

## INTRODUCTION FROM BISHOP VETTER

Greetings to you! In the past days and months, I have heard from many of you from across the Diocese of Helena questions regarding immigration and the stance of the Church. I am happy to share with you our Special Pastoral Message on Immigration by the Bishops of the United States in unity with one another and with our Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV, issued on November 12, 2025, at our Fall Plenary Assembly in Baltimore. I stand behind this message 100%.

In Christ, I am

*+ Austin A. Vetter*

Most Rev. Austin A. Vetter  
Bishop of Helena



### STATEMENT FROM THE UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS ON IMMIGRATION

*From the Plenary Assembly in Baltimore - November 12, 2025*



As pastors, we the bishops of the United States are bound to our people by ties of communion and compassion in Our Lord Jesus Christ. We are disturbed when we see among our people a climate of fear and anxiety around questions of profiling and immigration enforcement. We are saddened by the state of contemporary debate and the vilification of immigrants. We are concerned about the conditions in detention centers and the lack of access to pastoral care. We lament that some immigrants in the United States have arbitrarily lost their legal status. We are troubled by threats against the sanctity of houses of worship and the special nature of hospitals and schools. We are grieved when we meet parents who fear being detained when taking their children to school and when we try to console family members who have already been separated from their loved ones.

Despite obstacles and prejudices, generations of immigrants have made enormous contributions to the well-being of our nation. We as Catholic bishops love our country and pray for its peace and prosperity. For this very reason, we feel compelled now in this environment to raise our voices in defense of God-given human dignity.

Catholic teaching exhorts nations to recognize the fundamental dignity of all persons, including immigrants. We bishops advocate for a meaningful reform of our nation's immigration laws and procedures. Human dignity and national security are not in conflict. Both are possible if people of good will work together.

We recognize that nations have a responsibility to regulate their borders and establish a just and orderly immigration system for the sake of the common good. Without such processes, immigrants face the risk of trafficking and other forms of exploitation. Safe and legal pathways serve as an antidote to such risks.

The Church's teaching rests on the foundational concern for the human person, as created in the image and likeness of God (*Genesis 1:27*). As pastors, we look to Sacred Scripture and the example of the Lord Himself, where we find the wisdom of God's compassion. The priority of the Lord, as the Prophets remind us, is for those who are most vulnerable: the widow, the orphan, the poor, and the stranger (*Zechariah 7:10*). In the Lord Jesus, we see the One who became poor for our sake (*2 Corinthians 8:9*), we see the Good Samaritan who lifts us from the dust (*Luke 10:30-37*), and we see the One who is found in the least of these (*Matthew 25*). The Church's concern for neighbor and our concern here for immigrants is a response to the Lord's command to love as He has loved us (*John 13:34*).

To our immigrant brothers and sisters, we stand with you in your suffering, since, when one member suffers, all suffer (*cf. 1 Corinthians 12:26*). You are not alone!

We note with gratitude that so many of our clergy, consecrated religious, and lay faithful already accompany and assist immigrants in meeting their basic human needs. We urge all people of good will to continue and expand such efforts.

We oppose the indiscriminate mass deportation of people. We pray for an end to dehumanizing rhetoric and violence, whether directed at immigrants or at law enforcement. We pray that the Lord may guide the leaders of our nation, and we are grateful for past and present opportunities to dialogue with public and elected officials. In this dialogue, we will continue to advocate for meaningful immigration reform.

*As disciples of the Lord, we remain men and women of hope, and hope does not disappoint! (cf. Romans 5:5)*

*May the mantle of Our Lady of Guadalupe enfold us all in her maternal and loving care and draw us ever closer to the heart of Christ.*



# Holy Cross Parish

Second Sunday of Advent

December 7, 2025

Weekday Mass Schedule:

Mass: Monday and Tuesday 9:00a

Adoration: Monday 9:30a

Weekend Schedule:

Confession: Sunday 3:30-4:15p or by appointment

Mass: Sunday Mass 4:30p

Office Hours: Monday-Thursday 9:30a to 12:00p

Fr. Cody Williams, Pastor Email: [frcwilliams@holycrossmt.org](mailto:frcwilliams@holycrossmt.org)

Office: 406-266-4811

Email: [office@holycrossmt.org](mailto:office@holycrossmt.org)

Shawna: [RE@holycrossmt.org](mailto:RE@holycrossmt.org)

Website: [holycrossmt.org](http://holycrossmt.org)

Mailing address: P.O. Box 610 (101 S. Walnut)

Townsend, Montana 59644





All-male Priesthood


Often when we ponder the ruling that only men can be priests, we focus only on Jesus and assume that we know what he wants and what he is doing. In order for us to appreciate the larger context of this desire of Jesus, we need to expand our thinking into the larger context of Christianity, the Old Testament.

