

# Dear Padre,

*My friend is deeply involved in her faith, but I struggle with our friendship because I don't like how she treats her pets. I don't understand how someone who values religion so highly can show so little care for animals. What should I do?*



Franciscan Friar Kevin Mackin writes, “The bond between person and pet is like no other relationship, because the communication between fellow creatures is at its most basic. Eye to eye are two creatures of love” (“Why We Bless Animals,” *Catholic Update*). Because of this strong bond between humans and sentient creatures, it’s especially difficult to witness their mistreatment, either through neglect (such as failing to provide sufficient food, water, shelter, or veterinary care) or direct physical abuse (a violation of anti-cruelty laws and a criminal offense in all fifty states). Studies show that owning pets offers us companionship and emotional support; in turn, these qualities can foster in us greater empathy and compassion toward others. Yet, while pets may greatly benefit our health and well-being, owning them comes with a serious obligation and moral responsibility. Vulnerable pets depend on humans for adequate care and protection. At times, some pet owners can be overwhelmed by their responsibility to provide proper care; others may even be unaware that they are treating their pets inappropriately. Out of concern for both your friend and her pets, consider a non-critical, non-confrontational approach to discuss your observations and to offer assistance. ●

Fr. Byron Miller, CSSR / DearPadre.org

## A WORD FROM POPE LEO XIV

*Today we lift up our prayer for peace in the world, asking that nations renounce weapons and choose the path of dialogue and diplomacy. Disarm our hearts of hatred, resentment, and indifference, so we may become instruments of reconciliation. Help us understand that true security does not come from control fueled by fear, but from trust, justice, and solidarity among peoples.*

“PRAY WITH THE POPE” VIDEO MESSAGE, MARCH 2026

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## Do you have a question for the Padre?

Go to [DearPadre.org](https://dearpadre.org) to send your question and to learn more about *Dear Padre*.

|                                                                                                |                                                                               |                                                                                                                                            |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Monday</b><br>October 5<br><i>Weekday</i><br>Gal 1:6–12<br>Lk 10:25–37                      | <b>Thursday</b><br>October 8<br><i>Weekday</i><br>Gal 3:1–5<br>Lk 11:5–13     | <b>Sunday</b><br>October 11<br><i>Twenty-eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time</i><br>Is 25:6–10a<br>Phil 4:12–14, 19–20<br>Mt 22:1–14 or 22:1–10 |
| <b>Tuesday</b><br>October 6<br><i>Weekday</i><br>Gal 1:13–24<br>Lk 10:38–42                    | <b>Friday</b><br>October 9<br><i>Weekday</i><br>Gal 3:7–14<br>Lk 11:15–26     |                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Wednesday</b><br>October 7<br><i>Our Lady of the Rosary</i><br>Gal 2:1–2, 7–14<br>Lk 11:1–4 | <b>Saturday</b><br>October 10<br><i>Weekday</i><br>Gal 3:22–29<br>Lk 11:27–28 |                                                                                                                                            |



# The Gradual Road to Ruin

FR. THOMAS M. SANTA, CSSR

A wise old sage once observed, “When it starts out stupid, it just gets more stupid.” The parable in today’s gospel illustrates this wisdom.

The son has been sent. The jig is up. The owner is not going to give up the vineyard. The tenants gambled and lost. It’s time for them to accept the inevitable and pay the rent. But common sense and wisdom do not prevail. *Kill the son*, they think, *and all that he would have inherited will be ours!*

How do you get from “don’t pay the rent” to “kill the son”? It is not a straight or smooth path. There are a lot of twists and turns between point A and point B. But it happens. It sneaks in. It demands little compromises and small dishonesties along the way as it becomes easier and easier for you to choose what is destructive. Then, you find you have lost it all—your very self. And the corruption you’ve embraced convinces you that you’re making wise choices. You must be completely cleansed of the seduction that has enabled you to make these choices. You need to start again. ●



LEARN ABOUT  
THE AUTHORS  
OF OUR PARISH  
COMMUNITY

## Reflect

*Am I aware of a sin that has become easy to commit?*



Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God.

