



Holy Cross Parish

Third Sunday of Lent

March 8, 2026

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

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Townsend, Montana 59644



Basics of Catholicism part 126

What are annulments?

Jesus' words about marriage are quite harsh to our modern ears. Marriage is an unbreakable bond formed by God that unites the couple together. This definition doesn't allow for much wiggle room especially with really troubling or challenging marriages. Moses gave the option for divorce for the Israelites knowing the problems that can occur in marriages. But Jesus doesn't give this allowance. So what do we do when a marriage breaks down? How do we help people when two people shouldn't stay together for good reasons? Is there any clause in Jesus' words that allow us to take a more merciful approach to marriages?

Jesus does give one exception, "If the marriage is unlawful." But, what does this mean? What is an unlawful marriage? From a Jewish context this would be a marriage that didn't follow Jewish laws, was between two people who are too closely related, the marriage between a married person and another person, or marriage by force. Unfortunately for us, these laws don't seem to apply to our modern day marriage situations. Today we struggle with situations like infidelity, loss of love, confusion about the nature of the person, lack of maturity, and false understanding about the nature of marriage. In the midst of situations like these, what is the Church supposed to do to help people to live the joy of marriage well and be able to participate in the life of the Church?

The answer is an annulment. Annulments are juridical declarations by a Church judge who makes a statement concerning the validity of the marriage. Many people think that annulments are the breaking of the bond of marriage or ending a marriage contract. This is not entirely true. The vast majority of annulments are judicial acts that declare that the marriage has been deemed invalid, or that it didn't take place. Some annulments, although rare, do break the bond of marriage but in very specific cases.

The purpose of the annulment is to examine the marriage including the moment of consent and the intentions of the person to determine whether the person entering into the covenant of marriage made those vows. Notice the details of this statement. The process of declaring a marriage invalid involves examining the intentions of the person at the moment the vows were taken to indicate whether the couple willfully and consciously entered the fullness of the contract of marriage. We go back to the moment the vows were taken to examine the validity of the marriage. Most people like to assume that conditions following the marriage are important, but they are not. Only the moment the vows were taken. More on this process next time.

Fr. Cody

Western Montana Catholic Women's CONFERENCE

"COME TO ME" MATTHEW 11:28



Sister Jacinta Phipps



Celeste Bebe



Jessica Echeverry

There Is No Place Like Home

Friday, April 10, 2026 ~ Cathedral of St. Helena
5:30 pm Mass and Rosary ~ All are welcome

Saturday, April 11, 2026 ~ 7 am check-in

Women's Conference, Speakers,
Confessions, Vendors, Fellowship

(including special "Montana Strong" speakers: Allison Bell, Kaylyn Lybeck, Lynnette Nilan)

Helena Civic Center

visit HelenaCWC.org



MOMS & LITTLES

ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARTY

LITTLES UNDER 4
GAMES & CRAFTS

MARCH 13
11-12:30 PM

@HOLY CROSS CHURCH
RSVP TO NATALIE
(949)200-2315

Western Montana CATHOLIC WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

"Come to Me" Matt 11:28

April 11, 2026 - Civic Center, Helena, MT

www.helenacwc.org / 406.603.0175

Lord Jesus, thank you for the constant love you have for me. Thank you for the gift of life and the gift of faith. Today, take me into your Sacred Heart and renew me. I open my heart to your grace, to be



healed where healing is needed. Replace any wounds or worries with your peace and joy. Send your Holy Spirit into my whole being: body, mind, and soul. Guide me to be the woman you have created me to be: your beloved daughter, disciple, and friend. Please remove any obstacles that keep me from living this way. Make me a woman of faith, hope, and charity. Lord, pour out your grace upon the upcoming Catholic Women's Conference, upon the planning efforts, and upon many women that they may hear your invitation and say "yes." May the conference be a time of spiritual renewal, healing, reconciliation, and joy for all who attend. Thank you Lord Jesus for all this, I pray in your sweet name. Mary, Mother of God, pray for us!

Mother Mary, Gate of Heaven



Gate of Heaven, you are the sweetest, the tenderest, the kindest of mothers, constantly watching me with eyes of love as I travel my weary way through this same valley of tears that was once marked by your own blessed footsteps. How surely does devotion to you open the heavenly portals to numberless souls! Be the Gate of Heaven to me by obtaining through your prayers all the graces I need to live a holy life and to enter the gates of heaven. Amen.

St. Monica intercessor

Blessed Monica, mother of St. Augustine, we give thanks to our Father in Heaven who looked with mercy upon your tears over your wayward son. His conversion and heroic sanctification were the fruit of your prayers.

Dear St. Monica, we now ask you to pray with us for all those sons and daughters that have wandered away from God, and to add your prayers to those of all mothers who are worried over their children. Amen.



Mother Mary, Gate of Heaven, pray for us.
St. Monica, pray for us. Amen.