As almost everyone knows, the priests of the Old Testament were only male. The Books of Law do not allow women to become priests. The most common argument for this restriction is the patriarchal nature of that time. Yet, if we take a moment to wander through the Old Testament, the role of men and women get blurred. Women could be judges and prophets. We have several examples throughout the Book of Judges and into the historical books of women taking on a prominent roles in Israel. The Judge Deborah counseled the leaders of Israel and brought them back to the right worship of God. The prophetess Judith, from the Book of Judith, commanded the leaders of the army to come to her for counsel. Some of the queens of Israel had greater power than their husbands. The traditions of Judaism were passed down from the mothers not the fathers. No role for women was greater than the Queen Mother. The mother of the king held a role unparalleled in Israelite society. She could influence the decisions of the king and it was understood that he would obey her requests. Women played an incredibly important role in the functioning of Jewish society and were allowed to hold places of honor and importance in society.

With all these roles and places of prominence for women, Jewish law still forbade women from entering the priesthood and we have no evidence of women priests on any level. This short purview into Jewish society is valuable for us. God established the laws for Israel and he established them as perpetual laws. Jesus, who is God, if he overturned or changed these laws, then everyone would understand him to be false. God’s laws do not change. Therefore, we should understand and expect that the laws governing priesthood of the Old Testament would carry forward into the New Testament.

To further emphasize my point, Jesus’ “rite” for ordaining his priests – the washing of the feet and the Last Supper – mirrors the ordination rite of the Old Testament. They would start by washing their feet (and their entire bodies but mainly the feet), they would then be clothed in new garments (the blood of Jesus), and then be fed a meal of the sacrificed animal (the eating of the Last Supper and the Body and Blood of Jesus). Clearly Jesus is showing a continuation between the priesthood of the Old Covenant and the priesthood of the New Covenant. We simply have so many examples of Jesus’ desire to continue the laws of the Old Testament and continue the all-male priesthood that we simply cannot change this ruling. Yet, now we have a more exciting task before us: why did Jesus choose an all-male priesthood?

Fr. Cody



SAVE THE DATE

**MARCH for LIFE**

January 16, 2026



11:30am at the State Capitol Rotunda

This year's Keynote Speaker is Kristan Hawkins, CEO of the Pro-Life Generation and President of Students for Life of America and Students for Life Action. She is a frequent speaker and analyst on the topics of abortion, feminism and disability advocacy. She has spent nearly two decades building a national network of more than 1500+ campus Students for Life groups in all 50 states.


She hosts "The Kristan Hawkins Show" weekly and discusses trending news items from a pro-life perspective. Her writings and interviews have appeared in the New York Times, Washington Post, Wall Street Journal, Fox News, CNN, CBS, NBC, ABC, Newsweek, and NPR.

In addition to what is sure to be an informative and inspiring presentation by our Keynote Speaker, additional speakers will provide updates on Planned Parenthood facility closures and the latest developments regarding dissemination of the Abortion Pill. There are also plans to honor the life and legacy of Charlie Kirk.

This event is sponsored by:



For the latest updates on this event, please scan this QR code to go to the ProLife Montana EVENT page





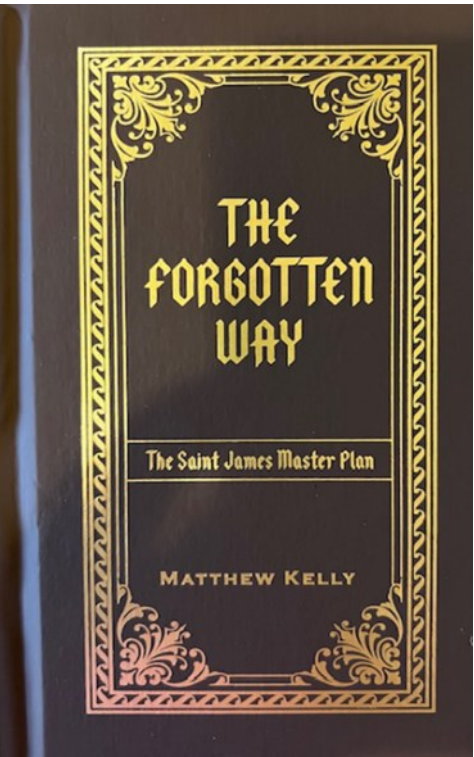
Special Collection Date:

12/14/2025

Envelopes available in the Narthex

Retirement Fund for Religious

Please give to those who have given a lifetime.