PHILIPPIANS 4:6

"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

27th Sunday of Ordinary Time

October 4, 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: stsmarijoseph.com Cluster Facebook: www.facebook.com/stsmarijoseph  
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 3 to October 11, 2026

|           |            |                                |                                  |                                                        |
|-----------|------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| Saturday  | October 3  | 4:00 PM                        | Lone Tree                        | Keith Grothe                                           |
| Sunday    | October 4  | 8:00 AM<br>10:00 AM            | Nichols<br>Hills                 | Sonny, Karleen, Tom O'Toole<br>Jack & Rose Marie Ruth  |
| Monday    | October 5  | 8:00 AM<br>8:30 AM             | Lone Tree R<br><b>St. Joseph</b> | Monica Leonhardt<br>No Intention                       |
| Tuesday   | October 6  | 8:00 AM<br>8:30 AM<br>10:00 AM | Lone Tree R<br><b>St. Joseph</b> | Rosella Attig<br>Bob Mellecker<br>Cluster Parishioners |
| Wednesday | October 7  | 8:00 AM<br>8:30 AM             | Lone Tree R<br><b>St. Joseph</b> | Rosella Attig<br>Leo Ruth                              |
| Thursday  | October 8  | 9:00AM<br>10:00 AM             | <b>St. Joseph</b><br>PPCC        | Marvin Simon<br>Martin Warson                          |
| Friday    | October 9  | 8:30 AM                        | <b>St. Joseph</b>                | John & Betty Soukup                                    |
| Saturday  | October 10 | 4:00 PM                        | Lone Tree                        | Keith Grothe                                           |
| Sunday    | October 11 | 8:00 AM<br>10:00 AM            | Nichols<br>Hills                 | Jack & Helene Salemink<br>Bob & Renita Rummelhart      |

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!*

## DIOCESE OF DAVENPORT

### A Journey with Mary: A Rosary Walk for Evangelization and Vocations



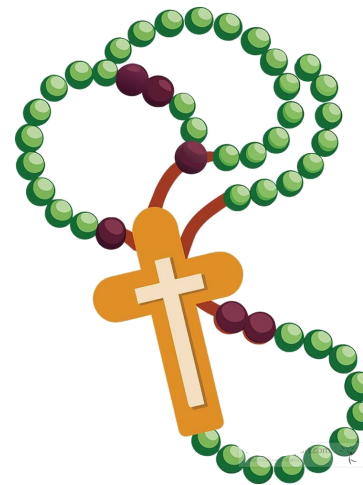
All are warmly invited to participate in a special Marian pilgrimage/Rosary walk in our Diocese on **Saturday, October 10, 2026**, beginning at 8:00 a.m. at St. Stanislaus, 5423 Maier Ave SW, Riverside to St. Joseph, Hills City Park. Vans will be available at Hills City Park by 7: 00.AM to pick you up to take you to St. Stanislaus if you want to walk. Please, park your car in Hills. Together, we will walk prayerfully, meditating on the mysteries of the Rosary and asking our Blessed Mother to renew us in faith and to revive our Diocese through evangelization and an increase in vocations.

Inspired by the theme, **"And Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, to a city of Judah" (Luke 1:39)**, this Rosary Walk invites us to follow Mary's example of bringing Christ to others with faith, joy, and missionary zeal. The pilgrimage will conclude with Holy Mass, celebrated by Bishop Dennis Walsh at approximately 11:00 a.m. at Hills City Park. Those who are unable to participate in the walk are warmly invited to join us for Mass and lunch.

Come and walk with Mary. Pray for peace. Pray for vocations. Be renewed in faith. Bring your family and friends as we journey together in hope.

**For more information, please contact:**  
Fr. David Paintsil – paintsild@diodav.org  
Carol Kirkpatrick -cjkkirk@sharontc.net

Park you car at St. Joseph's.  
We will have shuttle vans to  
take walkers to St. Stanislaus!



