of bright light came from his face. His robes became white. Then a voice from a cloud said, "This is my Son whom I love. In him I am well pleased. Listen to him." The three apostles were scared and fell on the ground and covered their heads with their arms. Then Jesus touched them and said, "Don't be afraid."

Now color the picture!



Help Jesus find his father!

