

# Dear Padre,

If Catholics say the Confiteor at Mass, then why do we still need to go to confession?

Recall when Jesus told Simon and his fishing companions to lower their nets after they had caught nothing. (See Luke 5:1–11.) When their boats began to sink with so many fish, Simon fell at Jesus’ feet and said, “Leave me, Lord, for I am a sinful man.” Likewise, at Mass, we’re so filled with awe upon entering the presence of God that we become aware of our own sinfulness.

The penitential act prepares the assembly to enter the celebration in a proper spirit of humility. The priest and the faithful observe a period of silence to acknowledge their sinfulness and confess their awe of Christ’s love and mercy. This is expressed in different forms, one of which is the Confiteor, a general confession that invokes the support of the communion of saints and the specific community gathered at Mass. It includes the instruction to strike one’s breast, an ancient gesture of humility and penitence. (See Luke 18:13; 23:48.) The rite concludes with the priest’s absolution, but it “lacks the efficacy of the sacrament of penance” (*General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, 51). Thus, the penitential act isn’t a substitute for absolution from sins confessed in the sacrament of penance, particularly serious, mortal sins. Rather, it prepares the faithful as a unified community to properly listen to God’s word and celebrate the Eucharist worthily (*GIRM* 46). ●

Fr. Byron Miller, CSSR / DearPadre.org



ZUTUGAR KARIMOV / UNSPLASH

### A WORD FROM POPE LEO XIV

In the Church there is...a place for everyone, and... every Christian is called to proclaim the gospel and bear witness in every environment.... Thus, this people shows its catholicity, welcoming the wealth and resources of different cultures and, at the same time, offering them the newness of the gospel to purify them and to raise them up.

**GENERAL AUDIENCE, ROME, MARCH 11, 2026**

The quotations from Pope Leo XIV are printed with permission, copyright © Dicastero per la Comunicazione-Libreria Editrice Vaticana. All rights reserved.

## 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*.

| Monday                                                                                             | Wednesday                                                                                                    | Saturday                                                                                                      |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| September 14<br><i>The Exaltation of the Holy Cross</i><br>Nm 21:4b–9<br>Phil 2:6–11<br>Jn 3:13–17 | September 16<br><i>Sts. Cornelius, Pope, and Cyprian, Bishop, Martyrs</i><br>1 Cor 12:31–13:13<br>Lk 7:31–35 | September 19<br><i>Weekday</i><br>1 Cor 15:35–37, 42–49<br>Lk 8:4–15                                          |
| Tuesday                                                                                            | Thursday                                                                                                     | Sunday                                                                                                        |
| September 15<br><i>Our Lady of Sorrows</i><br>1 Cor 12:12–14, 27–31a<br>Jn 19:25–27 or Lk 2:33–35  | September 17<br><i>Weekday</i><br>1 Cor 15:1–11<br>Lk 7:36–50                                                | September 20<br><i>Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time</i><br>Is 55:6–9<br>Phil 1:20c–24, 27a<br>Mt 20:1–16a |
|                                                                                                    | Friday                                                                                                       |                                                                                                               |
|                                                                                                    | September 18<br><i>Weekday</i><br>1 Cor 15:12–20<br>Lk 8:1–3                                                 |                                                                                                               |

# Our Parish COMMUNITY

September 13, 2026  
Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time (A)  
Sirach 27:30–28:7 / Romans 14:7–9 / Matthew 18:21–35



## The Debt We Have in Common

THOMAS M. SANTA, CSSR

As we hear today’s Gospel of the servant whose enormous debt is forgiven, yet who refuses mercy to a fellow servant owing far less, we cannot help but ask: how can this be? This is the first question that comes to mind. How could a person be forgiven so much and then, just a few minutes later, refuse to forgive something inconsequential in comparison? Selfishness doesn’t really explain it. Being so full of oneself doesn’t explain it. Being completely dense and obtuse is perhaps closer to the truth, but even that explanation comes up short.

