

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. ●



DIMITRIOS KAMBOURIS / SHUTTERSTOCK

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



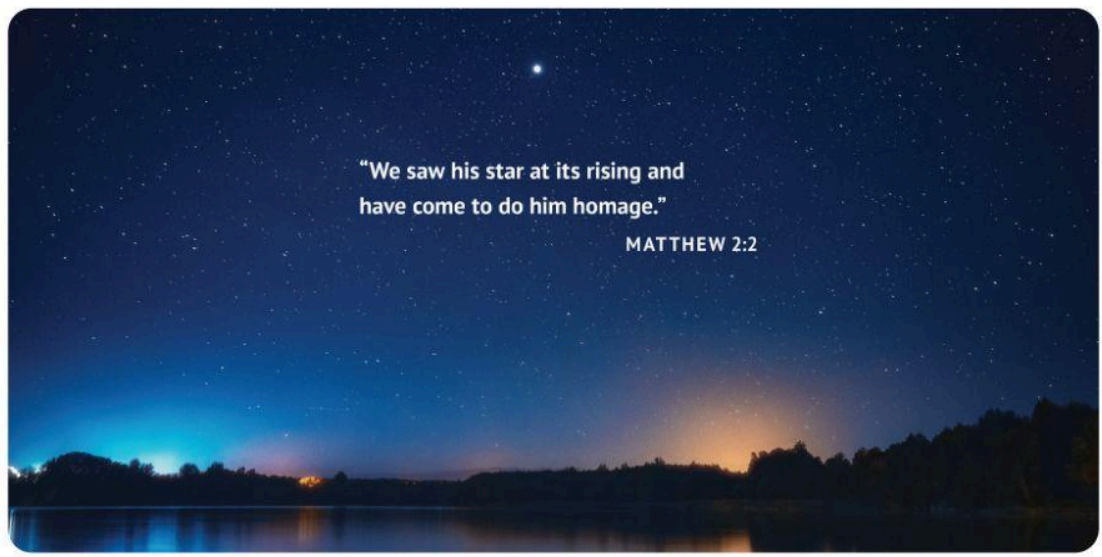
YANDRY FERRANDEZ PERDOMO / CATHOPIC

Do you have a question for the Padre?
 Go to DearPadre.org to send your question and to learn more about *Dear Padre*.

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



"We saw his star at its rising and have come to do him homage."
 MATTHEW 2:2

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. ●



LEARN ABOUT THE AUTHORS OF OUR PARISH COMMUNITY

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



Weekly Bulletin

January 3-4, 2026

The Epiphany of the Lord

Parish Office: 254 - 647 - 3163

Website: stritacatholicranger.org

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR!

We are back to our regular schedule as noted at the bottom of the bulletin.

EASTLAND FRIENDSHIP MEAL - January 6th

The Eastland Friendship Meal is this Tuesday, January 6th, from 6 to 7 pm at the First Baptist church in Eastland; 405 S. Seaman, Eastland.

All are welcome.

ST. ANDREW BREAKFAST - Saturday, January 17th

The next St. Andrew Breakfast will be on Saturday morning January 17, 2026 at **St. Patrick Cathedral**, 1206 Throckmorton St, Fort Worth, TX 76102, at **8:00 AM**. The day will begin with Mass followed by breakfast and fellowship. We encourage young men in high school and college in the Diocese of Fort Worth to attend. Please reserve your spot by January 15, 2026, through the **Vocations Office or by calling 817-945-9321**.

PRAYER INTENTIONS

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

MASS INTENTIONS

For the repose souls of **+Roberto Escovedo**, requested by Holy Rosary Altar Society, Our Lady of the Holy Rosary, Cisco.



POPE LEO PRAYER INTENTION

January 2026 – For prayer with the Word of God

Let us pray that praying with the Word of God be nourishment for our lives and a source of hope in our communities, helping us to build a more fraternal and missionary Church.

HELP - Wednesday evenings

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.**

MIDDLE SCHOOL RALLY - February 14th

Join us at the annual Middle School Rally - featuring **Joe Melendrez!** This full-day event is a wonderful opportunity for your middle school students to come together **across the Diocese**, to celebrate our Catholic faith and identity, to deepen community, and to be renewed in mission. **Event takes place at Nolan High School in Fort Worth on Saturday, February 14th from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.** If interested, tell **DRE Devony Norris** at Wednesday Classes or call **254-631-8079**, or call the office at 254-647-3163.

STEWARDSHIP

Christmas Vigil Masses

St. Rita \$ 1,853

St. Francis \$ 207

Christmas Day Masses

St. John \$ 970

St. Francis \$ 258

Holy Rosary \$ 940

December 27 & 28, 2025

St. John \$ 1,048

St. Rita \$ 740

St. Francis \$ 535

Holy Rosary \$ 967

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

Pastor: Fr. Joseph Pudota, SAC

Bookkeeper: Patsy Davis

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Safe Environment Coordinator: Katrina Briseno

Director of Religious Education: Devony Norris