



Close Enough!

MIGUEL DULICK

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



It 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?



**Immaculate Conception &
St. Joseph's Catholic Church**

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Mass Schedule – Forsyth

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Mass Schedule – Hysham

Sunday at 8:30 AM

Sunday at 12:30 PM

Office hours: By appointment – call 406.853.5252 or come to the rectory.

Religious Education: Contact Diane Wyrick for Forsyth at 406.351.2845 and Amber for Hysham at 406.342.5448.

Confession: Saturdays @ 2 PM.

Baptism: Adults and children under 7 (please contact Father Rob.)

Anointing of the Sick: If you are having surgery or are sick, please contact Father Rob to receive the Sacrament of Anointing.

Funerals: When anticipating or planning a funeral, please contact Father Rob before finalizing the arrangements.

Mass Intentions: If you would like to have a Mass offered and be listed in the bulletin, please contact Father Rob.

Homebound & Sick: If you or someone you know can no longer attend Mass due to physical inability, please contact Father Rob or Diane Wyrick at 406.351.2845 or Rosemary in Hysham at 406.740.1457 to receive Holy Communion and Anointing.

Immaculate Conception Prayer Chain: For requests, call Cherie Hesser at 406.351.9048 or any member of the Prayer Chain listed on the bulletin board in Parish Hall.

Mass & Liturgy Schedule:

Sunday	12/21	8:30 AM	Mass in Forsyth for Joseph Pester (D) from the Pester Family.
Sunday	12/21	12:30 PM	Mass in Hysham for Jean Schantz Paul (D) from Rosemary Olson Family.
Tuesday	12/23	5:15 PM	Mass in Forsyth Poor Souls in Purgatory from Jon & Carol Wigen.
Wednesday	12/24	4:00 PM	Christmas Eve Mass in Hysham for Cap & Rose Schantz (D) from David & Rosemary Olson Family.
Thursday	12/25	9:00 AM	Christmas Day Mass in Forsyth for Aay Altermett-DeCampas from Mary Altermett.
Friday	12/26	9:00 AM	Mass in Forsyth for Jeff Wigen from Jon & Carol Wigen.
Saturday	12/27	4:00 PM	Mass at the Nursing Home Poor Souls in Purgatory by Jon & Carol Wigen.
Sunday	12/28	8:30 AM	Mass in Forsyth for Mark Robbins (D) from Nick & LeAnn Murnion.
Sunday	12/28	12:30 PM	Mass in Hysham for Johnny Olson (D) from David & Rosemary Olson Family.

† Rosary every Monday at 8:15 AM, Tuesday at 4:45 PM and Friday at 8:30 AM.

† Religious education for children Sunday at 9:30 AM.

† Bible Study in Forsyth is Friday morning after Mass.

† CCD & Sacramental Prep Classes on Sunday morning. Questions: Please contact Diane Wyrick in Forsyth and Amber in Hysham.

† Mass times at St. Margaret Mary Catholic Church in Colstrip Sunday 10:30 AM.

† CCW meeting the 2nd Sunday after Mass.

Announcements:

The Diocese has established expected goals for each Parish for the Annual Bishop's Appeal. Immaculate Conception Parish is set at \$8000. and St. Joseph Church is set at \$3500. If everyone will give at least a little, we should not have a problem reaching those goals. Thank you!

Reminder of the Christmas Mass schedule:

St Joseph, Hysham at 4 PM on Christmas Eve (December 24th), St Margaret Mary, Colstrip at 7 PM on Christmas Eve and Immaculate Conception, Forsyth at 9 AM Christmas morning (Thursday December 25th).

A big thank you to the Knights of Columbus (Forsyth Council 3039) for the burrito breakfast on November 30th.

Finance Update: Last Sunday Collection: 12/14/2025

Immaculate Conception – Forsyth		St. Joseph – Hysham	
Loose Cash	245.00	Loose Cash	10.00
Loose Checks	55.00	Loose Checks	320.00
Envelope Cash	80.00	Envelope Cash	10.00
Envelope Checks	2080.00	Envelope Checks	200.00
Other (Bathroom)	350.00	Other	10.00
Cathedraticum Assessment	95.00	Building Fund	0.00
Special Collection (Rel. Retirement)	165.00	Special Collection	0.00
Capital Campaign	0.00	Capital Campaign	0.00
Current Operating Fund	0.00	Current Operating Fund	60.00
TOTAL:	\$ 3070.00	TOTAL:	\$ 610.00

Forsyth & Hysham Ministry Schedule for Christmas Eve/Day & next Sunday: 12/24&25&28/2025

Forsyth:			
	Time	Service	Names
	Mass at 8:30 AM	Eucharistic Ministers	Brian Sullivan & Frank Smith / Phil Steinberger & Ryan Silvis
		Cross Bearer	Brian Sullivan / Phil Steinberger
		Lector	Dan Murnion / Albert Martens
		Ushers	Dave & Diane Wyrick / Ray & Anne Smith
		Gifts	Dave & Diane Wyrick / Ray & Anne Smith
		Col. Counters	Diane Wyrick & Ray Smith / Dan Murnion & Ryan Silvis
		Sacristan	Diane Wyrick / Lorelei Schick
Hysham:			
	Mass at 12:30 PM	Eucharistic Ministers	Joan Thibault & Renee Zent / Mark Manning & Rosemary Olson
		Lector	Hope Manning / Dale Zent

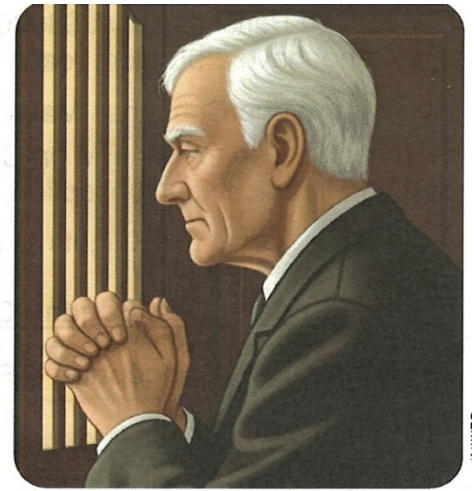
Dear Padre,

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. ●



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**.