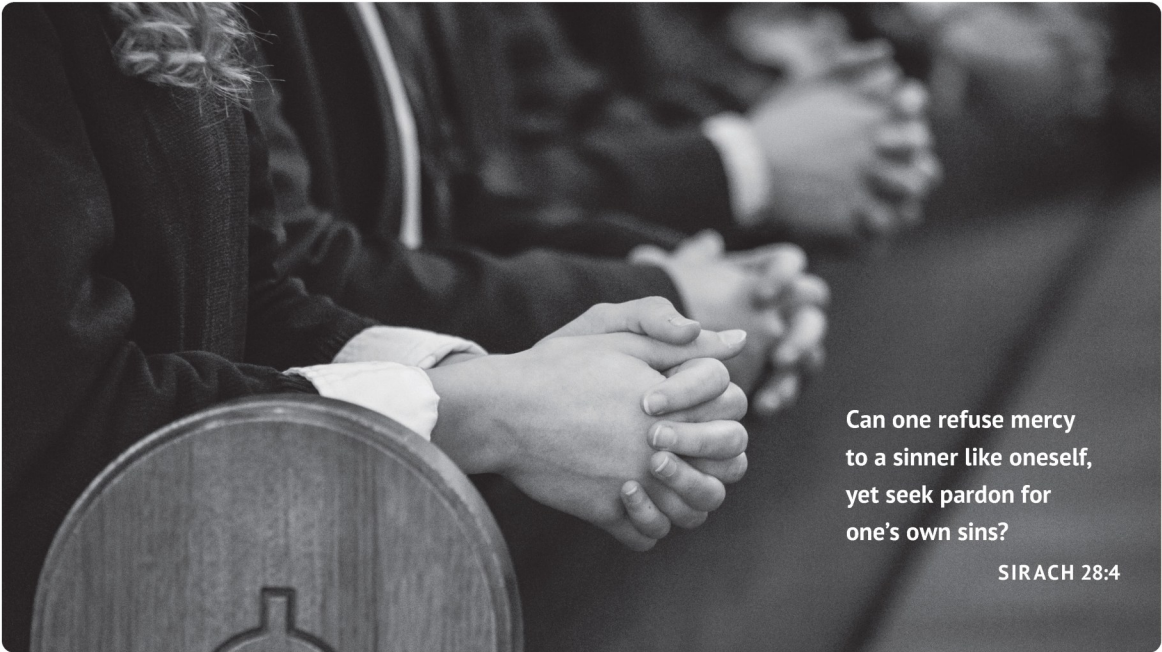
The truth is that the exaggeration of the debt is secondary to the story. What is essential to the story is the invitation to reflect on what it means to be a human being. It is to acknowledge that, when all is said and done, everyone owes a huge debt. No one is exempt from gratitude. An honest acceptance of who we are—completely and totally dependent on God who created us—is the core truth. To be so disconnected from this truth as to not recognize one’s own dependence and be completely unaware of the need to be grateful—that is the real challenge the story considers. ●



LEARN ABOUT THE AUTHORS OF OUR PARISH COMMUNITY

### Reflect

How am I at forgiveness—with others and with myself?



Can one refuse mercy to a sinner like oneself, yet seek pardon for one’s own sins?

SIRACH 28:4

"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

24th Sunday of Ordinary Time

September 13, 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 September 12 to September 20, 2026

|           |              |                                |                                |                                                              |
|-----------|--------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| Saturday  | September 12 | 4:00 PM                        | Lone Tree                      | Donald Kout                                                  |
| Sunday    | September 13 | 8:00 AM<br>10:00 AM            | Nichols<br>Hills               | Ann Wieskamp<br>Mary E. Rummelhart                           |
| Monday    | September 14 | 8:00 AM                        | Lone Tree R                    | Leonard Cooney                                               |
| Tuesday   | September 15 | 8:00 AM<br>8:30 AM<br>10:00 AM | Lone Tree R<br>Atrium<br>PP CC | Jerry Schlapkohl<br>Julia Ruppenkamp<br>Cluster Parishioners |
| Wednesday | September 16 | 8:00 AM<br>8:30 AM             | Lone Tree R<br>Atrium          | Doris Ruth<br>Liv & Dec of Draker family                     |
| Thursday  | September 17 | 8:30 AM<br>10:00 AM            | Atrium<br>PPCC                 | Clayton & Maryann Michel<br>Martin Warson                    |
| Friday    | September 18 | 8:30 AM                        | Atrium                         | Marvin Simon                                                 |
| Saturday  | September 19 | 4:00 PM                        | Lone Tree                      | Luther Hartley                                               |
| Sunday    | September 20 | 8:00 AM<br>10:00 AM            | Nichols<br>Hills               | Lawrence & Geneva Salemink<br>Dean & Alice Cole              |

