Dear Padre,

I occasionally need to be reminded why I should remain Catholic. Can you help?



JESUS FERNANDEZ / SHUTTERSTOCK

Whether our faith was inherited at birth or adopted later, it's healthy to periodically reexamine our beliefs and practices with the intent to grow closer to God. Saint Paul uses the metaphor of moving beyond milk to solid food to explain our maturing faith. (See Hebrews 5:12–14). Questions or doubts are not necessarily signs of crisis or disloyalty to God or the Church. Indeed, it's often when we challenge pat answers that God moves us to a deeper meaning and stronger relationship—that is, if we're steadfast on the path to holiness. People remain Catholic for numerous reasons, including:

- the Church's belief in God's goodness to us through the sacraments;
- a 2,000-year tradition of living the gospel in a universal, multicultural community of faith;
- a proven track record as an agent for personal and spiritual growth and social transformation.

When Church members' behavior is contrary to Christ's mission, and our confidence to remain is tested, it's good to recall that the Church is divinely fortified and humanly composed. People remain Catholic because the Church exists to bring us into full communion with God, through Christ, by working toward the fullness of the kingdom. "The Church 'is the visible plan of God's love for humanity,' because God desires 'that the whole human race may become one people of god, form one body of Christ, and be built into one temple of the Holy Spirit'" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 776). ●

Fr. Byron Miller, CSsR / DearPadre.org

A WORD FROM POPE LEO XIV



FABRIZIO MAFFEI / SHUTTERSTOCK

Health cannot be a luxury for the few.... Universal health coverage is not merely a technical goal to be achieved; it is primarily a moral imperative for societies that wish to call themselves just. Healthcare must be accessible to the most vulnerable, then, not only because their dignity requires it but also to prevent injustice from becoming a cause of conflict.

ADDRESS TO CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS, ROME, MARCH 19, 2026

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Do you have a question for the Padre?

Go to **DearPadre.org** to send your question and to learn more about *Dear Padre*.

Monday
October 26
Weekday
Eph 4:32–5:8
Lk 13:10–17

Tuesday
October 27
Weekday
Eph 5:21–33
Lk 13:18–21

Wednesday
October 28
Sts. Simon and Jude, Apostles
Eph 2:19–22
Lk 6:12–16

Thursday
October 29
Weekday
Eph 6:10–20
Lk 13:31–35

Friday
October 30
Weekday
Phil 1:1–11
Lk 14:1–6

Saturday
October 31
Weekday
Phil 1:18b–26
Lk 14:1, 7–11

Sunday
November 1
All Saints
Rv 7:2–4, 9–14
1 Jn 3:1–3
Mt 5:1–12a

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Love Is a Verb

FR. THOMAS M. SANTA, CSsR

"Love makes the world go 'round." Or another saying: "Love is all you need." Love, so necessary, so welcome, and seemingly so elusive. How can something be so needed, so valued, and so treasured and at the same time be so rare and even, at times, so difficult? Philosophers, poets, and scribes all provide different insights, each capturing something of the truth yet remaining somehow incomplete.

Jesus changes the context: love understood not as a feeling or as an emotion, but as a commandment. In God's kingdom, love is not something you pursue or something you hope to find. Living in God's kingdom, love is something you *do*. It is core; it is essential. It is how you live. It is how you form your judgments and perceptions. It is what energizes your choices and your decisions.

We come closer and closer each day to loving God fully when we understand the need to embrace the "unspoken" commandment: "[Jesus said,] 'For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it'" (Matthew 16:25). ●

LEARN ABOUT THE AUTHORS OF *OUR PARISH COMMUNITY*

Reflect

Do I think of love as a feeling or as an action—as a noun or a verb?



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"We at St. Mary & Joseph Parishes strive for a deeper encounter with Jesus Christ through Scripture and Sacraments, form missionary disciples, and send them forth to transform the world."

