

Dear Padre,

I am scared of the end times and predictions of these dates. I feel saved, but I don't truly know if I would be accepted into heaven. What are the Catholic teachings on the end times/rapture?

No one but our heavenly Father knows the precise time of our Lord's return. (See Mark 13:32-37.) If this uncertainty about when Jesus will return evokes more apprehension than anticipation, it doesn't help that prophets of doom make predictions based on a distorted understanding of apocalyptic literature in the Bible. An example of this literary form includes the Book of Revelation. It contains elements of a final judgment and cosmic struggle between good and evil written in highly symbolic and imaginative language; however, it wasn't intended to provide a literal description or timeline of how the world ends. In 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17, St. Paul also uses apocalyptic imagery to say that all the faithful will be "caught up" ("rapt up") to meet the Lord at his Coming. Some use this single text to vividly imagine true believers being "raptured" from the earth and escaping the destruction of humankind at the end times, but it's a misinterpretation. For Catholics, these apocalyptic passages offer hope and guidance: despite the powerful forces of evil, Christ will overcome. His death and resurrection already ushered in the last age. We don't know how long this age will last before the final consummation, hence the need to be watchful and prepared. ●



BILLION PHOTOS / SHUTTERSTOCK

Fr. Byron Miller, CSSR / DearPadre.org

Do you have a question for the Padre?

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

Monday May 18 <i>Easter Weekday</i> Acts 19:1-8 Jn 16:29-33	Thursday May 21 <i>Easter Weekday</i> Acts 22:30; 23:6-11 Jn 17:20-26	Saturday May 23 <i>Easter Weekday</i> Acts 28:16-20, 30-31 Jn 21:20-25
Tuesday May 19 <i>Easter Weekday</i> Acts 20:17-27 Jn 17:1-11a	Friday May 22 <i>Easter Weekday</i> Acts 25:13b-21 Jn 21:15-19	Sunday May 24 <i>Pentecost Sunday</i> Acts 2:1-11 1 Cor 12:3b-7, 12-13 Jn 20:19-23
Wednesday May 20 <i>Easter Weekday</i> Acts 20:28-38 Jn 17:11b-19		

A WORD FROM POPE LEO XIV

Where are you...when the poor are blamed for their poverty, forgotten and discarded, in a world that values profit more than people? [W]here are you in a hyper-connected life where loneliness corrodes social bonds and makes us strangers even to ourselves?...

Fraternity...means rediscovering the face of the other...the very image of God in the face of the poor, the refugee, and even the adversary.

ADDRESS TO MEETING
ON FRATERNITY, ROME,
SEPTEMBER 12, 2025



MARCO JACOBELLI EP / SHUTTERSTOCK



Stairway to Heaven

MIGUEL DULICK

Even by the Ascension, after forty days of eating and drinking with the resurrected Lord, the obtuseness of the Apostles still frustrates Jesus. In Acts, they're ready for a fight, "to restore the kingdom to Israel" (Acts 1:6). Matthew reports that "they worshiped, but they doubted" (Matthew 28:17). Pentecost cannot come soon enough, when they will be baptized with the Holy Spirit, and all will be made known.

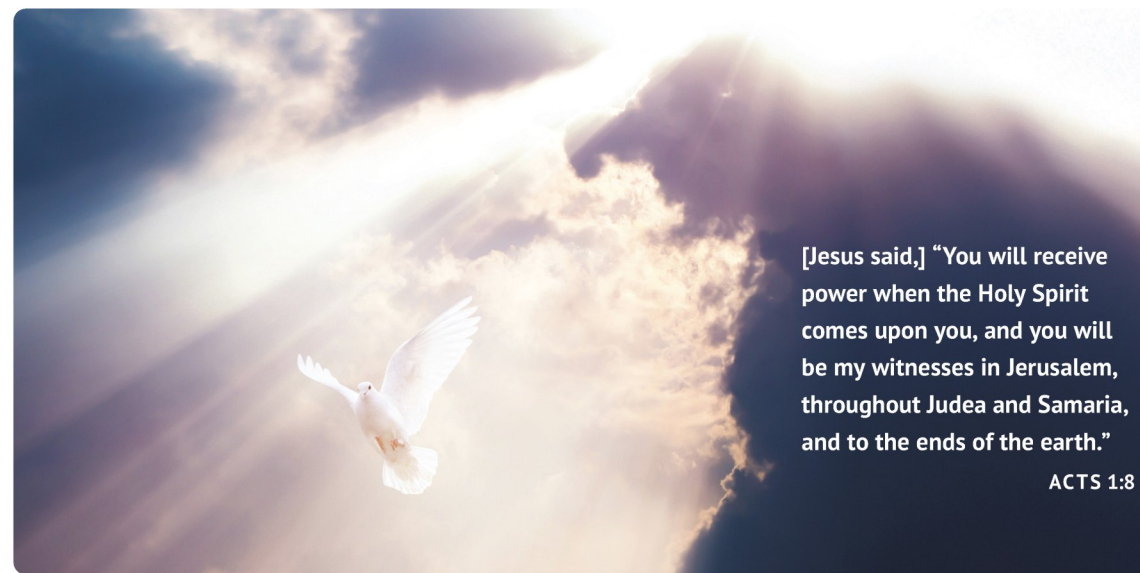
So the next nine days are crucial. The apostles and other disciples, 120 persons in all, prepare for the arrival of the Holy Spirit, a spiritual retreat, the original "novena." Only then can the apostle go and "make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19).