DIOCESE of DAVENPORT

# A Journey with Mary

A Rosary Walk for  
Evangelization and Vocations  
to Conclude the Eucharistic Rosary Congress

**St. Stanislaus 5423 Maier Ave SW, Riverside  
to St. Joseph, Hills City Park**

**Saturday, October 10th, 2026 at 8:00 AM**

Pilgrimage will end with Mass  
at Hills City Park with Bishop Dennis Walsh  
at 11:00 AM. Lunch and hospitality will follow.  
Those unable to walk may join for Mass and Lunch.

Buses will be available at Hills City Park by  
7:00 AM to pick you to St. Stanislaus, if you  
want to walk. Park your car in Hills.

Please use the QR code to RSVP for the walk  
so we can have an accurate count for lunch.

And Mary arose in those days and went  
into the hill country with haste, into the city of Judah  
( Luke 1: 39)



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 is open each Wednesday morning from 10 am to noon. Mike and Lucy Parker direct our food pantry and can be reached at 319-679-2420.

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, October 19, 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!

Prayer Corner

God never said the journey would be easy, but he did say the arrival will be worthwhile.

Eucharistic Adoration  
Wednesday,  
October 7, 2026.  
2 PM-3PM  
St. Joseph, Hills

Please note the time change.

Beginning October 18th.

O C I A  
Order of Christian Initiation for Adults

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

Religious Education began September 23, 2026.

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 |                    |                   |                          |                    |              |                |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|--------------|----------------|
|                                                                          | 10/03/2026 Lou     | 10/10/2026 Lou    | 10/17/2026 Lou           | 10/24/2026 Lou     | Lone Tree    | Parish Support |
| Greeter                                                                  | Bernie Lorack      | Lynn Bland        | Mary Ellen & Joel Yedlik | Barb Dinsmore      | Envelopes    | \$1,605.00     |
| Lector                                                                   | Judy Grothe        | Judy Grothe       | Lynn Bland               | Jerry Ford         | Offertory    | \$46.00        |
| Cross Bearer                                                             | Jerry Ford         | Glen Gerot        | Joel Yedlik              | Nancy Ford         | Fuel         | \$200.00       |
| Servers                                                                  | Sherry Nicola      | Jill Welter       | Lynn Bland               | Jerry Ford         | Religious Ed | \$110.00       |
| Eucharist                                                                | Judy Grothe        | Judy Grothe       | Lynn Bland               | Nancy Ford         |              |                |
| Eucharist                                                                | Sherry Nicola      | Sherry Nicola     | Sherry Nicola            | Jerry Ford         |              |                |
| Collection                                                               | Jerry Ford         | Betty Gerot       | Joel Yedlik              | Mike Parker        |              |                |
|                                                                          | Nancy Ford         | Glen Gerot        | Mary Ellen Yedlik        | Lucy Parker        |              |                |
| Gifts                                                                    | Jerry & Nancy Ford | Betty, Glen Gerot | Joel & Mary Ellen Yedlik | Mike & Lucy Parker |              |                |
| Commentator                                                              | Sherry Nicola      | Jill Welter       | Lynn Bland               | Jerry Ford         |              |                |