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!*

## Part IV: Make Your Home a Church

### Parents: The First Teachers and Witnesses of Faith



We began this series by reflecting on how to transform our homes into Domestic Churches. In Part III, we considered how the early Church Fathers and the Second Vatican Council understood the family as the Domestic Church. This week, we take the next step by asking: Who has the primary responsibility for making the home a place where faith is lived and nurtured? The Church gives us a beautiful answer: parents. Parents are the first teachers, witnesses, and evangelizers of their children.

Long before children learn about God in a classroom or hear the Gospel proclaimed in church, they encounter faith through their family. A child learns to pray because he or she sees parents praying. Children learn forgiveness when they see their parents forgive one another. They learn generosity, compassion, honesty, and love by watching these virtues practiced at home. Parents teach faith not only through their words but, even more powerfully, through their example. The Church has consistently emphasized this responsibility. The Second Vatican Council teaches that parents, "by their word and example," are the first heralds of the faith to their children. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* similarly teaches that the home is the first school of Christian life. Parents have a unique vocation to form their children in faith.

This responsibility can sometimes seem overwhelming. Parents may wonder: "Am I doing enough?" or "What if my children no longer practice their faith?" The good news is that parents do not have to be perfect. What children need most is to see that their parents genuinely love Christ and strive to follow Him. This witness is especially important in a culture where children encounter countless competing voices. Social media, entertainment, peers, and the wider culture influence how young people understand life, relationships, success, and happiness. The family therefore has an essential role in helping children develop a Christian vision of who they are and how they are called to live.

Being the first teachers of faith does not require complicated programs. It can happen through simple moments: praying before meals, blessing children before school, attending Sunday Mass together, reading the Gospel, praying the Rosary, celebrating feast days, helping someone in need, or talking about God when difficult situations arise. These practices gradually form a child's heart and create a culture of faith within the home.

As parents, grandparents, and guardians, let us never underestimate our influence on the faith of the next generation. The seeds planted in the home may seem small, but God can use them in ways we cannot imagine.

This week, I invite every parent and grandparent to ask: **"What am I teaching my children about God through the way I live?"** Then choose one simple practice of faith to strengthen your home. Remember: **the greatest lesson we can teach our children is not simply to know about God, but to know, love, and follow Him.**

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 announced, as needed.

Lone Tree Parish Council & Finance Council: Next meeting will be Monday, September 28, at 6PM in the Lone Tree parish hall.

Hills Parish Council: Next meeting will be Monday, September 21 at 6:30 PM. Finance Council meeting Thurs., September 17, 2026, 6:00 PM.

Bible Study

Bible Study will meet September 8 & 22 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

Choice not chance determines destiny.

Eucharistic Adoration

Wednesday, September 16, 2026.

6 PM-7PM

St. Joseph, Hills

Confessions are available at this time.