FEBRUARY 18-MARCH 29, 2026
INFORMAL KICKOFF 1:30PM
ASH WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2026
1500 CANNON STREET, THIS
CAMPAIGNS OPEN HOURS ARE 7AM
TO 7PM. SIGN UP FOR YOUR
PREFERRED TIMES AT
40DAYSFORLIFE.COM/HELENA

WE CHOOSE
PRAYER OVER
DESPAIR. PEACE
OVER SILENCE.
COURAGE OVER
COMFORT

40 DAYS FOR LIFE

Parish potlucks

Every 4th 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.

March 22: Love

April 26: Peace

May 24: **No Potluck** (Memorial Day Weekend)

On the third Sunday of each month a blessing table will be set up in the entrance of the church. You are welcome to bring any objects of devotion that you would like blessed and Fr. Cody will bless them after Mass. This will be available each third Sunday of the month. Please keep all your items to be blessed with you until the end of Mass. Once Mass is ended, Fr. Cody will come to the entrance of the Church and bless any of the objects that are on the table. Those objects that are on the table belong to the people who want them blessed and are not free for the taking.

Blessings



HOLY CROSS PARISH BOOK STUDY
IMITATION OF CHRIST
 by Thomas a Kempis
 WE'LL MEET ON THE FOLLOWING
 THURSDAYS AT 9AM - 11AM

March 5	April 23
March 19	May 7
April 9	May 21

Open to men and women
Drop-ins are welcome
Meet downstairs in the quilting room..
 For more info: Please contact
 Marge Kroeger 406-293-0514

The Holy Cross book study of the Imitation of Christ by Thomas a Kempis will meet again on **Thursday, March 19th**. We are discussing the 1st section, Ch. 1-25. The study is open to all, including drop-ins.

We meet in the classrooms downstairs.

Contact Marge Kroeger at 406-293-0514 with any questions!

Journey Gathering

Tuesday, March 10, 2026

7 PM, *Our Lady of the Valley* Social Center

A Lenten reflection: **The Prodigal Son**

Join us for a presentation by Deacon Steve Barry

Based on the Rembrandt painting *The Return of the Prodigal Son*

Bring your friends and families!!!

Please join us on Tuesday, March 10, 7 PM, *Our Lady of the Valley*

Holy Cross Parish Contributions

Week ending March 1st

Envelopes \$930.00
 Loose \$152.04

Online \$592.34

Total Weekly Contribution **\$1,674.38**

Total Weekly Goal \$2,629.31

Monthly Summary

Week 1 \$1,674.38

Week 2

Week 3

Week 4

Total Monthly Contribution **\$1,674.38**

Total Year to Date **\$125,413.99**

Yearly Goal \$140,000.00

Scripture Readings



Fourth Sunday in Lent

03-15-2026

Reading 1: 1st Samuel 16:1, 6-7, 10-13

Psalm: 23:1-3, 3-4, 5, 6

Reading 2: Ephesians 5:8-14

Gospel: John 9:1-41



Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

"We cannot please God unless we resemble Jesus Christ, and the Blessed Sacrament [was] instituted for the very purpose of perfecting in us this likeness."

- Edward Leen, CSSp.

MASS	Schedule
Monday March 9	Mass 9:00a seminarians Adoration 9:30a
Tuesday March 10	Mass 9:00a Homebound Parishioners
Wednesday March 11	Stations of the Cross 5:30p
Thursday March 12	
Friday March 13	Women's crepe breakfast 9:00-11:00a Moms + Littles Group 11:00a-12:30p
Saturday March 14	
Sunday March 15	Confession 3:30p Mass 4:30p Parish Family 5:30p -7:30p RE Dinner provided by the Knights Blessing table in the narthex

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, Don and Jenny Schaubert, Judy & Franklin Silfka, Repose of the soul of Mary Garman, Karen Simonich, Stover family

Ministry Schedule

Sunday, March 15, 2026

4:30pm

Greet:

Tony and Paula VanHoudt

Altar Servers:

Alex Weiss, Malikai Fisetbe, Mathyas Fisetbe

Lector:

Alex Estrada

Gifts:

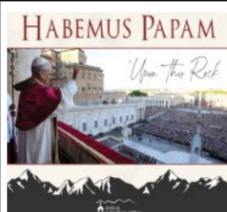
Joy Haggard and Karen Susag

EM:

Emmalin Fischer and Shawna Wickens

Money Counters:

Marge Kroeger and Joy Haggard



Annual Catholic Appeal

Holy Cross Parish Goal:

\$21,900.00

We have currently reached 48% of our parish goal, with \$11,175 to go!

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.



