



Close Enough!

MIGUEL DULICK

I t is the fourth Sunday of Advent. When Christmas is this close, one takes that final leap. Isaiah is centuries from Christmas, but he cannot wait! He sees the “sign” as clear as day: “the young woman, pregnant and about to bear a son” (Isaiah 7:14). And how about that Son! None other than “Emmanuel” himself—God-With-Us! Paul, too, is bursting at the seams! Inspired by what he calls “the obedience of faith” (Romans 5), he is excited to see the gospel thriving even among the Gentiles. For him, the “Spirit of holiness” is a gift offered to all—Christmas every day, you might say.

Speaking of “obedience of faith,” Joseph is the perfect example. The word “obey” comes from the same root as “to hear,” and Joseph has almost supernatural ears! Matthew, the former tax collector, tells “how the birth of Jesus Christ came about” in today’s gospel reading like a bookkeeper—the Holy Spirit in Column A, Joseph in Column B, with Mary in the middle. But when an angel whispers to Joseph at night, his dream comes true: “he took his wife into his home.” Everything is set for Emmanuel!

So, the Bible is brimming with Christmas, that is, “God-With-Us,” from end to end. And when a virgin can conceive, are any of us exempt from “birthing” Jesus in our midst? Even when a “happy holiday” seems impossible in the midst of war or violence or poverty, when our ears hear only silence, let’s sing Christmas carols every day! ●



SCAN TO
LEARN ABOUT
AUTHOR
MIGUEL
DULICK

Reflect

How am I at listening? Can I find new insights in old stories that I think I know so well?



The angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus.”

MATTHEW 1:20–21

St. Andrew Catholic Church

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Call or text Barbara Durler

(620) 255-1868

Fourth Sunday of Advent – December 21, 2025

<u>Day</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Feast</u>	<u>Intention</u>
Monday	10:30 am	Funeral Mass	Samuel Mages
Tuesday	8:00 am	Advent Weekday	Dale Vogel
Wednesday	4:30 pm	Vigil of the Nativity of the Lord	Joan Mages
Thursday	9:00 am	Nativity of the Lord	Floyd & Ethel Stein
Friday	9:00 am	St. Stephen (at Fort Dodge)	Berna Mae Stegman
Saturday	8:00 am	St. John the Apostle	Al & Irene Koechner
Sunday	9:00 am	The Holy Family	Saint Andrew Parishioners

Confessions: Sunday 8:00 – 8:45 am or by appointment any time

Ministers for Christmas Eve, December 24, 2025

Greeters: Delbert & Barb Downey

Collection: Reegan Kliesen & Tanner Rumbaugh.

Cantor: Choir

Servers: Quinlan Simon & Jaden Torrez

Lectors: Rochele Weil & Greg Lix

E.M.C.'s: Diane Lix, Jim Burke, Lindsay Durler

Gifts: Glen Kerbs

Ministers for Christmas Day, December 25, 2025

Greeters: Jim & Sue Groth

Collection: Reegan Kliesen & Tanner Rumbaugh.

Cantor: Choir

Servers: Jonathan Lemus & Levi Stephenson

Lectors: Briana Stephenson & Hattie Stein

E.M.C.'s: Regina Lix, Elaine Slattery, Sara Smith

Gifts: Nick King

Ministers for Next Sunday, December 28, 2025

Greeters: Matthew & Victoria Cornitius

Collection: Reegan Kliesen & Tanner Rumbaugh.

Cantor: Choir

Servers: Myles King & Aspen Downey

Lectors: John Askew & Mary Beth Helfrich

E.M.C.'s: Lynn Buehne, Ray Theis, Sheila McCarty

Gifts: Tom Kirkby

Rosary: Jay Theis

Giving Report: 12-14-25

Envelopes: \$2,711.00

Loose: \$287.00

Electronic: \$1,509.01

Alms for Renovation Project: \$52,743.69



Vocations Commission is hosting another Feast of the Holy Spouses dinner on Saturday January 24, 2026 at 5:30 pm. Couples that are interested can sign-up on the sheet in the back of Church or you can contact Briana Stephenson at 620-440-2544.

Opportunities for the Sacrament of Confession

December 21 4:00 pm St. John the Baptist in Spearville
 7:00 pm St. Andrew In Wright

Digital Discipleship: Bringing the Gospel to Social Media

January 21 • 12:10 PM • Zoom


Presenter: Sonya Cooksey

Sign up at: dcdiocese.org/stewardship

Learn simple, practical ways to share the Gospel on social media using the tools you already have. In this 45-minute Lunch & Learn, discover easy approaches to creating faith-filled posts, reaching more people, and turning everyday parish life into digital evangelization. All parish leaders are welcome!