Our Three-Parish Cluster
Sts. Mary and Joseph Catholic Churches
Lone Tree, Nichols and Hills

30th Sunday of Ordinary Time **October 25, 2026**

Church of St. Mary, 201 Short Street, Box B, Nichols, Iowa, 52766 319-330-5324
St. Mary Church, 216 West Jayne Street, Box 416, Lone Tree, Iowa, 52755 319-629-4225
St. Joseph Church, 209 Brady Street, PO Box 187, Hills, Iowa, 52235 319-679-2271

Sts. Mary and Joseph Cluster Parish Office
209 Brady Street, P.O. Box 187 Hills, Iowa 52235-0187

Father David Paintsil, Pastor; 319-679-2271; email: paintsild@diodav.org
Mrs. Carol Kaalberg, Pastoral Associate; 319-330-5324; email: kaalbergc@diodav.org
Lora Sieverding, Administrative Assistant & Bookkeeper; hillsstjosephfin@diodav.org
Nancy Waldschmidt, Director of Faith Formation; 319-331-2077; email: nwaldschmidt@gwaea.org
Cluster Website: stsmaryjoseph.com Cluster Facebook: www.facebook.com/stsmaryandjoseph
Rev. Lou Leonhardt (retired priest); PO Box 454, Lone Tree, IA 52755 319-629-4339
Bulletin deadline: 10am Tuesday. Contact Lora Sieverding: hillsstjosephfin@diodav.org
Hills Church entry: Lora Sieverding, 319-530-5560

Music Ministry: St. Joseph, Hills**:** Haylee Osmonson
Church of St. Mary, Nichols: Jean Mengel and Rhonda Meredith
St. Mary, Lone Tree: Steve Moore.
St. Joseph Prayer Line: Lucille Duwa 679-2404; Joan Gringer 679-2406
Church of St. Mary, Nichols Prayer Line: Carol Kaalberg, 319-330-5324
St. Mary, Lone Tree Prayer Line: Nancy Ford, 319-430-0882

In your prayers please remember the sick and suffering, those having surgery and other health issues from our cluster and beyond.

Cluster Mass Intentions October 24 to November 1, 2026

Saturday	October 24	4:00 PM	Lone Tree	Linda Hartley
Sunday	October 25	8:00 AM 10:00 AM	Nichols Hills	Jack & Helene Salemink Dave Ipsen
Monday	October 26	8:00 AM	Lone Tree R	Henry Leonhart
Tuesday	October 27	8:00 AM 8:30 AM 10:00 AM	Lone Tree R Atrium PP CC	Rosella Attig Prayer Service Cluster Parishioners
Wednesday	October 28	8:00 AM 8:30 AM	Lone Tree R Atrium	Rosella Attig Prayer Service
Thursday	October 29	8:30 AM 10:00 AM	Atrium PPCC	Joe & Jeremy Jenn Martin Warson
Friday	October 30	8:30 AM	Atrium	Marvin Simon
Saturday	October 31	4:00 PM	Lone Tree	Claude Latta
Sunday	November 1	8:00 AM 10:00 AM	Nichols Hills	Gayle Kaalberg Maynard Rayner

Atrium , Atrium Village Chapel, Atrium Village, Hills.

PP CC, Pioneer Park Care Center located at Pioneer Park Villa, Lone Tree.

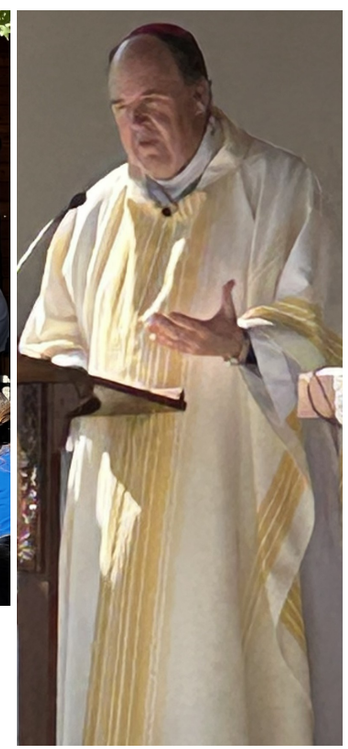
Lone Tree R, St. Mary Rectory in Lone Tree.

Confession Schedule
Father David is available to hear confessions before Mass at these times:
St. Mary, Lone Tree
Saturday 3:30 to 3:50 pm
Church of St. Mary Nichols
Sunday 7:30 to 7:50 am
St. Joseph, Hills
Sunday 9:30 to 9:50 am
Let us come to reconcile to God and others!

While Fr. David is in Ghana, we will continue to share photos from the Journey to Mary Pilgrimage...







Bishop Walsh, along with Fr. David and other Marian priests celebrate Mass in Hills Park, October 10, 2026.

Cluster Parish Announcements

Bulletin deadline Tuesday at 10:00 am. Contact Lora Sieverding at 319-530-5560, hillsstjosephfin@diodav.org or Carol Kaalberg at 319-330-5324 or kaalbergc@diodav.org.