LET'S PRAY THE ROSARY SUNDAYS @ 4PM

MAR. 1 - JOYFUL MYSTERIES
 MAR. 8 - LUMINOUS MYSTERIES
 MAR. 15 - SORROWFUL MYSTERIES
 MAR. 22 - GLORIOUS MYSTERIES
 MAR. 29 - JOYFUL MYSTERIES



Youth Schedule

- 3/8/2026: RE Class (Memorized Prayers)
- 3/15/2026: RE Class (Personal Prayer)
- 3/22/2026: RE Class (Making time for prayer)
- 3/29/2026: RE Class (Finding God in daily life and Stations of the Cross)

Attention Adults

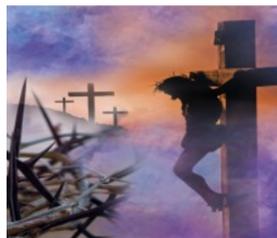
Join us for an adult group that will meet after mass on Sundays during RE class times. The adult group will discuss and explore the same topics as the youth. This year's focus is on Sacraments, the Mass, and prayer. Parents that join can continue the discussion and learning at home with their children.

Stations of the Cross

Wednesdays during Lent

5:30pm

No Meal will follow



Holy Cross Parish Women's

Crepe Breakfast

Friday, March 13th

9:00am – 11:00am

Holy Cross Parish Center

Come join us for some yummy food and fellowship!



WAYS TO DO LENT

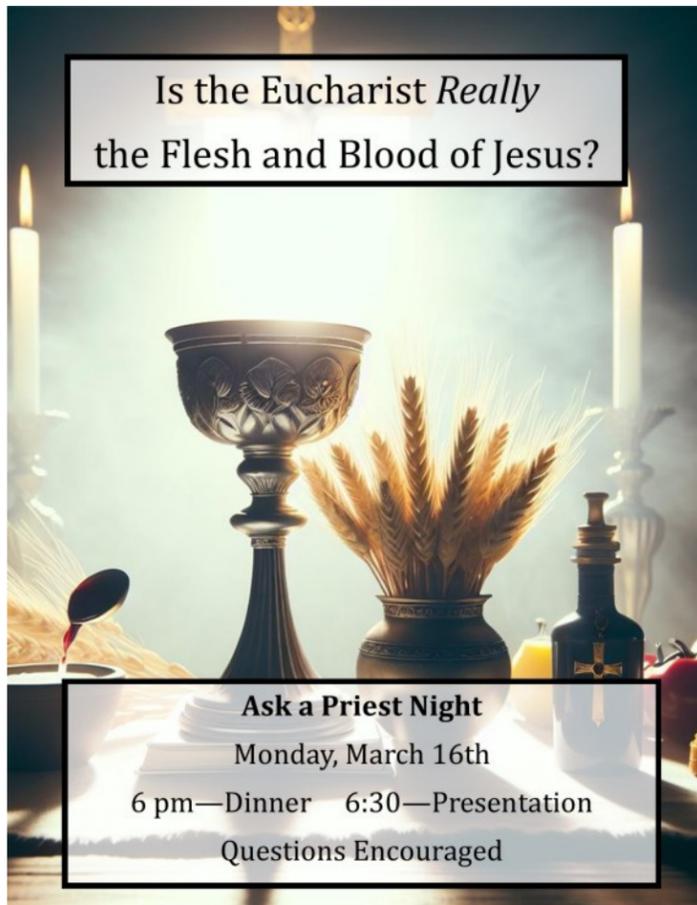
Try one of these practices each day during Lent.

Feed the birds Do a chore without being asked Read a book for fun Enjoy some time alone Fast from junk food Write in a journal for fifteen minutes Go to Mass Donate foods you like to eat to a food shelf

Walk a pet for a friend Close your eyes and listen Sing at the top of your lungs Try a new food or restaurant Write a letter to God Pray Psalm 19 Write a poem called "Spring" Compliment a parent Keep the TV turned off for a week Make the Stations of the Cross Buy or plant a flower and care for it Listen closely at Mass Play cards with the old folks at a nursing home Go for a walk Draw a symbol of the resurrection Offer to babysit for free (on a Friday night) Clean your closet and give away forgotten clothes Visit a grandparent Walk instead of ride Tell a child a story Try not to use the internet for a day Daydream about your future Ask a relative to tell a story about when they were your age Pray the Rosary Get some exercise Give away toys you have outgrown Make a new friend Put your phone away for a whole day Make peace with an enemy Find eight signs of new life in nature Laugh Attend a service during Holy Week

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Is the Eucharist Really the Flesh and Blood of Jesus?



Ask a Priest Night

Monday, March 16th

6 pm—Dinner 6:30—Presentation

Questions Encouraged

PENANCE SERVICES

Tuesday, March 24th at 6:30 pm



EUCCHARISTIC CONGRESS

MARCH 20-22, 2026
 CARROLL COLLEGE | HELENA, MT

FEATURING:
 HIS EMINENCE
 CARDINAL TIMOTHY DOLAN
 ARCHBISHOP OF NEW YORK



BISHOP MOTHER AND MORE!
 Austin A. Vetter Mary Clare, ACJ

Register Now!

DIoceseHELENA.ORG/EUCCHARISTICCONGRESS



Eucharistic Congress will have dedicated junior high and high school tracks for the weekend. Junior high and high school youth may attend either with their parent/guardian or a Virtus certified adult chaperone. Please contact Shawna Wickens if your junior high or high school youth would like to attend, but will not be attending with a parent/guardian, so chaperones can be arranged.