

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

Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe

November 23, 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: frwilliams@holycrossmt.org

Office: 406-266-4811

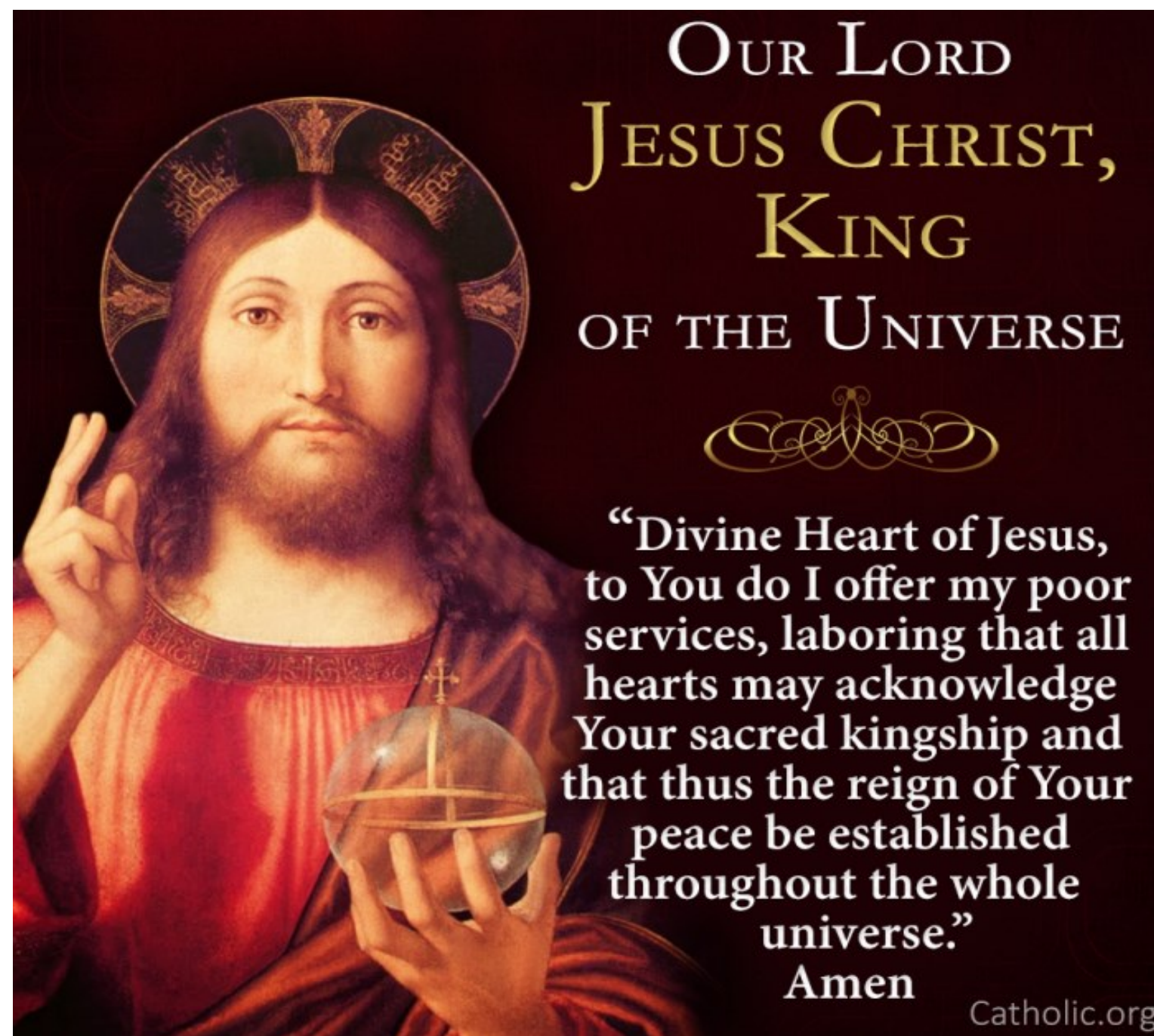
Email: office@holycrossmt.org

Shawna: RE@holycrossmt.org

Website: holycrossmt.org

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

Townsend, Montana 59644



All male priesthood

One of the most common criticisms of the Catholic Church today is that the Church doesn't allow women to become priests. Let's pause here for a moment. How many of you know why the Church doesn't allow women to become priests? Think about it for a moment. Often we get answers like, "because it is a patriarchy" or "The Church doesn't value women" or "the Church doesn't want to change or modernize." What do all these criticisms have in common? They assume we know better than the Church and that we are well versed in Jesus' desire for his Church. I want to take the next three parts to explore this question and to give it a great amount of detail so that you can appreciate this rather challenging yet beautiful topic.