FOOD PANTRIES

Lone Tree Food Pantry is open each Wednesday afternoon from 3:30-5:00 PM. For more information, please call 319-629-4900.

St. Joseph Food Pantry: Wednesday 10 am to noon. Directors: Mike and Lucy Parker 319-679-2420. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

PARISH COUNCILS



Minutes are posted at all church entries.

Nichols Parish Council & Finance Council: Next meeting to be January 24, 2027, following Mass. We will be planning for our pancake breakfast, Sunday March 7th.

Lone Tree Parish Council & Finance Council: Next meeting will be Monday, February 8, at 6PM in the Lone Tree parish hall. We will be planning for our pancake breakfast on Sunday, March 7th.

Hills Parish Council: Next meeting will be Monday, November 16, at 6:30 PM.

Bible Study

Bible Study will meet October 13 & 27 *at* ***Atrium Village***, **1st floor conference room** at 6:30 PM.
Contact Melody Hobert-Mellecker—319-936-3287, call or text — if you are interested, or just come!

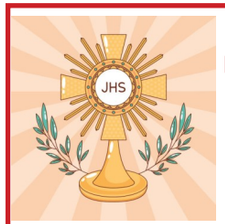


A Bible that is falling apart usually belongs to someone who isn't.

Meeting October 25th.

OCIA
Order of Christian Initiation for Adults

Please contact Fr. David Paintsil or Carol Kaalberg if interested.



Eucharistic Adoration
Every Wednesday, 6-7 PM.
Join us for some "quiet time" in front of the Blessed Sacrament.
***No Benediction* while Fr. David is in Ghana, only prayers and reflection.**

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
will meet October 28
At the Lone Tree St. Mary Parish Hall

Registration forms can be found at our church entries and on our website. Registration is free.
Nancy Waldschmidt, Director of Religious Ed
njwald1@gmail.com or 319-331-2077

Liturgical Ministers—Lone Tree St. Mary Saturday 4:00 pm Cycle A Reading

	10/24/2026 Fr. Lou	10/31/2026 Fr. Lou	11/07/2026 Fr. Tim	11/14/2026 Fr. Lou	Lone Tree	Parish Support
Greeter	Barb Dinsmore	Virginia Schlapkohl	Nancy Ford	Barb Dinsmore	Envelopes	See Next bulletin
Lector	Jerry Ford	Trudi Westfall	Jerry Ford	Judy Grothe	Offertory	See Next bulletin
Cross Bearer	Lynn Bland	JerryFord	Glen Gerot	Joel Yedlik	ACH	$215.00
Servers	Jerry Ford	Trudi Westfall	Jerry Ford	Jill Welter		
Eucharist	Nancy Ford	Judy Grothe	Jerry Ford	Judy Grothe		
Eucharist	Jerry Ford	Trudi Westfall	Nancy Ford	Sherry Nicola		
Collection	Lynn Bland	Jerry Ford	Glen Gerot	Joel Yedlik		
	Joan Davis	Nancy Ford	Betty Gerot	Mary Ellen Yedlik		
Gifts	Lynn Bland, Joan Davis	Jerry & Nancy Ford	Glen & Betty Gerot	Joel & Mary Ellen Yedlik		
Commentator	Jerry Ford	Trudi Westfall	Jerry Ford	Jill Welter		

Liturgical Ministers—Nichols Church of St. Mary Sunday 8:00 am Cycle A Reading

	10/25/2026 Fr. Lou	11/1/2026 Fr. Lou	11/08/2026 Fr. Lou	11/15/2026 Fr. Lou	Nichols	Parish Support
Greeter	Dennis Truesdale	Joe Harper	Joe Harper	Joe Harper	Envelopes	See Next bulletin
Lector	Carol Kaalberg	Renetta Burlage	Jeanne Green	Missy Lenz	Offertory	See Next bulletin
Cross Bearer	Dennis Truesdale	Michael Burlage	David Ollendick	Wayne Mengel	ACH	$250.00
Server	Carol Kaalberg	Carol Kaalberg	Carol Kaalberg	Carol Kaalberg		
Eucharist	Adam Gauger	Adam Gauger	Jeanne Green	Missy Lenz		
Eucharist	Carol Kaalberg	Carol Kaalberg	Carol Kaalberg	Carol Kaalberg		
Collection	Joe Harper	Joe Harper	David Ollendick	Kory Kaalberg		
	Wayne Mengel	Adam Gauger	Dennis Truesdale	David Ollendick		
Gifts	Brent & Meaghan Peters	Dennis Truesdale	Wayne Mengel	David Ollendick		
Commentator	Carol Kaalberg	Carol Kaalberg	Carol Kaalberg	Carol Kaalberg		