OCIA

Order of Christian Initiation for Adults

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

Religious Education will begin 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 |                          |                         |                          |                    |           |                |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|-----------|----------------|
|                                                                          | 09/12/2026 David         | 09/19/2026 David        | 09/26/2026 David         | 10/03/2026 Lou     | Lone Tree | Parish Support |
| Greeter                                                                  | Paula Moore              | Bernie Lorack           | Virginia Schlapkohl      | Bernie Lorack      | Envelopes | \$829.65       |
| Lector                                                                   | Lynn Bland               | Jerry Ford              | Lynn Bland               | Judy Grothe        | Offertory | \$46.00        |
| Cross Bearer                                                             | Joel Yedlik              | Lynn Bland              | Joel Yedlik              | Jerry Ford         | ACH       | \$245.00       |
| Servers                                                                  | Lynn Bland               | Jerry Ford              | Lynn Bland               | Sherry Nicola      | Fuel      | \$450.00       |
| Eucharist                                                                | Paula Moore              | Judy Grothe             | Sherry Nicola            | Judy Grothe        |           |                |
| Eucharist                                                                | Lynn Bland               | Jerry Ford              | Lynn Bland               | Sherry Nicola      |           |                |
| Collection                                                               | Joel Yedlik              | Nancy Ford              | Joel Yedlik              | Jerry Ford         |           |                |
|                                                                          | Mary Ellen Yedlik        | Jill Welter             | Mary Ellen Yedlik        | Nancy Ford         |           |                |
| Gifts                                                                    | Joel & Mary Ellen Yedlik | Jill Welter, Nancy Ford | Joel & Mary Ellen Yedlik | Jerry & Nancy Ford |           |                |
| Commentator                                                              | Lynn Bland               | Jerry Ford              | Lynn Bland               | Sherry Nicola      |           |                |

| Liturgical Ministers—Nichols Church of St. Mary Sunday 8:00 am Cycle A Reading |                  |                    |                  |                  |             |                |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|--------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------|----------------|
|                                                                                | 09/13/2026 Lou   | 09/20/2026 David   | 09/27/2026 David | 10/04/2026 David | Nichols     | Parish Support |
| Greeter                                                                        | Wayne Mengel     | Wayne Mengel       | Wayne Mengel     | Dennis Truesdale | Envelopes   | \$255.00       |
| Lector                                                                         | Tom Barr         | Missy Lenz         | Tom Barr         | Rennetta Burlage | Offertory   | \$86.00        |
| Cross Bearer                                                                   | Adam Gauger      | Dennis Truesdale   | Adam Lector      | Michael Burlage  | ACH         | \$250.00       |
| Server                                                                         | Carol Kaalberg   | Carol Kaalberg     | Carol Kaalberg   | Carol Kaalberg   | Fuel        | \$200.00       |
| Eucharist                                                                      | Tom Barr         | Missy Lenz         | Tom Barr         | Jeanne Green     | Surplus ADA | \$1,713.00     |
| Eucharist                                                                      | Carol Kaalberg   | Carol Kaalberg     | Carol Kaalberg   | Carol Kaalberg   |             |                |
| Collection                                                                     | Wayne Mengel     | Kory Kaalberg      | Joe Harper       | Joe Harper       |             |                |
|                                                                                | Dennis Truesdale | Adam Gauger        | Wayne Mengel     | Wayne Mengel     |             |                |
| Gifts                                                                          | Julie Elder      | Joel & Rose Harper | Kelsi Lampe      | Lori Leggins     |             |                |
| Commentator                                                                    | Carol Kaalberg   | Carol Kaalberg     | Carol Kaalberg   | Carol Kaalberg   |             |                |

| Liturgical Ministers—Hills St. Joseph Sunday 10:00 am Cycle A Reading |                          |                          |                       |                              |           |                |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|-----------|----------------|
|                                                                       | 09/13/2026 David         | 09/20/2026 David         | 09/27/2026 David      | 10/04/2026 David             | Hills     | Parish Support |
| Music Ministry                                                        | Haylee Osmonson/Choir    | Haylee Osmonson/Choir    | Haylee Osmonson/Choir | Haylee Osmonson/Choir        | Envelopes | \$505.00       |
| Greeter                                                               | Marcia Mellecker         | Jim & Hope Frantz        | Janet Goss            | Lee & Katheryn Campion       | Offertory | \$95.00        |
| Lector                                                                | Mike Waldschmidt         | Mike Waldschmidt         | Lora Sieverding       | Lora Sieverding              | ACH       | \$898.00       |
|                                                                       | Jean Burr,               | Messi Akodegnon,         |                       |                              |           |                |
| Server                                                                | Josh Ayelazuno           | Mike Sieverding          | Mike Sieverding       | Jean Burr, Josh Ayelazuno    |           |                |
| Eucharist -host                                                       | Jolene VanEschen         | Jolene VanEschen         | Mike Sieverding       | Mike Sieverding              |           |                |
| Eucharist - cup                                                       | Arlene Johnston          | Arlene Johnston          | Deanne Eden           | Kay Evans                    |           |                |
| Eucharist - cup                                                       | Bob Jenn                 | Mike Sieverding          | Bob Jenn              | Emy Rivera                   |           |                |
| Collection                                                            | Marcia Mellecker         | Jim Frantz               | Mike Waldschmidt      | Brian Moran                  |           |                |
|                                                                       | Jim Mills                | Hope Frantz              | Nancy Waldschmidt     | Mike Waldschmidt             |           |                |
| Gifts                                                                 | Mary E Rummelhart family | Dean & Alice Cole family | Maynard Rayner family | Jack & Rose Mary Ruth family |           |                |
| Commentator                                                           | Shelagh McDonald         | Lora Sieverding          | Shelagh McDonald      | Shelagh McDonald             |           |                |