Break/Break: Each year during the Christmas break, Gentry Heimerman and his family host an evening of games, food, and prayer for college students. Arriving late and/or leaving early is fine! It is simply a chance to connect with other students from around the diocese and enjoy an evening in the spirit of Advent. Dinner provided. Please email him to RSVP and get directions.

[\(gheimerman@dcdiocese.org\)](mailto:gheimerman@dcdiocese.org)



Join other college students for an evening of food, games, and prayer at our home!

BREAK/BREAK

Monday, December 22
7:00-9:30 p.m.
Please text or email Gentry to RSVP
gheimerman@dcdiocese.org
(I will respond with the directions if needed.)

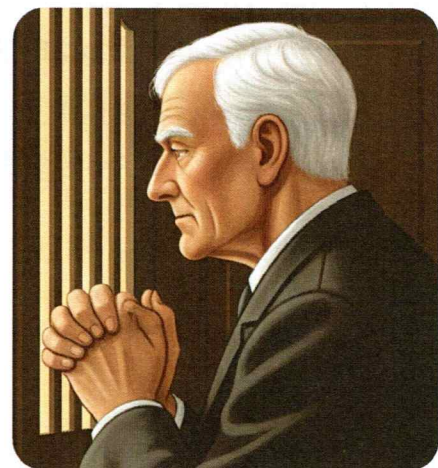
**Hospitable Community + Prayerful Worship +
Generous in Service + Formed by the Word**

Dear Padre,

I went to confession, and then, months later, my priest was removed for alcoholism and theft. Is my confession still worthy?

Your confession is not dependent on the worthiness or the unworthiness of the priest. Your confession is made to Jesus; the priest is a witness who pronounces the words of absolution that Jesus intended in the sacrament. "From the moment that a sacrament is celebrated in accordance with the intention of the Church, the power of Christ and his Spirit acts in and through it, independently of the personal holiness of the minister" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1128).

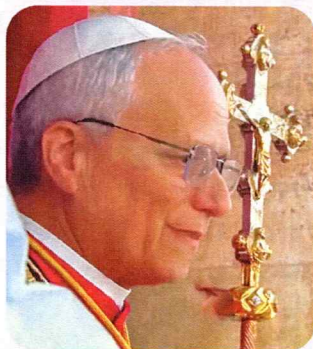
The question of the efficacy of the sacrament and the unworthiness of the minister who performs the sacrament in the name of the Church is not new. During the time of persecution, in the early centuries of the Church, some people, including priests and bishops, avoided martyrdom by offering the required oblation to Caesar. Later, they repented and returned to the Christian community, a community that included the surviving family and friends of the men and women who were martyred. The question was asked, and with some animated energy, "How could these ministers who sinned to save their own lives now represent the Church?" The answer, arrived at with patience and discernment, is that the minister is only the representative of the sacrament, not the source of the sacrament. Jesus is faithful, even when his ministers have been unfaithful. ●



GEMINI

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

A WORD FROM POPE LEO XIV



I think it is important for all of us to learn how to listen more, to enter into dialogue. First and foremost, with the Lord: always listen to the word of God. Then also listen

to others, to know how to build bridges, to know how to listen without judging, not closing the doors [and] thinking that we have all the truth and no one else can tell us anything.

HOMILY, ROME, MAY 11, 2025

Monday

December 22
Advent Weekday
1 Sm 1:24-28
Lk 1:46-56

Tuesday

December 23
Advent Weekday
Mal 3:1-4, 23-24
Lk 1:57-66

Wednesday

December 24
Advent Weekday
2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16
Lk 1:67-79

Thursday

December 25
The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas)
Is 52:7-10
Heb 1:1-6
Jn 1:1-18 or 1:1-5, 9-14

Friday

December 26
St. Stephen, the First Martyr
Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59
Mt 10:17-22

Saturday

December 27
St. John, Apostle and Evangelist
1 Jn 1:1-4
Jn 20:1a, 2-8

Sunday

December 28
The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph
Sir 3:2-6, 12-14
Col 3:12-21 or 3:12-17
Mt 2:13-15, 19-23

Do you have a question for the Padre?

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