**THE FORGOTTEN WAY**

*~ The Saint James Master Plan ~*

Mathew Kelly’s most recent book is available in the Narthex free for parishioners. This short book is full of wisdom and practices that provide a meaningful way to discover how to elevate your Christian life in the Way of St. James. Based on his words “Someone who does not trip up in speech has reached perfection,” the book includes discussions about elevating our speech to improve our lives and relationships dramatically. It includes a prayer process and scriptural meditations that will help re-orient your spiritual life with that single truth. Wonderful to share as a family, with prayer and reading groups or simple reflection. There is a limited number, so 1 free copy per household, please.




Thank you to all who attended the BE-LOVED Christmas Brunch.

2026 Calendars

Available in the Narthex

Please feel free to take one!



If anyone would like to donate towards the poinsettias for Christmas there are envelopes available in the Narthex. Please write poinsettias in the memo part of your check. Thank you for your generosity!

Calling All Women

Are you interested in participating in a women's group?

Fr. Cody is calling all women of the parish who are interested in participating in a women's group to a meeting on

**Saturday, December 13th**  
**1:00 pm**  
**Parish hall**

We will discuss possible groups like the Daughters of Isabella and gauge interest in starting a new group. I hope to see you all there.



Parish potlucks

Every 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the month we have a parish potluck where anyone can bring a dish or come down and enjoy some good food. As part of the desire for the circles to be more active in the parish, I am assigning a circle to each potluck as the point group for the potluck. Their responsibility is to set-up, clean-up, and help make sure there is enough food. Anyone is welcome to bring food and help. The circle's responsibility is to facilitate the potluck. If you have any concerns or questions, please contact Fr. Cody.

- December 28: Love
- January 25: Peace
- February 15: Hope



Diocese of Helena List of Sacred Sites

As the Jubilee Year of Hope is coming to the end soon. Here are a list of places that Bishop Vetter has designated as Sacred spaces within the Diocese of Helena where the faithful may obtain the jubilee indulgence.

- Cathedral of Saint Helena, Holy Rosary Church, Bozeman
- St. Rose of Lima Church, Dillon , St. Joseph Church, Libby
- St. Ignatius Mission Church, St. Ignatius
- St. Teresa of the Little Flower Church, Browning
- All Saint’s Chapel, Carroll College-Helena

For more info visit: <https://diocesehelena.org/jubilee-2025>

Holy Cross Parish Contributions

Week ending November 30th

Envelopes	\$2,785.60
Loose	\$99.00
Online	\$320.48
Total Weekly Contribution	\$3,205.08
Total Weekly Goal	\$2,629.31
Monthly Summary	
Week 1	\$5,043.83
Week 2	\$1,383.34
Week 3	\$2,182.74
Week 4	\$2,567.60
Week 5	\$3,205.08
Total Monthly Contribution	\$14,382.59
Total Year to Date	\$84,848.14
Yearly Goal	\$140,000.00

Mass	Schedule
Monday December 8	Mass 6:30p Feast of the immaculate conception Holyday of obligation
Tuesday December 9	Mass 9:00a Homebound Parishioners
Wednesday December 10	
Thursday December 11	
Friday December 12	
Saturday December 13	women's meeting 1:00 p in the Parish Center
Sunday December 14	Confession 3:30p Mass 4:30p Parish Family 5:30p -7:30p RE



CATHOLIC JOURNEY EXPERIENCE:  
ALL ARE INVITED!

This is your opportunity to attend a 3-day weekend retreat seeking guidance by the Holy Spirit into a deeper experience of Christian community, prayer, discussion, reflection and enlightenment!

Women's Weekend held at St Cyril and Methodius, East Helena  
January 15-18th, 2026

Contact: [helenacatholicjourney.women@gmail.com](mailto:helenacatholicjourney.women@gmail.com) 406-431-7577

Men's Weekend held at St Cyril and Methodius, East Helena  
February 12-15th 2026

Scripture Readings



Third Sunday in Advent  
12-14-2025

Reading 1:	Isaiah 35:1-6. 10
Psalms:	146:6-7, 8-9, 9-10
Reading 2:	James 5:7-10
Gospel:	Matthew 11:2-11



Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

"O Mary, Mother of Jesus Christ, and our dear Mother! O all ye holy angels, who, by your adoration in our churches, make up for the little love which your God and our Savior receives from men, obtain for us the grace to comprehend a little the love of Jesus Christ in the Most Holy Sacrament."

- St. Margaret Mary

Pray for our Seminarians

Lord Jesus, we ask your special blessing on those preparing for the priesthood in our seminaries. We pray that they will grow in faith, hope and love. Give them courage and perseverance and be their constant companion as they prepare to serve you and your people with the fire of your love. Make them holy as you are holy. Amen.