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.



Page 3  
September 13, 2026

### ANNUAL PARISH CORPORATE BOARD MEETING

It is important all pastors/parochial administrators, PLCs and parish lay directors attend **ONE** of these required annual meetings. Meetings will be held virtually, ZOOM, and **you will need to register for the Zoom to get the login information.**

Meeting times:

Sunday, September 13th, 4:00 - 5:00 PM.

Tuesday, September 15th, 7:00 - 8:00 PM.

*Tuesday is a repeat of Sunday's meeting.*

### JOURNEY WITH MARY WEEK OF ADORATION

Our cluster parishes will have 6 hours daily of adoration for one week at St. Joseph Church. We will begin on October 3rd, following the Healing Mass, as well as after Sunday Mass. Daily Mass will be at St. Joseph Church, Monday through Friday at 8:30 AM with adoration following Mass. The top of each hour the Rosary will be said, a master binder will be available for those leading the Rosary. Signup sheets can be found at all church entries.



### **ATTENTION ALL PARISHIONERS OF ST. MARY LONE TREE, ST. MARY NICHOLS, ST. JOSEPH HILLS:**

A Journey with Mary pilgrimage hosted by St. Mary and St. Joseph cluster parishes is being planned

**OCTOBER 10, 2026**

*An RSVP is essential for proper planning. Please use the sign up sheet at our church entrances.*

Pilgrimage begins at St. Stanislaus Church, rural Hills at 8 AM with Rosary Walk and will end at Hills city park, with Mass celebrated by Bishop Dennis Walsh at 11 AM. Bring your lawn chair for Mass in the park.

Lunch will be served at the park, following Mass.

*Questions may be directed to Carol Kirkpatrick or Fr. David Paintsil.*

We will be doing 6 hours of adoration each day following Mass leading up to our pilgrimage on Saturday. See sign up sheets at church entries. Daily Mass at St. Joseph at 8:30 am Oct. 5-9.



### **Mentors wanted**

We are looking for mentor volunteers for Wednesday night religion class. Mentors will sit with paired student and help them with activities and share insights into the lessons. Each student will be paired with a mentor for the year, hopefully you will create a lasting bond that will encourage continued spiritual growth for both parties.

#### **Mentor Requirements:**

- \*Confirmed
  - \*Catholic in good standing (attend church regularly)
  - \*Complete Veritas training.
  - \*Background check
  - \*Available Wednesday nights 6:30 to 7:30
  - \*Desire to help a student with spiritual growth
- Mentors can be parents, siblings or other relative, family friend or a parishioner the student hasn't met yet.

**If interested please contact Nancy Waldschmidt**  
[njwald1@gmail.com](mailto:njwald1@gmail.com) or 319-331-2077



### **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION STARTS WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23.**

Registration forms can be found at church entries. No fees.

Questions?

Contact Nancy Waldschmidt at  
[njwald1@gmail.com](mailto:njwald1@gmail.com) or  
319-331-2077

**Rest in Peace:** Our parish sympathy is extended to the family of Brent & Meaghan Peters, on the loss of Brent's mom, Cheryl Peters. 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.

24th Annual Johnson County 4-H



# **PANCAKE BREAKFAST**



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

