

Blessed Trinity Catholic Community † Spirit of Christ Mission

Twenty-Fifth Sunday Ordinary-time A + September 20, 2026

Isaiah 55:6-9; Psalm 145,2-3, 8-9, 17-18; Philippians 1:2-c-24, 27a; Matthew 20:1-16a

Eucharistic Prayer For Various Occasions IV

Homily: Fr. Ed Hislop



"Receive with favor, O Lord, we pray, the offerings of your people..." Prayer Over the Gifts, 25th Sunday Ordinary time
So, we will pray, as our offerings are brought today to the Lord's Table. Through this giving we hope. With this prayer we live our faith.

The offerings we bring, the gifts we share, the sacrifice we make, shape the life and spirit of Blessed Trinity Catholic Community. This is the sacrifice the Lord accepts *for the glory and praise of his name for our good and the good of all the Church*. Words spoken at this table matter.

Our gifts, giving, faith and trust become the flesh and blood of our work in God's vineyard in this place. *We are the laborers hired in the Gospel*. We have responded with unprecedented love over the last number of years.

God's work is seen in our generous response, thus far, to this renovation project: *"A Vision of Hope; A Promise of Life; and a Spirit of Service."*

In six months 70% of you contributed close to one half of our three-year one-million-dollar goal. This is in addition to monies raised before the current campaign. That is extraordinary! Half a million dollars in sixth months! *Of course, we still have the second half yet to raise. We continue to move forward trusting in promises made and visions embraced.*

Through our many discussions, reflections and consensus-built decisions, in which we have all had a part, we are seeing amazing results. The worn-out bathrooms are completely renovated; the Chapel for the Blessed Sacrament is close to completion. The beautiful art glass for the chapel is in process of fabrication. The new tabernacle will arrive and be installed in a few months. The sacristy renovation has begun. The Font will soon be replaced, this space will soon be cleaned, and painted, new carpeting will be installed, along with tile around the font area, and sanctuary space, new seating will arrive in November; the new altar and handicapped accessible ambo is in process of fabrication, along with new candle stands and cross.

This space will soon reflect anew the beauty of those who gather here, and the wonder and abiding presence of the Risen Christ. Parking lot re-construction will begin next Spring. We are moving forward with vision, promise and spirit reflecting an amazing dedication to hope, life and service. We have done all of this without incurring debt. That too is remarkable. Promises are being kept. Thank you. Thank you. Here, *"full, conscious and active participation"* is lived. Our prayer, as we bring our gifts to the Lord's table today, is true: The Lord receives with favor the offerings of his people! Words spoken at this table matter.

Like the vineyard in the Gospel, the work continues in many different ways. There are always new needs and there are always new gifts, there are always new challenges and opportunities reflected in the day to day, Sunday to Sunday life and ministry of Blessed Trinity Catholic Community.

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Not so much due to a lack of giving but to a significant increase in expenses, increases we are all experiencing these days, we find our current ordinary stewardship weekly/monthly income is no longer adequate to meet the various financial

needs required of our day-to-day operation. Everything is just much more expensive.

As we began this new fiscal year, we needed to seriously evaluate the salaries and benefits of our parish staff personnel. We discovered that, while over the past several years we have provided annual percentage increases, we had not maintained the increase required by the Diocese of Helena Personnel Salary Policy. We determined to correct that error immediately out of a sense of justice, and as a response to the good work and ministry of each person on our staff. Blessed Trinity could not accomplish all we do without them.

In addition, upon the retirement of Jim McDonald, our financial services director, we decided to expand the hours of that position, due to its increasing complication and demands. Jim's dedicated service accomplished a great deal in 20 hours per week, but the work began to require more time. We continue to be grateful to Jim for his good and caring work.

Blessed Trinity liturgical music ministry, which is crucial to the spirit of our parish, has been blessed for many years with Daniel Hampson, who continues to serve, but now, at his choice, with fewer hours than before. Thank you, Daniel!

Also, volunteering, *volunteering* for the past few years as organist, pianist, choir member and cantor, Scott Hamilton has served Blessed Trinity with dedication, talent, spirit and persistence. Scott applied for the Finance position advertised in the bulletin, over several weeks. We discovered that he has an amazing talent for financial management. So, we put together a full-time job description in collaboration with the Diocese, which included the Finance management position, associate director of liturgical music and director of buildings and grounds (a long-needed service). Scott has accepted and has begun serving in that position.



Thus, the work and the workers in the vineyard fill a myriad of ministries in diverse numbers and time. It is all expensive!

It is true, the "kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out at dawn to hire workers for his vineyard..." We need to generously support those who lead the ministries and serve our parish.

In this vineyard the work of ministry is extraordinary and very expensive, but generosity is overwhelming, while spirit and dedication is amazing.

Blessed Trinity keeps the vision and the promise of the Second Vatican Council alive, with "*full, conscious and active participation*," both in our spirited liturgy and pastoral ministry, in both parish and city. From here we reach out to many in need, embrace the immigrant, and seek truth. Here we are welcomed and welcome; here we sing, pray, remember, give, receive; here we can be silent and become the One beyond ourselves. Here we can be touched by the quiet beauty of God. Here we learn, as in the Gospel, to bear the "*day's burden and the heat*," even as we name the darkness of the times in which we live. Here our hearts are set aglow, as a new day always dawns. Here we desire to give the last one, the same as we have received.

We are a welcoming, generous, significant, faith community. We cannot risk diminishing our spirit, good ministry, vibrant worship, glorious music, caring outreach, dynamic faith formation, welcoming office management and joyful gatherings.

We each need to consider increasing, in a significant way, our weekly/monthly stewardship offering, while at the same time enthusiastically continuing to fund our renovation project.

Our work in this vineyard is only just beginning. So, we still pray: "*Receive with favor, O Lord, the offerings of your people...*"

The Roman Missal Prayer Over the Gifts, 25th Sunday Ordinary time