Let's start from the beginning with one of the most common criticisms: "if Jesus had been born in a different time, then he would have allowed women to become priests." This criticism assumes many things that are simply not true. Jesus lived in a time in which women priests were more common than they are today. Greek religious culture had specific temples that allowed only women to become priests such as the cult of Demeter and Athena. Jesus would have been at least somewhat familiar with these temples since they were part of Roman culture as well. Additionally, Jesus is God. I am always amazed by how many people forget that fundamental truth. Why would Jesus be concerned about the public's view of his choices? At no point in Scripture does he seem to care either what the religious leaders think nor the Roman government thinks; Jesus does whatever he deems right and best.

Expanding our view one step further, let's look at Jesus' earliest disciples. Often we focus only on the 12 Apostles. Yet, many women followed Jesus. These women were instrumental in the success of his ministry. They would collect money, take alms, care for his needs, and were with him almost every step of the way. The women were the only people who were present for his passion, death, and Resurrection. The disciples, except John, fled during his passion. John stayed with him for his death but not his Resurrection. Only the women were there for all of it. Additionally, the women got the answers right and understood the nature of Jesus well before the disciples did. In summary, the women were better disciples than the men and, functionally, would have made better priests. The prime example being Mary, who should have been the best example of a priest.

With all this in mind we should be shocked that Jesus didn't choose women to be priests. They were faithful disciples, experienced his passion, death, and Resurrection, and remained with him. Given the cultural experience of the Greeks and Romans, women priests were common. So now we are left with a more puzzling question: Why did Jesus choose only men for the priesthood? Why did the early church hold to and assume that only men could be priests? Why can't the Church change her stance on only men becoming priests today? The answer is soon to come.

Fr. Cody

Thanksgiving Meal Prayer

Good and gracious God, we give You thanks today, as we do all days, first and foremost for the gift of creation and the gift of life. We ask You to bless this food, that it may nourish us and sustain us, and strengthen our ability to do Your will. We pray in thanksgiving for all the hands involved in bringing it to our table. You tell us, Lord, that to whom much is given, much is expected. May this meal and the fellowship we enjoy not only serve as clear reminders of Your love of us, but of Your call for us to share Your love and to serve our brothers and sisters, especially those most in need. We ask this as we ask all things, through Christ, our Lord. Amen.



Special Collection Date:
12/14/2025

Envelopes available in the Narthex

Retirement Fund for Religious

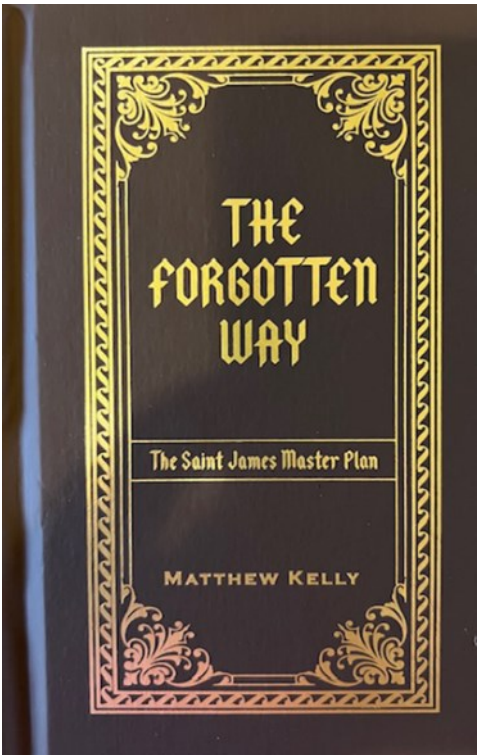
Please give to those who have given a lifetime.

Congratulations!

A big Congratulations to the players and coaches of the Broadwater High School Volleyball team who took 2nd at the State Tournament. Well done!

Congratulations to all who participated in cross country and football this fall as well!

What a joy to see the members of our parish family participating in these events!



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.

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.

