

Dear Padre,

A friend of mine took his life. He was a very staunch Catholic. His wife wanted to know if he could be buried or have a Mass in the Catholic Church.



AMY STOUT / CATHOLICA

Yes, your friend should most certainly receive a Catholic funeral and burial. "We should not despair of the eternal salvation of persons who have taken their own lives. By ways known to him alone, God can provide the opportunity for salutary repentance. The Church prays for persons who have taken their own lives" (*The Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2283).

A person who is suffering with a mental illness or disorder, certainly a prerequisite for suicide, may not have the necessary mental freedom to choose something that is understood as grave or mortal. In other words, he or she does not have the necessary requirements for full and free consent of the will.

Not that long ago, suicide was often misunderstood. Thankfully, today we understand the havoc and suffering of mental illness, and that a person can be a victim, even if it might look like he or she is not. The great suffering of those who take their own lives must not be dismissed or discarded. The family members and friends of a person who suffers suicide should also not be judged but should only receive compassion and understanding. They, too, are victims, in the fullest sense of the word and in the truest understanding of what it means to be a fragile human being. ●

Fr. Thomas M. Santa, CSsR / DearPadre.org

A WORD FROM POPE LEO XIV

Young people of our time, like those of every age, are a volcano of life, energy, sentiments, and ideas. It can be seen from the wonderful things they are able to do, in so many fields. However, they also need help in order for this great wealth to grow in harmony and to overcome what...can still hinder their healthy development.

ADDRESS, ROME, MAY 15, 2025

ANTONELLA LULAJRI / CATHOLICA

Do you have a question for the Padre?

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

Monday	Thursday	Saturday
December 29 <i>Octave of Christmas</i> 1 Jn 2:3-11 Lk 2:22-35	January 1 <i>Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God</i> Nm 6:22-27 Gal 4:4-7 Lk 2:16-21	January 3 <i>Christmas Weekday</i> 1 Jn 2:29-3:6 Jn 1:29-34
Tuesday	Friday	Sunday
December 30 <i>Octave of Christmas</i> 1 Jn 2:12-17 Lk 2:36-40	January 2 <i>Sts. Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen, Bishops and Doctors of the Church</i> 1 Jn 2:22-28 Jn 1:19-28	January 4 <i>The Epiphany of the Lord</i> Is 60:1-6 Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6 Mt 2:1-12
Wednesday	December 31 <i>Octave of Christmas</i> 1 Jn 2:18-21 Jn 1:1-18	

Our Parish COMMUNITY

December 28, 2025

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph (A)

Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14 / Colossians 3:12-21 or 3:12-17 / Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23



Embracing a Spirituality of Listening

ANN M. GARRIDO

The most treasured prayer of Jesus' people has long been and remains the Shema: "Hear O Israel, the Lord is God. The Lord is One." Jewish spirituality is grounded not in seeing or touching or tasting, but in hearing. No one exemplifies fidelity to this way of being in the world more than Joseph, as evidenced in today's gospel. Joseph is one who listens to what God's messenger says to him and immediately acts on it. He responds to the call to flee with Mary and Jesus to Egypt. Then, he responds to the call to return home with his family to Israel. As many have noted, Joseph never speaks in Scripture, but he certainly listens, and he certainly acts on what he hears.

Christmas is perhaps the noisiest season of the year. At gatherings of family and friends with festive music in the background, it often feels as if we are shouting over one another to be heard. It is a season when it can be hard to have deep conversations, even with God. Indeed, it can be such a busy season that sometimes our regular prayer practices fall by the wayside. But, if we do not make space in our daily lives to listen, might we miss messages that are important, even urgent, for us to hear, as in the case of today's gospel? Messages that require immediate response? What would it look like to carve out a bit of silence in this holiday season, to be like Joseph and regroup yourself in a spirituality of listening? ●



SCAN TO LEARN ABOUT AUTHOR ANN M. GARRIDO

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, as in all wisdom you teach and admonish one another, singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.