| Liturgical Ministers—Nichols Church of St. Mary Sunday 8:00 am Cycle A Reading |                  |                  |                       |                        |           |                |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------|----------------|
|                                                                                | 10/04/2026 David | 10/11/2026 David | 10/18/2026 Lou        | 10/25/2026 Lou         | Nichols   | Parish Support |
| Greeter                                                                        | Dennis Truesdale | Dennis Truesdale | Dennis Truesdale      | Dennis Truesdale       | Envelopes | \$350.00       |
| Lector                                                                         | Rennetta Burlage | Missy Lenz       | Tom Barr              | Tom Barr               | Offertory | \$33.00        |
| Cross Bearer                                                                   | Michael Burlage  | Wayne Mengel     | Adam Gauger           | Dennis Truesdale       |           |                |
| Server                                                                         | Carol Kaalberg   | Carol Kaalberg   | Carol Kaalberg        | Carol Kaalberg         |           |                |
| Eucharist                                                                      | Jeanne Green     | Missy Lenz       | Tom Barr              | Tom Barr               |           |                |
| Eucharist                                                                      | Carol Kaalberg   | Carol Kaalberg   | Carol Kaalberg        | Carol Kaalberg         |           |                |
| Collection                                                                     | Joe Harper       | Adam Gauger      | Adam Gauger           | Joe Harper             |           |                |
|                                                                                | Wayne Mengel     | Kory Kaalberg    | Dennis Truesdale      | Wayne Mengel           |           |                |
| Gifts                                                                          | Lori Leggins     | Cindy Massey     | Bruce & Margaret Matt | Brent & Meaghan Peters |           |                |
| Commentator                                                                    | Carol Kaalberg   | Carol Kaalberg   | Carol Kaalberg        | Carol Kaalberg         |           |                |

| Liturgical Ministers—Hills St. Joseph Sunday 10:00 am Cycle A Reading |                              |                                |                            |                       |           |                |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------|----------------|
|                                                                       | 10/04/2026 David             | 10/11/2026 David               | 10/18/2026 Lou             | 10/25/2026 Lou        | Hills     | Parish Support |
| Music Ministry                                                        | Haylee Osmonson/Choir        | Haylee Osmonson/Choir          | Haylee Osmonson/Choir      | Haylee Osmonson/Choir | Envelopes | \$200.00       |
| Greeter                                                               | Lee & Kathryn Campion        | Marcia Mellecker               | Lee & Kathryn Campion      | Jim & Hope Frantz     | Offertory | \$81.00        |
| Lector                                                                | Lora Sieverding              | Mike Waldschmidt               | Mike Waldschmidt           | Carol Kirkpatrick     |           |                |
| Server                                                                | Jean Burr, Josh Ayelazuno    | Mike Sieverding                | Jean Burr, Messi Akodegnon | Mike Sieverding       |           |                |
| Eucharist -host                                                       | Mike Sieverding              | Bob Jenn                       | Kristee Malmberg           | Jolene Van Eschen     |           |                |
| Eucharist - cup                                                       | Kay Evans                    | Arlene Johnston                | Bob Jenn                   | Carol Kirkpatrick     |           |                |
| Eucharist - cup                                                       | Carol Kirkpatrick            | Kristee Malmberg               | Mike Sieverding            | Mike Sieverding       |           |                |
| Collection                                                            | Brian Moran                  | Marcia Mellecker               | Thom Kirkpatrick           | Jim Frantz            |           |                |
|                                                                       | Mike Waldschmidt             | Barb Mahanna                   | Jim Mills                  | Hope Frantz           |           |                |
| Gifts                                                                 | Jack & Rose Mary Ruth family | Bob & Renita Rummelhart family | Maynard Rayner family      | Dave Ipsen family     |           |                |
| Commentator                                                           | Carol Kirkpatrick            | Lora Sieverding                | Lora Sieverding            | Lora Sieverding       |           |                |

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



A donation jar is located at the church entry for cash donations. Donations will purchase groceries to be used to prepare a meal for the Catholic Workers House on Sunday, October 25th.  
*A sign up sheet to help with the meal will be coming in October.*

24th Annual Johnson County 4-H

PANCAKE  
BREAKFAST

October 4, 2026 | 8am - 12pm  
Building C, Johnson County Fairgrounds





A JOURNEY WITH MARY  
ADORATION AND PILGRIMAGE

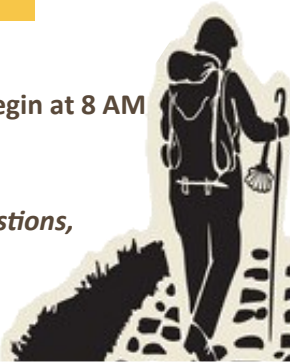
Beginns this Saturday, October 3 and  
concludes Saturday, October 10.