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

Pray for vocations to the Priesthood and Religious Life.

Prayer Chain

Unless otherwise requested , after one month prayer request names will be removed from the prayer chain

John Clark, Martin and Margy Clark, Marilyn Lane, Shanna Montonario, Kadence Saxton, Kammy Law, Don and Jenny Schaubert, Judy & Franklin Silfka, Mike McGonigal, Bob Moodry, Mary Garman

Ministry Schedule

Sunday December 14, 2026 4:30pm

Greet:	Bleile Family
Lector:	Michael Fisetbe
Gifts:	Reiman Family
EM:	John Bleile and Lucas Bleile
Money Counters:	Juanita Bray and Karen Susag

HABEMUS PAPAM



The Annual Catholic Appeal kicks off this weekend. Our goal is to raise \$21,900. Many people are unsure of the value and importance of the Annual Catholic Appeal. Let me guide you to understand the importance of this appeal using the new image on the poster. To maintain the function of the church, we have three parts that need support. The parishes are an essential part of the church. Through the parishes, the people come to know God, desire to follow him, receive the Sacraments, and have a place to live their lives of faith. Yet, parishes cannot sustain themselves. They need support from the Diocese for administrative needs, clergy, and to connect them to the larger church as a reminder that we are part of Jesus' Church not our own. The Annual

Catholic Appeal supports the education of priests, the ministries of the Diocese, administrative help to the parishes, and maintains our Catholic identity. Another aspect of the Church is the global aspect. We are not just a group of churches in Montana but part of the global Catholic Church. Recognizing our identity through these three aspects is necessary for understanding who we are. When all three of these aspects of the Church are understood, supported, and lived out, then we can understand who we are and our role in the Church of Jesus. **We have currently reached 24% of our parish goal!**



# Faith Formation

## A Year with the Church Fathers

Mondays from 6:30-8 pm  
Starting Monday, Oct. 27th  
Explore the lives of the fathers.  
Read their theology and writing.  
Come to understand their value in the Church.  
See flyer for more information.

1/5/26 will be  
the last session  
for the fall series



## LET'S PRAY THE ROSARY SUNDAYS @ 4PM

~~NOV. 30 - JOYFUL MYSTERIES~~  
DEC. 7 - LUMINOUS MYSTERIES  
DEC. 14 - SORROWFUL MYSTERIES  
DEC. 21 - GLORIOUS MYSTERIES  
DEC. 28 - JOYFUL MYSTERIES

There is a ministry sign up sheet for  
Christmas Eve Mass in the Narthex

## Youth Schedule

12/7/25: RE Class (Mass as God's prayer)  
12/14/25: RE Class (The beginning of Mass)  
12/21/25: **NO RE**  
12/28/25: **NO RE**  
1/4/25: Paris Christmas Party

## Attention Adults

Join us for an adult group that will meet after mass on  
Sundays during RE class times. The adult group will  
discuss and explore the same topics as the youth. This  
year's focus is on Sacraments, the Mass, and prayer.  
Parents that join can continue the discussion and  
learning at home with their children.

## Christmas Choir



George Jenkins will be leading a Christmas  
choir to sing during Christmas Eve mass. If you  
are interested in singing in the Christmas  
choir please contact George.

## Did Jesus establish one Church?



### Ask a Priest Night

Monday December 15th  
Dinner at 6pm, presentation at 6:30  
All are welcome!

## Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception



Mon. Dec. 8th  
Mass at 6:30 pm  
Holy Day of Obligation

## Christmas Eve Mass Wed. 12/24 4:30 pm



## Advent Word Search

S	I	N	W	R	E	A	T	H	T	S
M	Y	E	I	S	O	A	N	Q	O	V
I	R	D	V	T	C	A	N	D	L	E
I	C	A	L	E	N	D	A	R	Q	J
P	E	A	C	E	O	P	E	H	S	O
N	A	T	I	V	I	T	Y	L	S	Y
H	O	P	E	Y	F	U	H	O	T	K
A	D	V	E	N	T	A	U	V	A	R
T	A	Y	N	X	T	U	I	E	R	Y

- Advent	- Joy
- Candle	- Peace
- Calendar	- Love
- Wreath	- Nativity
- Hope	- Star

We are looking for volunteers to provide dinner after mass on some Sundays prior to RE.  
If you are interested in helping please contact Shawna Wickens or scan the sign up genius QR  
code.

Thank you for supporting our parish youth!



## 2026 Summer Camp Season

### CAMPS SCHEDULE

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