

Dear Padre,

I'm in the OCIA program. My wife and I were married civilly. She goes to a non-denominational church but is not baptized. Someone said we would have to get our marriage "convalidated." Why? And what does that mean?

Convalidation is a legal term, but it can also be understood as good pastoral practice and even more as a wise spiritual choice. Basically, from a legal point of reference, your marriage took place outside of the canonical structure of the Church. It needs to be "regularized" and "documented" for you to move forward. Because your wife is not baptized, it cannot be a sacramental marriage, which requires baptism, but it can be made valid and recorded in official Church documentation. Such documentation is helpful, particularly if you have children and intend to raise them as Catholic. Also, if your wife ever decides to become a baptized Catholic, your marriage would automatically become a sacramental marriage when she is baptized. Nothing more is required of you. All in all, it is a good decision and a positive step in your spiritual journey. ●



BOGDAN SONJACHINJ / SHUTTERSTOCK

Fr. Thomas M. Santa, 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

July 27
Weekday
Jer 13:1-11
Mt 13:31-35

Tuesday

July 28
Weekday
Jer 14:17-22
Mt 13:36-43

Wednesday

July 29
Sts. Martha, Mary, and Lazarus
Jer 15:10, 16-21
Jn 11:19-27 or
Lk 10:38-42

Thursday

July 30
Weekday
Jer 18:1-6
Mt 13:47-53

Friday

July 31
St. Ignatius of Loyola, Priest
Jer 26:1-9
Mt 13:54-58

Saturday

August 1
St. Alphonsus Liguori, Bishop and Doctor of the Church
Jer 26:11-16, 24
Mt 14:1-12

Sunday

August 2
Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Is 55:1-3
Rom 8:35, 37-39
Mt 14:13-21

Our Parish COMMUNITY

July 26, 2026

Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (A)

1 Kings 3:5, 7-12 / Romans 8:28-30 / Matthew 13:44-52 or 13:44-46



[Solomon said to the Lord,]
"Give your servant, therefore,
a listening heart to judge your
people and to distinguish
between good and evil."

1 KINGS 3:9

What Image of the Kingdom Will You Serve Up?

ANN M. GARRIDO

Jesus' favorite thing to talk about was a mystery he called the kingdom of God, referred to in the Gospel of Matthew as the kingdom of heaven. He was not the first to speak of it. The prophets before him spoke often of God's dream for the world. They wanted all to know what it would look like when God reigns here on earth as God already reigns in the heavens. But Jesus added to that teaching by offering vivid new images of what God's reign is like. Matthew 13 is filled with such snapshots. The kingdom of heaven will be like a mustard seed, a pearl, a measure of leaven, a hidden treasure. It will be like a sower casting out seed, a wheat harvest, a net that catches many fish.

At the end of this litany, however, Jesus offers an image of what he expects of those who have received his teaching about the Kingdom. They are to be like "the head of a household who brings from his storeroom both the new and the old" (Matthew 13:52). It sounds as if Jesus' disciples are to act like hosts of a banquet, setting the table with stories from across time to feed their guests with whatever words and images would best help them grasp the mystery of this kingdom. They are to continue Jesus' work of developing new ways to illumine a mystery that is in the end too great for words. ●

Reflect

What image of God's kingdom would you offer people of the twenty-first century?



LEARN ABOUT
THE AUTHORS
OF OUR PARISH
COMMUNITY



"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

17th Sunday of Ordinary Time

July 26, 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: 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 other issues
from our cluster and
beyond.*

Cluster Mass Intentions July 25 to August 2, 2026

Saturday	July 25	4:00 PM	Lone Tree	Marvin Klebe
Sunday	July 26	8:00 AM 10:00 AM	Nichols Hills	Tim Leggins Bob & Renita Rummelhart
Monday	July 27	8:00 AM	Lone Tree R	Rosella Attig
Tuesday	July 28	8:00 AM 8:30 AM 10:00 AM	Lone Tree R Atrium PP CC	Harry Attig Keith Grothe Cluster Parishioners
Wednesday	July 29	8:00 AM 8:30 AM	Lone Tree R Atrium	Raymond Herring Liv/Dec of Draker family
Thursday	July 30	8:30 AM 10:00 AM	Atrium PPCC	Rose Amelon Martin Warson
Friday	July 31	8:30 AM	Atrium	Julia Ruppenkamp
Saturday	August 1	4:00 PM	Lone Tree	Paul Yedlik
Sunday	August 2	8:00 AM 10:00 AM	Nichols Hills	Ann Wieskamp Kenny Swenka

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 III

Make Your Home a Church

The Family in the Teaching of the Early Church and Vatican II

Last week, we reflected on the biblical foundation of the family and saw that God intended the home to be the primary place where faith is nurtured and passed on from one generation to the next. This week, we continue our reflection by looking at how the early Church Fathers and the Second Vatican Council understood the family as the Domestic Church.