Jesus, who brought heaven down to earth in the Incarnation, now ascends, taking earth up to heaven, with his resurrection. Saint Paul gives us a hint of how special this interchange is when he wishes for the Ephesians to receive from Jesus "a Spirit of wisdom and revelation" (Ephesians 1:17).

Our own obtuseness can block the Holy Spirit when we think we have all the answers. When I first preached in Honduras, in the village where I live, I was so prepared. I said everything I could think of, all that I had learned in my courses for a masters degree in divinity. But then, when I heard the prayers and insights of poor and simple folks, supported by a rich, personal knowledge of the Lord himself, I cut my sermons in half and let the "saints," as St. Paul liked to call the people, finish the job. Thank you, Holy Spirit! ●



LEARN ABOUT THE AUTHORS OF OUR PARISH COMMUNITY



[Jesus said,] "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

ACTS 1:8

Reflect

How can I better cooperate with the Holy Spirit?



Comments from Father David Paintsil:

Set the World on Fire

[SUSANNA PETERS](#)(NISHA)

“The Sovereign Lord has given me his words of wisdom, so that I know how to comfort the weary. Morning by morning he wakens me and opens my understanding to his will.” (Isaiah 50:4 NLT)

Catherine of Siena was a laywoman who made an impact on the world through her writing. Born in 1347, she lived only 33 years. She refused to marry or become a nun. Instead, she chose to serve God as a layperson. For years, she lived in solitude and silence within her family home. After this period of withdrawal, she learned to use her talents for the glory of God. She became an advocate for the poor and the sick. She pressed for reformation in the church. Although she didn’t learn to write until three years before her death, she dictated letters to scribes. Her writings influenced popes, kings, and ordinary folks to turn to God.

During her lifetime, Catherine was judged as a woman who was just **“too much”**--too righteous, too extreme, too ascetic, too talkative, too opinionated, too bossy, too weird, etc. After her death, her writings were compiled into books, and she was seen as one of the most influential teachers of the Church.

Catherine was judged more strictly because she was a woman and a writer. Her intensity and uncompromising principles made many people uncomfortable. Her youthful exuberance was tamed by maturity. She learned to channel her expressive nature in a way that brought glory to God.

“Be who God meant you to be and you will set the world on fire.” (St. Catherine of Siena)

Perhaps, you can identify with St. Catherine of Siena. Maybe you have been told all your life that you need to *tone yourself down a bit because you were ‘too much’ for this world*. Maybe you are too expressive, too opinionated, too assertive, too righteous, too disciplined. Your intensity makes other people uncomfortable. They would prefer you to shrink and be a lesser version of yourself. But God created the spark within you for a purpose. If you have been given a voice, speak up. If you have been given words of wisdom, write. If you have been given understanding, comfort the weary with these insights. Don’t hold back. **Be bold. Be strong. Set the World on fire.**

"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

Feast of Ascension of our Lord

May 17, 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 Carol Kaalberg, 319-330-5324 or Lora Sieverding, 319-530-5560
 Hills Church entry: Lora Sieverding, 319-530-5560 or Judy Stebral, 319-331-8727

Music Ministry: St. Joseph, Hills: Lily Westemeyer, Robynn Anderson, 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 our issues from our cluster and beyond.

