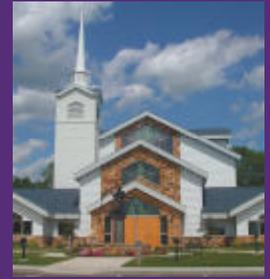




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 Fall Creek, WI 54742
 715-877-3400
www.straymond.us



Welcome to the Catholic Parishes of
ST. MARY & ST. RAYMOND

Second Sunday of Advent | December 6, 2020



WEEKLY MASS SCHEDULE

December 5 through December 13

| | | |
|---------------|-----------|--------------------------|
| Sat., Dec. 5 | 9:00a SM | Priest Intention |
| | 4:00p SM | B J Worgernese |
| | 6:00p SR | Parishioners of SM & SR |
| Sun., Dec. 6 | 8:30a SR | †Olivia Pelzel |
| | 11:00a SM | †Joanne C Poppe |
| | 1:00p SM | Priest Intention |
| Mon., Dec. 7 | No Mass | |
| Tue., Dec. 8 | 9:00a SM | Parishioners of SM & SR |
| | *7:00p SR | Mary Gallick |
| Wed., Dec. 9 | 8:00a SM | †Peter Kovar |
| Thu., Dec. 10 | 8:00a SR | Joshua Lane |
| Fri., Dec. 11 | 9:00a SM | †Robert & Joanne Manthey |
| Sat., Dec. 12 | 4:00p SM | Parishioners of SM & SR |
| | 6:00p SR | †Kenneth Jaenke |
| Sun., Dec. 13 | 8:30a SR | †Gary Ball |
| | 11:00a SM | †JoAnn LeMere |
| | 1:00p SM | †Leo & Irene Schuh |

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

| | | |
|----------|-------------|----------------------|
| Thursday | 7:00–9:00p | SR (In the library) |
| Saturday | 10:00a–Noon | SM (In Confessional) |

EUCCHARISTIC EXPOSITION & ADORATION

| | | |
|----------|------------|----|
| Tuesday | 5:00–9:00p | SM |
| Thursday | 5:00–9:00p | SR |

*Incense will be used at Mass

Pastor

Fr. Derek Sakowski
 715-855-1294 ext. 101
frsakowski@gmail.com

Parochial Vicar

Fr. Peter Kieffer
 715-855-1294 ext. 140
frpeterkr@gmail.com

Rectory: 715-514-5113

Reflections from Father Peter Kieffer



When I was in college at St. Mary's University of Minnesota, every December 8 there would be a special celebration on campus for the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception. Mary, under the title of the Immaculate Conception, is the patroness of the university. I remember on that day during my junior year of college one of

my friends and I were serving as ushers at Mass, greeting people as they entered and handing them a worship aid. As each person walked in, we welcomed him or her by saying quickly, "Happy Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Patroness of our university and of the United States of America!"

This Tuesday, December 8, we celebrate the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This solemnity celebrates the fact that Mary was conceived without sin in the womb of her mother, Anne. Mary, by a singular grace, was preserved from all sin throughout her life, having the merits of her Son's, and our Lord's, Suffering and Death, applied to her from the very moment of her conception. While Mary received this remarkable gift from God, she was not a puppet. She could have chosen to follow God or not. Mary, however, aided by God's grace, chose to follow God most perfectly throughout the course of her life, uniting her will to the will of her Son.

Why would God give this unique gift to Mary? Mary, about 14 or so years later, would have the Angel Gabriel announce to her that God wanted her to be the Mother of His Son, Jesus. By being born, proclaiming God's Kingdom, and dying and rising from the dead, Jesus would offer us salvation and the opportunity to have eternal life with Him in heaven. Because God is All-Pure, free from all sin, it would make sense that God the Father would want the Mother of His Son to be immaculate, kept free from all sin.