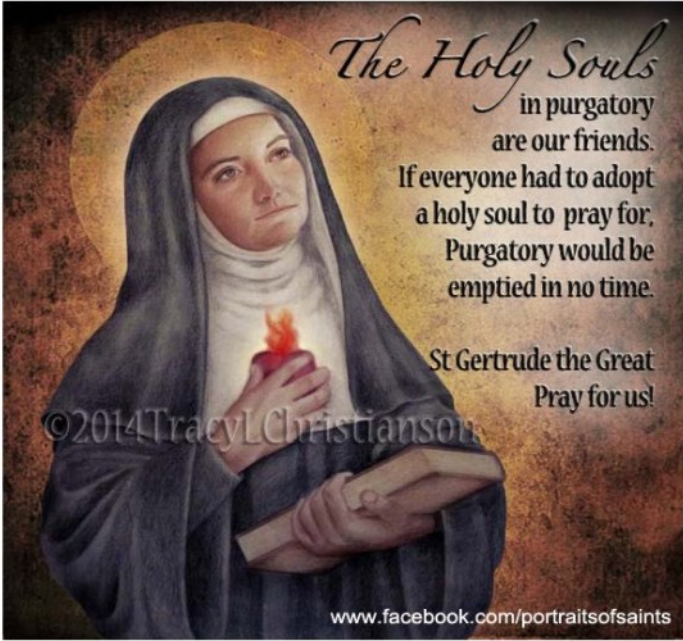
Parish potlucks

Every 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.

December 28: Love

January 25: Peace

February 15: Hope



Holy Cross Parish Contributions	
Week ending November 16th	
Envelopes	\$4,414.32
Loose	\$87.40
Online	\$335.34
Total Weekly Contribution	\$4,837.06
Total Weekly Goal	\$2,629.31
Monthly Summary	
Week 1	\$5,043.83
Week 2	\$1,383.34
Week 3	\$4,837.06
Week 4	
Total Monthly Contribution	\$11,264.23
Total Year to Date	\$70,552.27
Yearly Goal	\$140,000.00
Thank you for your generosity	

Mass	Schedule
Monday November 24	Mass 9:00a Seminarians Adoration 9:30a
Tuesday November 25	Mass 9:00a Pete Sullivan rb the Gibbs Family
Wednesday November 26	
Thursday November 27	Thanksgiving Day
Friday November 28	
Saturday November 29	
Sunday November 30	Confession 3:30p Mass 4:30p Parish Family 5:30p- High school group (pizza + Pope Leo Address)



**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 406-431-7577

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

HABEMUS PAPAM

The Annual Catholic Appeal kicks off this weekend. Our goal is to raise \$21,300. 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.

Scripture Readings

First Sunday in Advent
11-30-2025

Reading 1:	Isaiah 2:1-5
Psalms:	122:1-2, 3-4, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9
Reading 2:	Romans 13:11-14
Gospel:	Matthew 24:37-44

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

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

"The best way to economize time is to 'lose' half an hour each day attending Holy Mass."

- Frederic Ozanam


Ministry Schedule

Sunday November 30 2026 4:30pm

Greet:	John and Missy Rauser
Lector:	Debbie Miller
Gifts:	Bleile Family
EM:	Tom & Julie Lebert
Money Counters:	Karee Reiman and Kristi Gersch

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 @ 4:00

NOV. 2 - JOYFUL MYSTERIES
NOV. 9 - LUMINOUS MYSTERIES
NOV. 16 - SORROWFUL MYSTERIES
NOV. 23 - GLORIOUS MYSTERIES
NOV. 30 - JOYFUL MYSTERIES





"The Rosary is a weapon for these times."
- Saint Padre Pio

Faith Formation

Youth Schedule

- 11/23/25: Pilgrimage presentation & RE youth Virtus lesson
- 11/30/25: **NO RE**— 8th grade/high school group meet for pizza & to watch Pope Leo's NCYC address
- 12/7/25: RE Class (Mass as God's prayer)
- 12/14/25: RE Class (Recognizing our need for God)

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.



BE-LOVED CHRISTMAS!

Ladies Brunch
Sunday, November 30th @ 9:30am
Holy Cross Parish Center

Bring a friend and enjoy friendship and fellowship.
Be ready for a blessed Christmas!



All women invited to come enjoy a joyful start to Advent!

HELP NEEDED!

To make our evangelization event -"Resting in the Busyness of Life," on Friday, December 5th a success, we need your help! The night will start with dinner at 6 pm, followed by testimony talks and discussion from 6:30-8. We need lots of help for this event in the following areas:

- Welcoming
- Food preparation
- Set-up
- Child Care
- Clean-up

If you are willing to help, please email either Shawna at re@holycrossmt.org or Fr. Cody at frcwilliams@holycrossmt.org with your desired area of help.