Cluster Mass Intentions May 16 to May 24

Saturday	May 16	8:30 PM	Lone Tree	Thomas & Elma Cooney
Sunday	May 17	8:00 AM 10:00 AM	Nichols Hills	Jennifer Salemink Kenny Swenka
Monday	May 18	8:00 AM	Lone Tree R	Henry Leonhardt
Tuesday	May 19	8:00 AM 8:30 AM 10:00 AM	Lone Tree R Atrium PP CC	Harry Attig John Schneider Cluster Parishioners
Wednesday	May 20	8:00 AM 8:30 AM	Lone Tree R Atrium	Monica Leonhardt Liv & Dec Hebl family
Thursday	May 21	8:30 AM 10:00 AM	Atrium PPCC	Kevin Mahanna Martin Warson
Friday	May 22	8:30 AM	Atrium	Bob & Kathy Pogge
Saturday	May 23	8:30 PM	Lone Tree	Kevin Mullinnix
Sunday	May 24	8:00 AM 10:00 AM	Nichols Hills	Tim Leggins John Schneider

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!

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

Meeting Minutes
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 Monday, August 24 at 6PM, parish hall.

Hills Parish Council: Next meeting will be Monday, May 18 at 6:30 PM. **Hills Finance Council:** Next meeting will be June 18, 6PM, with Hills Bank, at St. Joseph Parish Hall.


Bible Study

Bible Study will meet May 12 & 26 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

Anger is a condition in which the tongue works faster than the mind.



Eucharistic Adoration
Wednesday,
May 20, 2026.
6 PM-7PM
St. Joseph, Hills

Confessions are available at this time.

Lone Tree Parish Council
elections are coming soon!



We will be looking for 2 council members,
1 man & 1 woman,
for a 3 year term.

Thank you to
Steve Moore and Jenni Eden
who have served the last three years
on our council.

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

	05/016/2026 David	05/23/2026 Lou	05/30/2026 David	06/06/2026 Lou	Lone Tree	Parish Support
Greeter	Paula Moore	Barb Dinsmore	Paula Moore	Virginia Schlopkoohl	Envelopes	\$720.00
Lector	Jerry Ford	Jill Welter	Sherry Nicola	Trudi Westfall	Offertory	\$62.00
Cross Bearer	Nancy Ford	Lynn Bland	Joel Yedlik	Lynn Bland		
Servers	Jerry Ford	Jill Welter	Sherry Nicola	Trudi Westfall, Maggie Anderson		
Eucharist	Paula Moore	Sherry Nicola	Paula Moore	Trudi Westfall		
Eucharist	Jerry Ford	Judy Grothe	Sherry Nicola	Judy Grothe		
Collection	Glen Gerot	Lynn Bland	Joel Yedlik	Lynn Bland		
	Betty Gerot	Joan Davis	Mary Ellen Yedlik	Joan Davis		
Gifts	Glen, Betty Gerot	Lynn Bland, Joan Davis	Joel & Mary Ellen Yedlik	Lynn Bland, Joan Davis		
Commentator	Jerry Ford	Jill Welter	Sherry Nicola	Trudi Westfall		

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

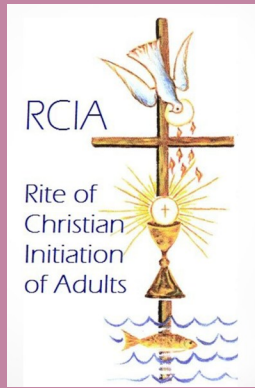
	05/17/2026 Lou	05/24/2026 David	05/31/2026 David	06/07/2026 David	Nichols	Parish Support
Greeter	Wayne Mengel	Wayne Mengel	Wayne Mengel	Dennis Truesdale	Envelopes	\$900.00
Lector	Carol Kaalberg	Trudi Westfall	Renetta Burlange	Missy Lenz	Offertory	\$105.00
Cross Bearer	David Ollendick	Adam Gauger	Michael Burlage	Wayne Mengel	Catholic Messenger	\$53.00
Server	Carol Kaalberg	Carol Kaalberg	Carol Kaalberg	Carol Kaalberg	A & R Dues	\$20.00
Eucharist	Adam Gauger	Trudi Westfall	Missy Lenz	Jeanne Green		
Eucharist	Carol Kaalberg	Carol Kaalberg	Carol Kaalberg	Carol Kaalberg		
Collection	Kory Kaalberg	Dave Ollendick	Kory Kaalberg	Dennis Truesdale		
	Adam Gauger	Wayne Menge!	Adam Gauger	Wayne Menge!		
Gifts	Kory & Chris Kaalberg	Tom & Maggie Gouger	Missy Lenz	Kelsi Lampe		
Commentator	Carol Kaalberg	Carol Kaalberg	Carol Kaalberg	Carol Kaalberg		