The idea of the family as a Domestic Church is not a modern invention. From the earliest centuries of Christianity, believers understood that the home was the first place where the Christian faith was learned and lived. Before churches were built, Christians gathered in ordinary homes to pray, celebrate the Eucharist, and encourage one another in faith. The home became the heart of the Christian community.

The early Church Fathers frequently reminded parents that they were the first teachers of the faith. St. John Chrysostom encouraged fathers and mothers to make their homes "a little church," where prayer, Scripture, and Christian virtue would shape the lives of their children. Likewise, St. Augustine emphasized that Christian parents form their children not only through instruction but, above all, through the witness of their daily lives.

This understanding remained central throughout the Church's history, but it received renewed emphasis during the Second Vatican Council. In *Lumen Gentium*, the Council beautifully described the family as the "Domestic Church." It teaches that parents are the first heralds of the faith to their children by both their words and their example. The home is where Christian values are first learned, lived, and celebrated.

Building on this teaching, St. John Paul II, in *Familiaris Consortio*, described the Christian family as a community of life and love where faith is celebrated and passed on to future generations. More recently, Pope Francis, in *Amoris Laetitia*, reminds us that holiness grows through ordinary acts of love, patience, mercy, forgiveness, and prayer.

These teachings offer great hope for families today. We do not need perfect homes to become Domestic Churches. When families pray together, read Scripture, forgive one another, share meals, and place Christ at the center of daily life, they become living witnesses to the Gospel.

This week, I invite every family to spend a few minutes together each evening in prayer. Thank God for the blessings of the day and ask Him to help your home become a place where faith is lived, hope is strengthened, and love grows each day.

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.

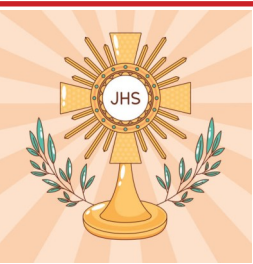
Hills Parish Council: Next meeting will be Monday, August 17 at 6:30 PM. Finance Council meeting Thurs., September 17, 2026, 6:00 PM.

Bible Study
Bible Study will meet July 14 & 28 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

Speak kind words, and you will hear kind echoes.



Eucharistic Adoration
Wednesday,
July 29, 2026.
6 PM-7PM
St. Joseph, Hills

Confessions are available at this time.



Vacation Bible School will be August 3-7 at Nichols Christian Church. 9 am until 11:30 am. For students 5-12 years old. Rides from Lone Tree to Nichols will be offered. Please contact Linda Abbott for more information: 563-357-8733.



Our new Facebook address is
Sts. Mary and Joseph of Hills,
Lone Tree, and Nichols.

Liturgical Ministers—Lone Tree St. Mary						
Saturday 4:00 pm						
Cycle A Reading						
	07/25/2026 David	08/01/2026 Lou	08/08/2026 David	08/15/2026 Lou	Lone Tree	Parish Support
Greeter	Bernie Lorack	Virginia Schlapkohl	Paula Moore	Barb Dinsmore	Envelopes	Report next week
Lector	Sherry Nicola	Jerry Ford	Jill Welter	Trudi Westfall	Offertory	Report next week
Cross Bearer	Mike Parker	Nancy Ford	Lynn Bland	Joel Yedlik	ACH	\$215.00
Servers	Sherry Nicola	Jerry Ford	Jill Welter	Trudi Westfall		
Eucharist	Paula Moore	Jerry Ford	Judy Grothe	Judy Grothe		
Eucharist	Sherry Nicola	Nancy Ford	Sherry Nicola	Trudi Westfall		
Collection	Mike Parker	Glen Gerot	Joan Davis	Joel Yedlik		
	Lucy Parker	Betty Gerot	Lynn Bland	Mary Ellen Yedlik		
Gifts	Mike & Lucy Parker	Betty Gerot, Glen Gerot	Joan Davis, Lynn Bland	Joel & Mary Ellen Yedlik		
Commentator	Sherry Nicola	Jerry Ford	Jill Welter	Trudi Westfall		

Liturgical Ministers—Nichols Church of St. Mary						
Sunday 8:00 am						
Cycle A Reading						
	07/26/2026 David	08/02/2026 David	08/09/2026 Lou	08/16/2026 David	Nichols	Parish Support
Greeter	Jeanne Green	Adam Gauger	Adam Gauger	Adam Gauger	Envelopes	Report next week
Lector	Missy Lenz	Trudi Westfall	Tom Barr	Renetta Burlage	Offertory	Report next week
Cross Bearer	Adam Gauger	Adam Gauger	Wayne Mengel	Michael Burlage	ACH	\$250.00
Server	Carol Kaalberg	Trudi Westfall	Trudi Westfall	Carol Kaalberg		
Eucharist	Missy Lenz	Tom Barr	Tom Barr	Jeanne Green		
Eucharist	Carol Kaalberg	Trudi Westfall	Trudi Westfall	Carol Kaalberg		
Collection	Adam Gauger	Wayne Mengel	Kory Kaalberg	David Ollendick		
	Kory Kaalberg	Dennis Truesdale	Adam Gauger	Dennis Truesdale		
Gifts	Tom & Maggie Gouger	Adam Gauger	Kelsie Lampe	Bruce & Margaret Matt		
Commentator	Carol Kaalberg	Trudi Westfall	Trudi Westfall	Carol Kaalberg		