It is appropriate for us to celebrate this Holy Day during the Advent season. While we are dispensed, in our diocese, from the obligation to attend Mass this

Tuesday, we still can and should reflect on Mary's Immaculate Conception. Advent is a time in which we patiently wait, pray for, and anticipate the celebration of the birth of Jesus. By reflecting on the Immaculate Conception of Mary, we can better reflect on Who Jesus is and why His birth, which we will celebrate in a few weeks, is so important.

Mary's Immaculate Conception reminds us of the fact that Jesus is not associated with sin in any way. Just as Jesus is pure and gave Mary the grace to remain pure throughout her life, so, too, does God desire for us to remain pure. Rather than looking for ways to cut corners or to see how close we can get to sinning without actually committing a sin, God challenges us to see how holy we can become. To strive to become as immaculate as we can be, imitating the holiness of Mary and the example of Jesus.

Mary's Immaculate Conception serves as a starting point for the events we will celebrate in the weeks and months ahead. It anticipates and illuminates the significance of the Birth of Jesus at Christmas. It sheds greater clarity on the themes of Ordinary Time: the preaching of the Word made flesh, His miracles, and His earthly life. It offers a deep perspective on the importance of Lent as a time to repent and turn away from sin and toward a life of holiness, like Mary's. It makes the celebration of the Solemnity of our Lord's Resurrection on Easter all the more powerful, recognizing that the sinless Son of God, free from all sin and born of the Immaculate Virgin Mary, had the power to conquer death and rise from the grave.

While just one of the Holy Days we observe over the course of the liturgical year, this Holy Day is one of supreme importance. It is a day we should celebrate with happiness, fun, and joy. Thank You, Lord, for giving Mary the privilege of being immaculately conceived. Thank You, Lord, for asking Her to be the Mother of our Savior. Thank You, Lord, for giving us such a loving Mother.

In anticipation for this coming Tuesday, I wish all of you a "Happy Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Patroness of the United States of America!"

Saint Mary and Saint Raymond of Peñafort Parishes

St. Mary Parish News

A Christmas Surprise?

Father has planned a special surprise for the St. Mary Parish to be unveiled at our Christmas celebration. Stay tuned for hints to see if you can figure out what it is...here is clue number one!

"It has a very special place in every Catholic Church."

Looking to Volunteer?

If you've been looking for a way to get involved in the parish and if you enjoy proofreading or working with technology contact Ellen Hernandez or Jon Jones to get involved with proofreading the bulletin or helping with livestreaming!

Poinsettia Memorials

If you would like to have a poinsettia placed in the church in memory of a loved one look for a special envelope in your envelope packet or place our

request in a blank envelope with the label "Christmas Flowers" and the name of your loved one. Please return to the parish office or place in the offertory by Dec. 13. All names will be listed in a bulletin insert on Sunday, Dec. 20.

St. Mary's Elementary School

Regis High School

A Regis student, Maddy Ott, has asked to leave a box for collecting donated coats as a class project. The donation box can be found in the breezeway at the front entrance of St. Mary Parish through December 15.

Virtual Learning Dates

December 21-21

January 19-29

St. Raymond Parish News

Knights of Columbus

The Knights of Columbus will be selling rosettes each week at the end of Mass until Christmas

Blood Drive

Thanks to all who participated at the blood drive on Dec.1 and to all those first time donors! We had 35 donors and reached 40 units! A special thank you to Jake and Bob for their assistance at the drive!

Advent

50 free copies of Word Among Us Press' Advent Devotional are available. Stop by the parish office to get your copy Today!

Immaculate Conception Parish

Immaculate Conception will be hosting an Advent carry-out dinner on Dec. 6 from 11am to 1:30p. Meal is \$10 and will include, roasted pork loin with gravy, a wild rice blend, roasted vegetables, a dinner roll, and a cookie.