WORKER BEES....Saturday, October 10



Car parking/Shuttle to begin at 7 AM  
Cleaning of park tables & set up to begin at 8 AM  
Chair set up to begin at 9:00 AM  
See Carol Kirkpatrick with questions,  
319-331-0921  
Marcia Mellecker is leading lunch.  
Clean up to follow ... please help if you are able.



**Pilgrimage Walkers**  
Please park your car in St. Joseph parking lot. Shuttle vans will take you to St. Stanislaus Church where the pilgrimage begins. Pilgrimage will begin at 8 AM.



Mass with Bishop Dennis Walsh in the Hills Park  
Saturday, October 10 at 11:00 AM.

Park you car at St. Joseph's.  
We will have shuttle vans to take walkers to St. Stanislaus!

ADORATION SCHEDULE  
at St. Joseph

SAT., OCT. 3

|         |                |
|---------|----------------|
| 1:00 PM | K. Evans       |
| 2:00 PM | A. ATITSE      |
| 3:00 PM |                |
| 4:00 PM | C. Kirkpatrick |
| 5:00 PM | S. Reese       |
| 6:00 PM | K. Evans       |

SUN., OCT. 4

|          |                |
|----------|----------------|
| 11:00 AM | M. Mellecker   |
| NOON     | L. Loan        |
| 1:00 PM  | J. Burr        |
| 2:00 PM  |                |
| 3:00 PM  |                |
| 4:00 PM  | C. Kirkpatrick |

MON., OCT. 5

|          |                |
|----------|----------------|
| 9:00 AM  | L. Duwa        |
| 10:00 AM |                |
| 11:00 AM | M. Waldschmidt |
| NOON     | L. Loan        |
| 1:00 PM  |                |
| 2:00 PM  | M. Mellecker   |

TUES., OCT. 6

|          |                |
|----------|----------------|
| 9:00 AM  | J. Burr        |
| 10:00 AM | J. Burr        |
| 11:00 AM | J. Burr        |
| NOON     | L. Loan        |
| 1:00 PM  | S. McDonald    |
| 2:00 PM  | C. Kirkpatrick |

WED., OCT. 7

|          |                |
|----------|----------------|
| 9:00 AM  | J. Stebral     |
| 10:00 AM | J. VanEschen   |
| 11:00 AM | S. Reese       |
| NOON     | L. Loan        |
| 1:00 PM  | M. Mellecker   |
| 2:00 PM  | C. Kirkpatrick |

THURS., OCT. 8

|          |                |
|----------|----------------|
| 9:00 AM  | L. Duwa        |
| 10:00 AM |                |
| 11:00 AM | J. Gauger      |
| NOON     |                |
| 1:00 PM  | K. Evans       |
| 2:00 PM  | C. Kirkpatrick |

FRI., OCT. 9

|          |                |
|----------|----------------|
| 9:00 AM  | K. Simon       |
| 10:00 AM |                |
| 11:00 AM |                |
| NOON     | L. Loan        |
| 1:00 PM  |                |
| 2:00 PM  | C. Kirkpatrick |



The rosary  
will be said  
at the top of  
every hour.



OCIA  
Order of Christian Initiation of Adults  
Classes will begin October 18, 2026.  
See Carol Kaalberg or Fr. David for more information.



HILLS BOO BASH  
COSTUME PARADE & TRUNK-OR-TREAT  
October 18th  
2 PM— 4PM  
St. Joseph Church Parking Lot  
Sponsored by Hills Hometown Pride

HOLY FAMILY PARISH  
St. Joseph Church, 210 11th Street, Wellman, Iowa.  
Pork Loin & Chicken Dinner, \$18/\$10 (children 4-10)  
Sunday, October 4, 2026  
11 AM until 1 PM  
Drive thru dinners available.  
Live Auction at 1 PM. All proceeds for upkeep of church.

FREE TACO MEAL  
OCTOBER 17  
FOLLOWING MASS  
LONE TREE ST.MARY  
PARISH HALL  
All parishioners & guests welcome!



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