Liturgical Ministers—Hills St. Joseph Sunday 10:00 am Cycle A Reading

	10/25/2026 Fr. Tim	11/01/2026 Fr. Tim	11/082026 Fr. Lou	11/15/2026 Fr. Lou	Hills	Parish Support
Music Ministry	Haylee Osmonson/Choir	Haylee Osmonson/Choir	Haylee Osmonson/Choir	Haylee Osmonson/Choir	Envelopes	$370.00
Greeter	Jim & Hope Frantz	Lee & Kathryn Campion	Marcia Mellecker	Jim & Hope Frantz	Offertory	$88.00
Lector	Nancy Waldschmidt	Carol Kirkpatrick	Carol Kirkpatrick	Nancy Waldschmidt	World Missions	$15.00
Server	Mike Sieverding	Emy Rivera, Josh Ayelazuno	Mike Sieverding Messi Akodegnon	Jean Burr, Emy Rivera	ACH	$410.00
Eucharist -host	Jolene Van Eschen	Jolene Van Eschen	Carol Kirkpatrick	Kay Evans		
Eucharist - cup	Carol Kirkpatrick	Carol Kirkpatrick	Deanne Eden	Arlene Johnston		
Eucharist - cup	Mike Sieverding	Deanne Eden	Kay Evans	Bob Jenn		
Collection	Jim Frantz	Nancy Waldschmidt	Marcia Mellecker	Jim Frantz		
	Hope Frantz	Mike Waldschmidt	Barb Mahanna	Hope Frantz		
Gifts	Dave Ipsen family	Maynard Rayner family	Bob & Renita Rummelhart family	Kevin Mahanna family		
Commentator	Lora Sieverding	Shelagh McDonald	Lora Sieverding	Lora Sieverding		

If you are unavailable for the above ministry assignment, please find your own replacement. Thank you.



Please join us in the parish hall for coffee and donuts after Mass today. Donuts are a free will donation. Short on cash...no worries, join us anyway and have a donut on us!

PILGRIMAGE PLANNING

COMMITTEE TO MEET AFTER MASS SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 1, ST. JOSEPH HALL. EVERYONE WELCOME.



WINDOW RESTORATION HAS BEGUN AT ST. MARY LONE TREE...







BELOVED DECEASED

Names are now needed for our "Book of our Beloved Deceased." Each church has a book by the altar. Please write your names for prayer during the month of November.

FREE WILL DONATION!

HOLY TRINITY CHURCH

DRIVE-THRU FALL DINNER

FREE WILL DONATION!

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25, 11 AM UNTIL 1:00 PM

Fried Chicken & Pork Loin

Generous sides of beef & noodles, potatoes, green beans, and a roll...And, don't miss our *FAMOUS PIES!*

Be sure to bid in our Online Auction: SierenAuctionSales.com

571 Howard Street, Richmond (Kalona)



Joan Gringer is retiring from our DIRECTOR OF GREETINGS position. If you would like to assume Joan's duties please let Joan or the church office know. Joan, on behalf of our church, sent cards/greeting to parishioners and their family members, friends, or neighbors who may have had a special birthday, anniversary, illness, hospitalization or even a special milestone life event or award. THANK YOU Joan Gringer for always wishing our community well with your cards and greetings.

Rest in Peace: Our parish sympathy is extended to the families of Rick Cole & Mary Ellen Yedlik, on the loss of their brother, Randy Cole, whose funeral was last week. Eternal rest grant unto him O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him. May his soul and all the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

Rest in Peace: Our parish sympathy is extended to the family of Larry Musser, who died last week. Larry was a resident of Pioneer Park, Lone Tree. His visitation will be Sunday, October 18, 4-6PM at St. Joseph Church in Hills. Funeral Mass will be Monday, October 19, at St. Joseph Church, 10 AM. Burial at St. Stanislaus. Eternal rest grant unto him O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him. May his soul and all the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

Rest in Peace: Our parish sympathy is extended to the family of Janis Ipsen, who passed away last week. Eternal rest grant unto her O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon her. May her soul and all the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.



THANK YOU FOR JOINING US!







A successful Taco Supper after Mass last week at St. Mary Lone Tree.



October is Respect Life month. We will be praying the Rosary before all Masses at all parishes.





OCIA

Order of Christian Initiation of Adults

October Classes: October 25.

See Carol Kaalberg or Fr. David for more information.