ST. MARY'S PARISH STAFF

FULL TIME DIRECTORS (SM & SR)

Pastoral Ministry

Jon Jones 715-855-1294, x 108
↳ smsrpastoralmin@gmail.com

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Maintenance (SM)

Charles Thurner 715-855-1294, x 141
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Magnificat Orders

Need to renew your yearly subscription?

Order renewals at discounted price now through **December 15**. Stop by the parish office or check out the St. Mary's website! Only **\$30!** It is a great source of prayer with access to daily readings, meditations, prayers, and more!

St. Mary's Stewardship: Last Week

Adult Envelopes\$2,792.00
Offertory (Plate)\$183.00
Flowers\$150.00
Total Envelope & Plate..... \$3,125.00

Thank you!

SUPPORTING YOUR CHURCH

Thank you to everyone who has continued to support our parishes through your weekly offering! We have had a good response even though we have not been in Church together! If you have questions about how you can get your offering to Church, please feel free to call Bonnie Firkus at 715-533-0629.

St. Raymond's Stewardship: Last Week

Adult Envelopes\$2,837.00
Capital Campaign\$275.00
Offertory (Plate).....\$165.00
Holy Day Env\$25.00
Flowers\$50.00
Christmas/East\$50.00
Total Envelope and Plate..... \$3,402.00

ST. RAYMOND'S PARISH STAFF

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Senior Priest In Residence (SR)

Fr. John Schultz 715-271-0018
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THANK YOU!

What's Happening

Vocations— Joseph Lynch



Hello Fellow Parishioners, I'm excited to be able to share with you that I am discerning

religious life. Little by little, the Lord has been inviting me to join the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal and their life of prayer, service to the poor, and evangelization. I'm ready to

follow His call, but before I can do that I must overcome a significant obstacle stopping hundreds of men and women like me from entering religious life. This obstacle is student loan debt.

As a next step, the Franciscans and I have partnered with the Labouré Society. I'm grateful to have Fr. Sakowski's support in this work and I hope that you will join me as well. I humbly ask you for your prayers as my

Labouré classmates and I work to overcome this obstacle by December 31st.

I look forward to speaking with you all soon to invite you on my journey. God Bless and see you soon - Joseph

rescuevocations.org/Joseph

LABOURÉ
HELP RESCUE VOCATIONS

Information about Returning Safely to Public Masses

Public Mass AND Social Distancing

As we return to Mass, each of us has a serious moral duty to do our part to prevent COVID-19 from spreading, while also respecting emotional and spiritual needs and the centrality of the Eucharist in our lives. Unfortunately, this virus is not going away just yet. Any of us could be carrying the disease without knowing it. As we gather for Mass, we will be taking appropriate precautions:

- (1) **No Obligation.** All of us are dispensed from our obligation to attend Sunday Mass - probably for several weeks. No one is obliged to come, and for those who come, no one is obliged to receive Communion. If you are at risk, please be safe!
- (2) **Wearing Masks and Washing Hands.** The Governor of Wisconsin has declared a State of Emergency, effective August 1, including a requirement for everyone over 5 years old to wear masks in public buildings. The fine for not wearing a mask is \$200. Bishop Callahan encourages us to comply with the Governor's decree. Please bring your own face covering if you have one. We will also provide them while supplies last.
- (3) **Socially Distanced Seating.** Our team of trained ushers will seat everyone. We will limit ourselves to 25% capacity, and will keep each individual/household at least 6 feet apart from the next one. We expect that 50-70 people will fit safely in the church. If more than this amount choose to come, we plan to direct the overflow to the parish hall, where people will be seated a safe distance apart, and where they can participate via live stream and be brought Holy Communion during Mass.
- (4) **Limited Ministries.** We are limiting the number of people in the sanctuary. Over time, we will start scheduling in servers, lectors, Extraordinary Ministers, etc.
- (5) **Communion Precautions.** The priest distributing communion will wear a mask during that time, for your protection. The communion line will keep each household 6 feet apart as they wait. Hand sanitizer will be on hand both for communicants and for the minister. Please wait until you are dismissed into the communion line. Take your time and be reverent.
- (6) **Holding Off on Congregational Singing.** Unfortunately, research is showing that singing propels our germs much like coughing or sneezing does. We will use instrumental music or one-person singing for now. One step at a time.
- (7) **Stationary Offertory Basket.** We will not be passing any baskets. You can drop off your offering on the way into Church or on the way out
- (8) **Dismissal After Mass.** When Mass is ended, our team of ushers will dismiss the people row by row. There will not be the opportunity to stay after Mass or to congregate or visit. Everyone will have to exit so that we can lock the Church and allow our cleaning crew to sanitize everything.
- (9) **Sanitizing.** A crew of volunteers will sanitize after Mass. It doesn't take long, but is an important safety step. We need regularly scheduled volunteers to do this. Please consider signing up!



