

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



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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

Tuesday

January 6
Christmas Weekday
1 Jn 4:7–10
Mk 6:34–44

Wednesday

January 7
Christmas Weekday

1 Jn 4:11–18
Mk 6:45–52

Thursday

January 8
Christmas Weekday
1 Jn 4:19–5:4
Lk 4:14–22a

Friday

January 9
Christmas Weekday
1 Jn 5:5–13
Lk 5:12–16

Saturday

January 10
Christmas Weekday

1 Jn 5:14–21
Jn 3:22–30

Sunday

January 11
The Baptism
of the Lord
Is 42:1–4, 6–7

Acts 10:34–38
Mt 3:13–17

Our Parish COMMUNITY

January 4, 2026

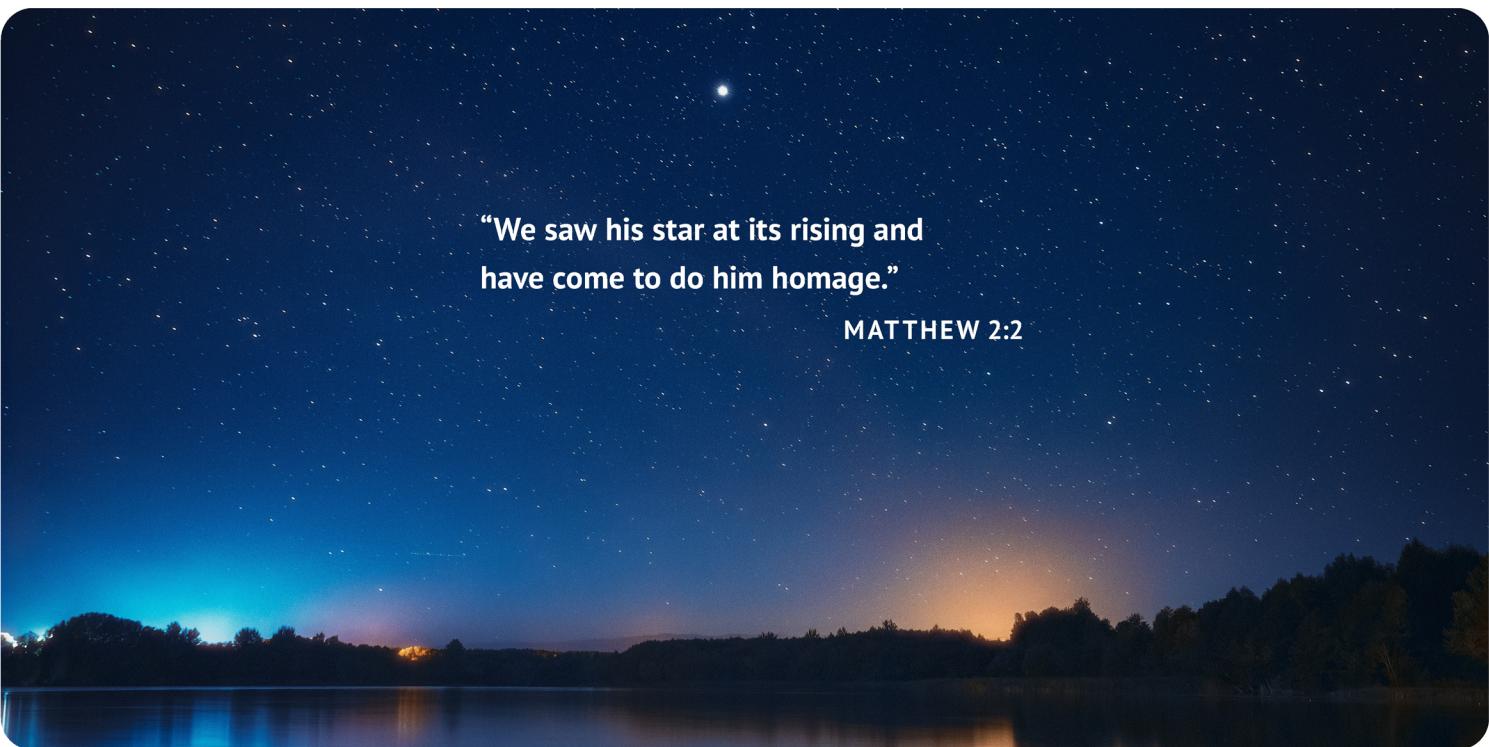
The Epiphany of the Lord (A)

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?

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