

# Dear Padre,

*I recently lost my husband of sixty years. I prayed for him through his four-year illness. Since he has died, I cannot pray. Any advice for me?*

My heartfelt condolences on your profound loss. When someone we love dies, a part of us dies too. Sometimes, the trauma is so severe that it can even affect our relationship with God.

Psychiatrist Elisabeth Kübler-Ross identified five stages of grief. In the denial stage, some people can't accept the reality of the death. It becomes too much to handle. In the anger stage, some may question their belief in God—especially if their prayer requests (such as, "Please God, if you heal my loved one, I will...") weren't successful in the bargaining stage. People in the depression stage feel overwhelmed by the reality of the loss and may not always feel like connecting with others—even with God in prayer. However, in the acceptance stage, emotions stabilize, and a person comes to terms with their new reality. Nothing makes up for the absence of a loved one, but people manage to cope and live on.

It's because you loved so deeply that the loss feels so deep. God accepts you completely; God understands how you feel. He wants you to be at peace and live life fully. Our compassionate God yearns to help console you and offer assistance in your healing process until you can embrace him again in prayer. ●

Fr. Byron Miller, CSsR / DearPadre.org



## A WORD FROM POPE LEO XIV

*Let us resolve to bring [God's] love everywhere, never forgetting that each of our sisters and brothers is a dwelling place of God and that his presence is manifested above all in the little ones, in the poor and the suffering, who ask us to be thoughtful and compassionate Christians.*

REGINA CAELI, ROME, MAY 25, 2025



## Do you have a question for the Padre?

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

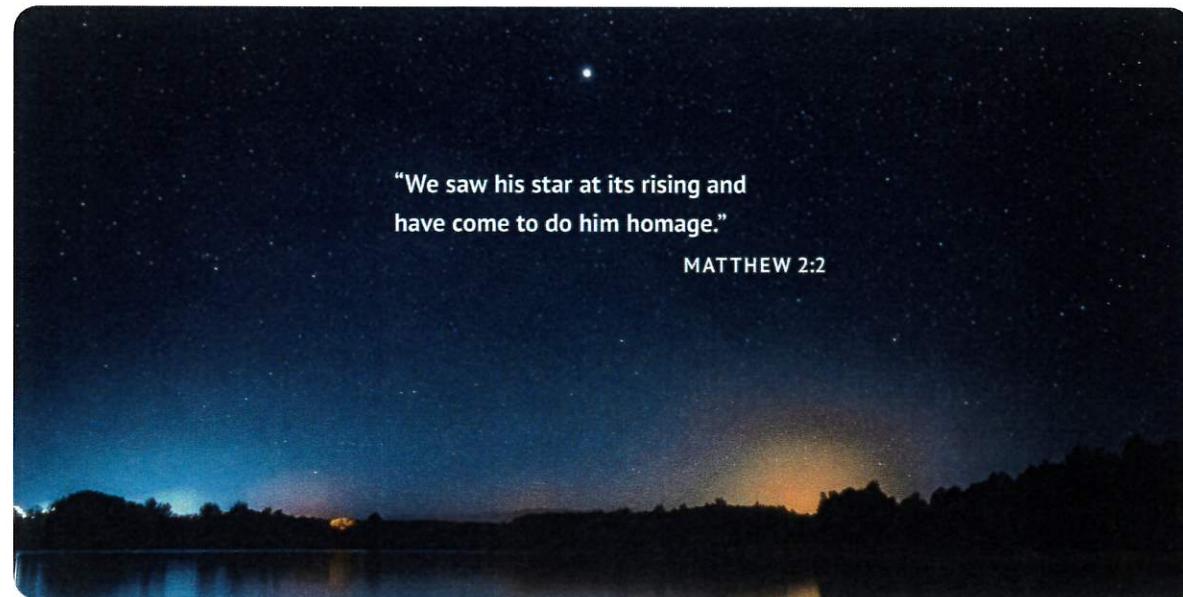
<b>Monday</b> January 5 <i>St. John Neumann, Bishop</i> 1 Jn 3:22–4:6 Mt 4:12–17, 23–25	<b>Wednesday</b> January 7 <i>Christmas Weekday</i> 1 Jn 4:11–18 Mk 6:45–52	<b>Saturday</b> January 10 <i>Christmas Weekday</i> 1 Jn 5:14–21 Jn 3:22–30
<b>Tuesday</b> January 6 <i>Christmas Weekday</i> 1 Jn 4:7–10 Mk 6:34–44	<b>Thursday</b> January 8 <i>Christmas Weekday</i> 1 Jn 4:19–5:4 Lk 4:14–22a	<b>Sunday</b> January 11 <i>The Baptism of the Lord</i> Is 42:1–4, 6–7 Acts 10:34–38 Mt 3:13–17
	<b>Friday</b> January 9 <i>Christmas Weekday</i> 1 Jn 5:5–13 Lk 5:12–16	

# Our Parish COMMUNITY

January 4, 2026

*The Epiphany of the Lord (A)*

Isaiah 60:1–6 / Ephesians 3:2–3a, 5–6 / Matthew 2:1–12



## Following Jesus Without a Star to Guide Us

FR. THOMAS M. SANTA, CSSR

**“We saw his star at its rising and have come to do him homage”** (Matthew 2:2) describes the spark that sent the Magi on their journey. Something unusual in the sky, interpreted as a sign of something wonderful—in response, they changed direction in their lives and devoted themselves to a completely different path. As wonderful as it might well be, a special star in the heavens is not the ordinary experience of how we learn to follow the Lord or discern his will. If only there could be a sign in God's universe for each of us, beckoning us forward, clarifying what we need to do, setting down the path that needs to be followed. Perhaps life would be much simpler. Or perhaps not?