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

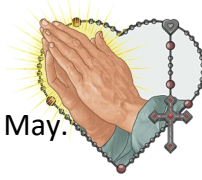
	05/17/2026 David	05/24/2026 David	05/31/2026 Lou	06/07/2026 David	Hills	Parish Support
Music Ministry	Lily & Choir	Haylee & Choir	Choir	Robyn Anderson	Envelopes	\$468.00
Greeter	Volunteer	Jim & Hope Frantz	Marcia Mellecker	Judy Stebral	Offertory	\$74.00
Lector	Bob Jenn	Mike Waldschmidt	Alyssa Moran	Kay Evans		
Server	Josh Ayeluzuno, Mike Sieverding	Jean Burr Messi Akodegnon	Emy Rivera, Wendy Berry	Messi Akodegnon, Jean Burr		
Eucharist -host	Deanne Eden	Mike Sieverding	Jolene Van Eschen	Jolene Van Eschen		
Eucharist - cup	Bob Jenn	Deanne Eden	Mike Sieverding	Emy Rivera		
Eucharist - cup	Arlene Johnston	Arlene Johnston	Carol Kirkpatrick	Carol Kirkpatrick		
Collection	Mike Waldschmidt	Jim Frantz	Marcia Mellecker	Mike Sieverding		
	Lora Sieverding	Hope Frantz	Barbara Mahanna	Lora Sieverding		
Gifts	Kenny Swenka family	John Schneider family	Bob & Renita Rummelhart family	Darlene Schott family		
Commentator	Lora Sieverding	Lora Sieverding	Lora Sieverding	Lora Sieverding		

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

Are you interested in learning more about our Catholic faith, or know someone who would like to become Catholic, if so, please contact Fr. David Paintsil or Carol Kirkpatrick to let them know of your interest. Classes will begin this fall. An exact date and time will be determined.



**St. Joseph Parish
Council Meeting**
Monday, May 18
6:30 PM
Parish Hall



We are praying the rosary before all of our parish Masses during the month of May.

Catholic Radio Station In Kalona – 89.5 KMHV



A Unique Way to Strengthen Your Faith!

"In addition to the many ways God has given us to learn about our Catholic faith, our area now has our own Catholic radio. KMHV-FM at 89.5 broadcasts a mix of EWTN and Relevant radio around the clock.

You will find answers to many questions about the faith; called in from listeners just like you. You will hear meaningful discussions of difficult challenges that the culture presents such as:

- Who is God?
- Why be a Catholic?
- Why doesn't the church change its moral teachings?

Whether the topic is church news, church history, national or international news, there is always a solidly Catholic basis to whatever is presented. Our on-air people are experts for sure but they also have a friendly manner and a sense of humor. In summary, if you are looking for radio that is different and strengthens your faith, give KMHV-FM 89.5 a try. You may never switch stations again!"

Wear RED next weekend as we celebrate Pentecost and th Gift of the Holy Spirit.



Memorial Day Services: 9:00 AM

St. Mary Catholic Cemetery, Nichols with Fr. Lou.

Inclement weather at Nichols church.

10:00 AM St. Stanislaus Cemetery, with Fr. David.



Baccalaureates:
Lone Tree High School: Wednesday, May 20 at 6:00 PM, Lone Tree School South Gym
West Liberty High School: Wednesday, May 20 at 7:00 PM, Our Redeemer Lutheran Church



SAVE THE DATE **June 28, 2026**
Father Lou's 70th year of ordination celebration!



The chair rail at St. Mary Lone Tree Parish Hall has been completed.

Our St. Mary Gathering Space has completed its outdoor renovations...new steel roof, new steel siding, new spouting with leaf covers, new doors, and new windows.



Jon Mengel from the Church of St. Mary of Nichols recured the Sacrament of Confirmation at St. Mary & Mathias Church in Muscatine by our Bishop, Dennis Welsh. Jon is a student a St. Mary of Mathias Catholic School in Muscatine.