Advent

Preparing for the Coming of Christ

A familiar hymn that is usually sung during the beautiful season of Advent is *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*. The lyrics help us to understand the essence of Jesus coming to us as our Savior.

Each verse of this hymn begins with a prayer that starts with the phrase, "O Come," and includes an Old Testament reference to Jesus—the Messiah. The first Old Testament mention of the Messiah is Emmanuel, which means "God is with us."

O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile
here, until the Son of God
appear. (Refrain):

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel,
shall come to thee, O Israel.

Israel needed rescue from having been exiled in a foreign land. We also need to be rescued – from sin and selfishness. When we sing this song, we can remember the depth of God's love for us by sending His Son, Jesus—God taking on human flesh—to rescue us from our sins, which harm us and others.

This next reference is to the Messiah's infinite wisdom and knowledge. In His wisdom, God revealed to us His plan of loving goodness. We would receive access to the Father through Jesus, who came to reunite us with the Father after the Original

Sin of our first parents. We are reunited with the Father through sanctifying grace – God's own divine life – that we receive through the channel of His Sacraments.

O come, thou wisdom, from
on high, and order all things
far and nigh; To us the path
of knowledge show, and teach
us in her ways to go. (Refrain)

In this song, another reference is to the Messiah's power and might. This verse captures the scene in Exodus 19:16; the Lord appeared on Mount Sinai through the signs of a cloud and a trumpet blast to the Israelites whom He had saved from the captivity of Egypt. God gave Moses His Laws of Love so that we would know how to live to say close to Him.

O come, O come, thou Lord of
might, Who to Thy tribes, on
Sinai's height. In ancient times
didst give the law, in cloud
and majesty and awe. (Refrain)

In this stanza, we pray that the Messiah will rescue us from the devil, the "father of lies," who hates God and seeks to lead us away from Him. Jesus won this victory of freedom from sin for us but we have to cooperate with His grace to resist temptation and sin and receive His salvation.

O come, thou rod of Jesse's
stem, from Satan's power
deliver them; From depths
of hell Thy people save, and
give them victory o'er the grave.
(Refrain)

The Messiah is from the line of David. We pray that He will open the gates of Heaven which were closed through the disobedience of Adam and Eve. The "key" to open the gates of our home in Heaven was Jesus' Death and Resurrection.

O come, Thou Key of David,
come, and open wide our
heav'nly home; Make safe
the way that leads on high,
and close the path to misery.

In this last verse, we understand that Jesus is the desire and delight of every human heart. It is He who brings the peace and joy that we all long for and He alone is the source of these greatest gifts.

O come, Desire of nations,
bind, in one the hearts of all
mankind, bid every strife and
quarrel cease, and fill the
world with Heaven's peace.

During these challenging times, we must never forget that Jesus is always present. He is God, King of the Universe, and everything is still ultimately under His Providence. As He promised, He will bring together all things for good as we place our trust in Him. May we come to know, in a deeper way, the peace and joy of Jesus this Christmas.

By Ann Lankford, Director for
Catechesis & Evangelization



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