Would it truly be less complicated if everything were made clear and certain? Is the manifestation of God's grace and blessings confined to the straight and narrow, or can we also experience God in the chaos—"in the weeds," so to speak. Human experience seems to suggest that life is more "gray" than "black and white." There is real grace in the journey, in making mistakes, even in choosing something that is incomplete. Thankfully, God's grace does not need perfection to be powerful. We can know and follow God's will for us in the ordinary moments of day-to-day living. We do not need the extraordinary or the dramatic. ●

### Reflect

*How can I resolve to look for God in the unplanned, the unexpected, the interruptions?*



LEARN ABOUT THE AUTHORS OF OUR PARISH COMMUNITY

# SACRED HEART CHURCH OF MANLY, IOWA

OUR MISSION IS TO BE A EUCHARISTIC COMMUNITY THAT WILL LISTEN TO THE WORD OF GOD, BE FAITHFUL TO HIS TEACHINGS AND KNOWING, LOVING AND SERVING GOD.

PASTOR: Fr. Dave O'Connor

Phone: 641-423-5001

ASSOCIATE PASTOR: Fr. Ben Valentine

Phone: 641-423-5001

PASTORAL COORDINATOR: Mike and Wilma Romig

Phone: 641-454-2559

COORDINATOR OF RELIGIOUS ED: Kelley O'Keefe

Phone: 641-425-1615

YOUTH MINISTER: Fr. Ben Valentine

Phone: 641-423-5001

**EMERGENCY PRIEST LINE: 641-251-1483**

WEEKEND MASS: Saturday - 5:30 pm

WEEKDAY MASS: Wednesday - 8:00 am

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION: First Saturday of the Month, prior to Mass

[www.sacredheartmanly.org](http://www.sacredheartmanly.org)

## THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

January 4, 2026

### MASS INTENTIONS AT MANLY FOR

Saturday January 3<sup>rd</sup>-----Jamie Welsh

Wednesday January 7<sup>th</sup>-----For the People

Saturday January 10<sup>th</sup>-----For the People

### OTHER AREA MASS TIMES:

SATURDAY 4:00 PM, HOLY FAMILY

SUNDAY 7:30 & 9:00AM, St. JOSEPH

SUNDAY 10:30AM, HOLY FAMILY

### LITURGICAL MINISTERS

#### LECTORS

January 3<sup>rd</sup>

Barb Smith

January 10<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup>

Steve Halfman

#### EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS

January 3<sup>rd</sup>

Mike & Wilma Romig, JoAnn Andera

January 10<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup>

JoAnn Andera Peggy Matous

#### USHERS

January 3<sup>rd</sup>

Lennis & Betty Krones Jan. 3<sup>rd</sup>

January 10<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup>

Dennis Johnson Steve Matous

#### OFFERTORY GIFTS

Dean Brcka, Kelli Carlson

Mike & Wilma Romig

FINANCIAL GIVING COLLECTION RECEIVED ON THE WEEKEND: December 24 & 27, 2025: Tithe \$315.00; Offertory \$278.50; Christmas \$8420.00; Total \$9013.50 Thank you!

There will be 8:00AM Mass Wednesday, January 7<sup>th</sup>  
Finance Council will meet Tuesday, January 6, 2026 6:30 PM  
Pastoral Council will Meet Tuesday, January 6, 2026 7:15 PM

Pastor's Pen by Fr. Dave O'Connor

(see Attached)

### Gratitude and Hope in the New Year

As the Archdiocese of Dubuque continues its *Journey in Faith*, Archbishop Thomas Zinkula expresses sincere gratitude to all who have shared their hopes, concerns, and faith throughout this process.

The feedback received from parishioners across the Archdiocese is now guiding the next stage of discernment. Over the coming months, all input and parish data will be carefully reviewed. This spring, the final pastorate plan and clergy assignments will be shared.

Beginning in July 2026, each new pastorate will begin with an interim six-month Mass schedule while parishes work together to grow as communities of joyful missionary disciples, centered in the Eucharist and united in faith.

As the new year begins, Archbishop Zinkula invites everyone to see this time as one of prayer, reflection, and trust in the Holy Spirit's guidance. Questions about the process can be answered at [dbqjourneyinfaith.org/faq](http://dbqjourneyinfaith.org/faq). May this season of renewal bring peace, hope, and new opportunities for grace in the year ahead.

**The Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick**— If you are seriously or chronically ill, or will be having a serious surgery, you are a candidate to receive the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. Those who are advanced in age even without a noticeable decline in health may be anointed as well. Please call the parish office well in advance of a surgery you will be having to schedule a time to be anointed. You will be offered the opportunity to go to confession as well.

**Hospital Visits**— We encourage you to make a call to the parish office (either Sacred Heart 641-454-2586 or Epiphany Parish 641-423-5001) if you or a loved one is or will be hospitalized at MercyOne. The priests are accustomed to visiting the hospital and we would be happy to do so if we know who is hospitalized.

For 'In him we live and move and have our being'