We are working to increase and promote safety for those who attend and use our church. As part of our desire for increased safety, external doors to the building will be locked on Sundays during RE. The only door which will remain unlocked is the one leading from the parking lot to the basement. If you have questions or concerns about this change, please contact Fr. Cody.

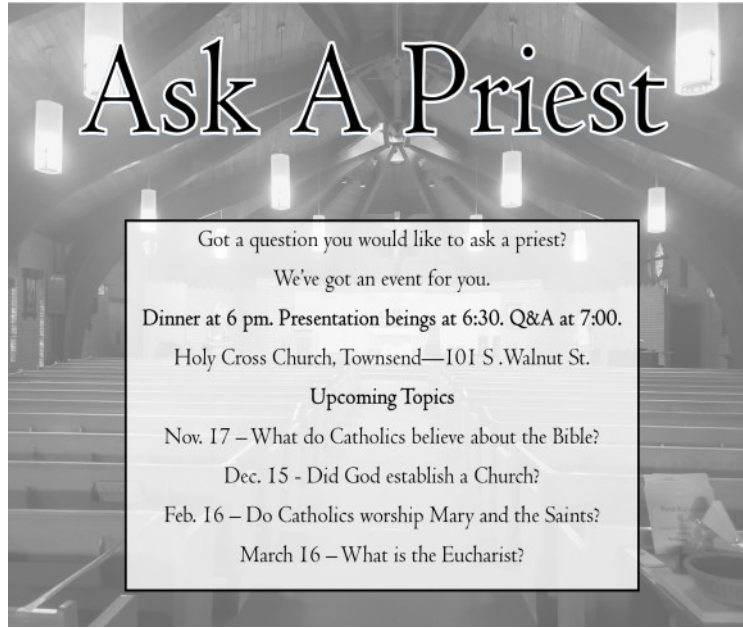


2026 Summer Camp Season

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 5th**. Opens for all other registrants Jan 9th.

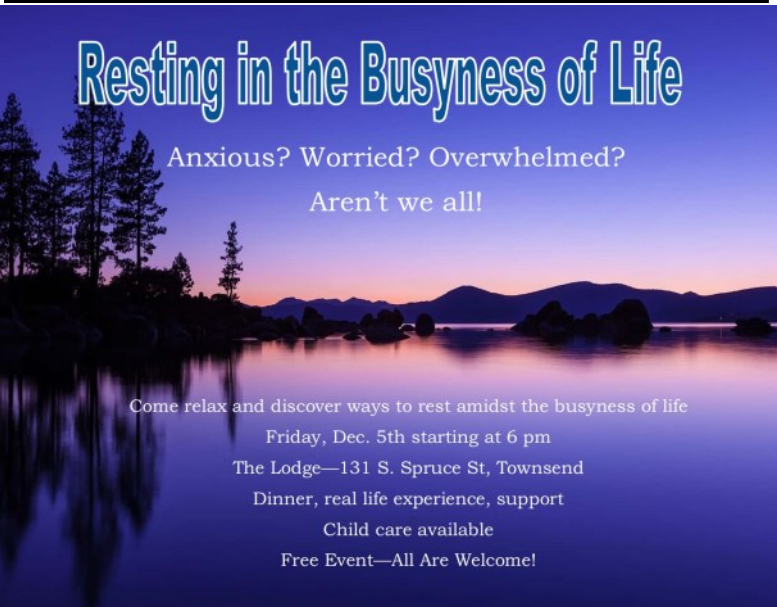


Ask A Priest

Got a question you would like to ask a priest?
We've got an event for you.
Dinner at 6 pm. Presentation beings at 6:30. Q&A at 7:00.
Holy Cross Church, Townsend—101 S. Walnut St.

Upcoming Topics

- Nov. 17 – What do Catholics believe about the Bible?
- Dec. 15 - Did God establish a Church?
- Feb. 16 – Do Catholics worship Mary and the Saints?
- March 16 – What is the Eucharist?



Resting in the Busyness of Life

Anxious? Worried? Overwhelmed?
Aren't we all!

Come relax and discover ways to rest amidst the busyness of life
Friday, Dec. 5th starting at 6 pm
The Lodge—131 S. Spruce St, Townsend
Dinner, real life experience, support
Child care available
Free Event—All Are Welcome!


The Prayer of St. Gertrude

.. ——— ♡ ——— ..

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the Most Precious Blood of Thy Divine Son, Jesus, in union with the masses said throughout the world today, for all the holy souls in purgatory, for sinners everywhere, for sinners in the universal church, those in my own home and within my family.

Amen.

.. ——— ♡ ——— ..



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!




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