Liturgical Ministers—Hills St. Joseph						
Sunday 10:00 am						
Cycle A Reading						
	07/26/2026 Lou	08/02/2026 David	08/09/2026 David	08/16/2026 David	Hills	Parish Support
Music Ministry	Haylee Osmonson & Choir	Robynn Anderson	Choir	Choir	Envelopes	Report next week
Greeter	Jim & Hope Frantz	Judy Stebral	Janet Goss	Jim & Hope Frantz	Offertory	Report next week
Lector	Mike Waldschmidt	Kay Evans	Nancy Waldschmidt	Nancy Waldschmidt	ACH	\$410.00
				Josh Ayelazuno, Mike Sieverding		
Server	Mike Sieverding	Jean Burr, Messi Akodegnan	Emy Rivera, Wendy Berry			
Eucharist -host	Deanne Eden	Jolene Van Eschen	Jolene Van Eschen	Kristee Malmberg		
Eucharist - cup	Arlene Johnston	Deanne Eden	Mike Sieverding	Arlene Johnston		
Eucharist - cup	Emy Rivera	Kristee Malmberg	Bob Jenn	Deanne Eden		
Collection	Jim Frantz	Mike Sieverding	Mike Waldschmidt	Jim Frantz		
	Hope Frantz	Lora Sieverding	Nancy Waldschmidt	Hope Frantz		
Gifts	Bob & Renita Rummelhart Family	Kenny Swenka Family	Joe & Rita Jenn Family	volunteer		
Commentator	Shelagh McDonlad	Lora Sieverding	Lora Sieverding	Shelagh McDonlad		

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



COLLECTION BOX In St. Joseph Church foyer.

Hills Bank is collecting donations for Shelter House of Iowa City. Items should help *beat the heat*...bottled water, sports drinks, sunscreen, lip balm, hats, sunglasses, mini fans, cooling towels, etc. *Collection will end on August 14th.*



Please join us in the parish hall for coffee and donuts after Mass today.

Healing Mass Schedule

August 1, at St. Joseph, Hills

9:00 AM Confessions

9:30 AM Rosary

10:00 AM Healing Mass

Hospitality provided by
St. Mary, Lone Tree



Josh and Emily recently returned from Josh's home of Ghana. Father David was gifted some new Ghana-wear upon their return. Welcome Back Josh and Emily.

Thank you, Fr. David



Will you be celebrating your 50th wedding anniversary this year? If you were married in 1976 the diocese will be honoring you and your spouse on October 18th at St. Patrick's, Iowa City. Please let your parish office know your anniversary date **before** August 23, 2026.



Knights of Columbus Annual Tootsie Roll Campaign to support Special Olympics athletes will be this weekend. Joe & Rose Harper will be here to pass out tootsie rolls and collect your donations following Mass at our cluster parishes.



Back to school is just around the corner. If you need assistance with Catholic school tuition, please let your parish office know.



LovefromLevi Volunteers Needed

LovefromLevi is seeking volunteer sewers/crafters to help create customized felt hospital books for children ages 3–5 facing cancer and other serious illnesses. Founded in honor of 4-year-old Levi, **LovefromLevi** (a 501(c)(3) non-profit) provides interactive books designed to help children understand and cope with medical procedures. Each book is personalized to a child's unique medical journey and provided free of charge to families. No advanced sewing experience is needed—all skill levels are welcome. To learn more or volunteer, contact Beth Rundlett at beth@lovefromlevi.com or visit www.lovefromlevi.com.



Gathered in faith, united in prayer

JULY 27 -31

**ELEMENTARY PROGRAM
(GRADES 1-6)
9AM-3PM**

**MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL
PROGRAM (GRADES 7-12)
6:30PM-8:45PM**

All are welcome

- ✦ Daily Mass
- ✦ Fun songs & skits
- ✦ Interactive Catholic faith lessons
- ✦ Hands-on activities
- ✦ Games & recreations
- ✦ Eucharistic Adoration & Opportunities for Reconciliation

CONTACT US riversideholylfamily@diodav.org
or spnyderb@diodav.org



THANK YOU! To the 'Ladies of the 90-year-old club' who raked and swept up the tree debris that was in the parking lot of St. Mary, Lone Tree, ... we are so grateful you are willing to help!

THANK YOU!!