COLOSSIANS 3:16

Reflect
Do I allow myself enough silence, or am I tempted to fill the silence with noise?



Weekly Bulletin

December 27-28, 2025

Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus,
Mary and Joseph

Parish Office: 254 - 647 - 3163

Website: stritacatholicranger.org

Dear Parishioners,

As we celebrate the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ, we give thanks for the gift of faith and for our parish family. The Child of Bethlehem reminds us that God is with us, bringing hope, peace, and joy to the world.

May this Christmas fill your hearts and homes with love, strengthen your faith, and renew your trust in God's providence. Thank you for your prayers, service, and generosity throughout the year.

Wishing you and your families a blessed and joyful Christmas and a New Year filled with God's grace.

- Fr. Joseph Pudota, SAC, Pastor

POPE LEO PRAYER INTENTION

December 2025 – For Christians in areas of conflict
Let us pray that Christians living in areas of war or conflict, especially in the Middle East, might be seeds of peace, reconciliation, and hope.

STEWARDSHIP

December 20 & 21, 2025

St. John \$ 737
St. Rita \$ 887
St. Francis \$ 343
Holy Rosary \$ 1,277

Office is closed this week; December 29 thru January 2nd

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Wed., Dec. 31st:

Thanksgiving for the Year

5:00 p.m. Silent Adoration at St. Rita

6:00 p.m. Mass at St. Rita

Thursday, January 1st: **Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God**

8:00 a.m. at Our Lady of the Holy Rosary

9:30 a.m. at St Francis Xavier in Spanish

11:00 a.m. at St. Rita

4:00 p.m. at St John

Friday, January 2nd:

First Friday Adoration

7:00 p.m. at St. Francis Xavier

Wed., January 7th:

Welcome back Children's Catechesis

5:15 p.m. to 6:45 p.m. at St. Francis Xavier

NEEDING HELP WITH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION - Eastland & Strawn

We need more assistance with our children's religious education department this spring. We have so many wonderful children that we need *volunteers* who can be present at classes to aid our *volunteer* teachers, and we need substitutes to fill in. Please call our DRE Devony Norris at 265-631-8079 or the office at 254-647-3163.

PRAYER INTENTIONS

Please pray for the sick: Karen Donoho, Al Haremza, Jax Jordan, Dianne Meyer

MASS INTENTIONS

For the repose souls of +Jose Jorge Puebla, +Martha Imelda Rios, + Federico Gallegos, requested by Yolanda Puebla; +Carme Mendoza, +Rodolfo Lopez, +Rocio Lopez, +J. Concepcion Lopez, and +Jaqui Esquivel, St. Francis Xavier, Eastland.

STRAWN - ST. JOHN

Saturday Vigil 4:00 PM: Mass

Wednesday

4:00 - 4:30 PM:

Confession/Adoration

4:30 PM: Mass

2nd Thursday - Monthly

St. Boniface, Dodson Prairie

4:00 PM: Confession/ Adoration

4:30 PM: Mass

CISCO - OUR LADY OF

THE HOLY ROSARY

Sunday

8:00 AM: Mass

Wednesday

8:30 AM: Confession/Adoration

9:00 AM: Mass

RANGER - ST. RITA

Sunday

9:45 AM: Mass

Tuesday

5:30 - 6:00 PM:

Confession/Adoration

6:00 PM: Mass

EASTLAND - ST. FRANCIS XAVIER

Sunday (Español)

11:15 AM: Mass

Thursday (Español)

6:30 - 7:00 PM: Adoration/Confession

7:00 PM: Mass

1st Friday - Monthly (Español)

7:00-8:00 PM: Adoration

3rd Saturday - Monthly (Español)

9:00 AM: Mass

PARISH OFFICE: 254 - 647 - 3163

Monday - Thursday, 9 AM - 3 PM

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In case of pastoral emergency: 817 - 821 - 5821

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