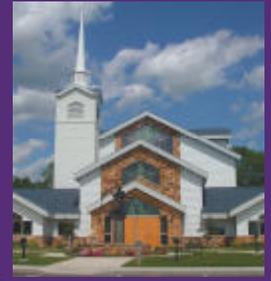




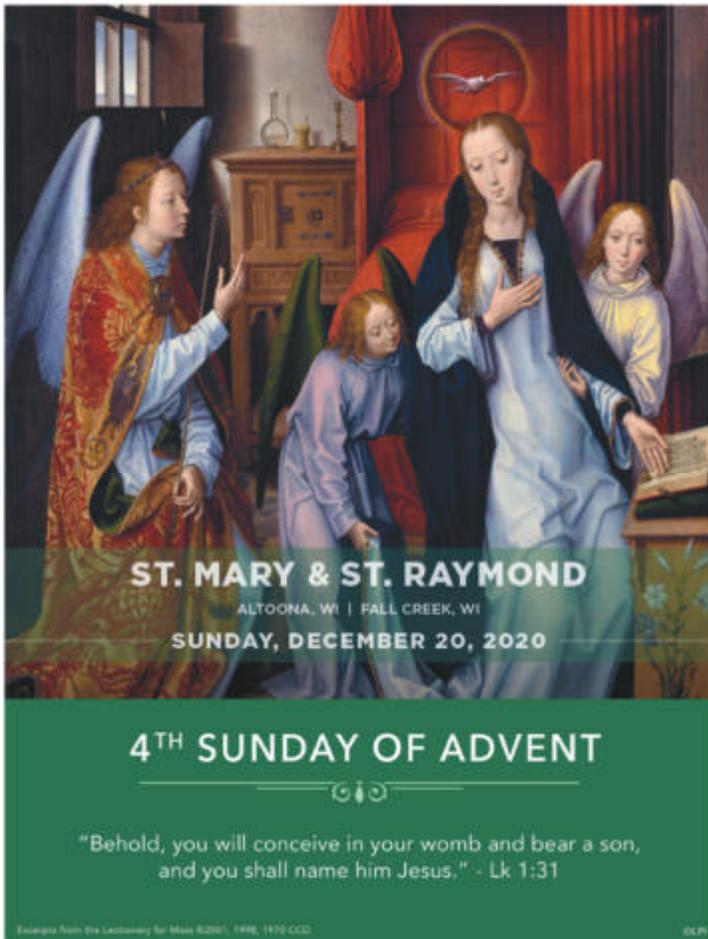
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 715-877-3400  
[www.straymond.us](http://www.straymond.us)



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

**Fourth Sunday of Advent | December 20, 2020**



**WEEKLY MASS SCHEDULE**

December 19 through December 27

Sat., Dec. 19	4:00p SM	†Virginia Polenz
	6:00p SR	†Bob & Phyllis Klees
Sun., Dec. 20	8:30a SR	Parishioners of SM & SR
	11:00a SM	†Robert Nyberg
	1:00p SM	Priest Intentions
Mon., Dec. 21	No Mass	
Tue., Dec. 22	8:00a SR	For a Happy Death
Wed., Dec. 23	8:00a SM	†Erick Klimisch
Thu., Dec. 24	2:00p SM	Parishioners of SM & SR
	4:00p SM	†Angela Mroczenski
	*5:00p SR	†George & Mary Geisert
	7:00p SM	†Bernele Schultz
	*10:00p SR	Priest Intention
Fri., Dec. 25	9:00a SR	†Peter & Mary Gallick
	11:00a SM	†Rich Wahl
Sat., Dec. 26	4:00p SM	†Arthur Bohl
	6:00p SR	†Brian Schultz
Sun., Dec. 27	8:30a SR	Parishioners of SM & SR
	11:00a SM	†Clarence Mullenberg
	1:00p SM	Priest Intention

**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](mailto:frsakowski@gmail.com)

**Parochial Vicar**

**Fr. Peter Kieffer**  
 715-855-1294 ext. 140  
[frpeterkr@gmail.com](mailto:frpeterkr@gmail.com)

Rectory: 715-514-0161

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## Reflections from Jon Jones

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### From the Cradle to the Cross, Emmanuel

Happy Advent! I love Advent. I have not always enjoyed it so much, but as is often the case with small children, walking through the Advent season and preparing for Christmas with them also means walking through it for myself with fresh eyes. Several years ago I began the practice of purchasing one

new album of good holiday music every year, and now I enjoy pulling those out just for these special few weeks.

As we walk together through this Advent season I have a question for you. If you were asked which was more important to our faith, Christmas or the crucifixion, what would you say? It is an interesting question to think about. I can admit that for the first 10 years of my life with Christ I would have said ‘the cross’ without a doubt. Without the cross there would be no forgiveness of sins and so there would be no salvation. On the other hand, there could be no crucifixion without Christmas. The reality is that it is a faulty question. We should not separate the two. Christ’s descent to become a man and his ascent on the cross (or, his ascent to glory as St. John the Evangelist sees it, cf. 12.28) are both a part of the capital “I” Incarnation. What Jesus declares as “finished” on the cross was begun in the womb of Mary (Jn 19.30).

Still, it is a curious fact of Church history that the main preoccupation for her first thousand years was the question how God could also be man (as opposed to how one man could atone for the sins of many). The creeds, the councils, orthodoxy and heresy divided along the line of how one answered this question. Perhaps the easiest illustration would be to set the Apostle’s Creed side-by-side with the Nicene Creed and notice that the greatest expansion is made regarding the mystery of Christ’s birth. Nearly every Sunday we recite this mysterious truth together as one body:

*I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,*

*the Only Begotten Son of God,*

*born of the Father before all ages.*

*God from God, Light from Light,*

*true God from true God,*

*begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father;*

*through him all things were made.*

*For us men and for our salvation*

*he came down from heaven,*

*and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary,*

*and became man.*

Amazing. God became like me. And what is even more amazing is how he chose to make himself known in advance. Ahead of time God chose a name for himself: Emmanuel, “God is with us” (Isa 7.14). The day I write this, today the Church prayed this very scripture from the prophet for morning prayers, or Lauds. It is a beautiful story, God becoming man so that He could redeem us. Indeed, it is the most beautiful because it is true. But, God’s attitude in doing so was not one of condescension or making demands. Jesus did not preach how much I owe God for sending his son. Instead, He says gently that He comes simply to be with me, that He will come and die rather than live without me.

Can we possibly imagine a year filled with more isolation and loneliness? As much as the general ingratitude pains me, I can empathize when I see exclamations of how awful this year has been for some. The tension between keeping our distance out of concern for one another yet always desiring a closer fellowship feels unbearable at times. The phrase “social distance” highlights the very fact that we are created for connection, to be social, to be in communion. Moving my family across the country in the middle of a pandemic has had its challenges. We are not made to be alone.

But, God is among us and he promises that he will not abandon us (Jn 14.18). One might say that the early Church fought so much over the extent to which we believe God has solidarity with us. Time and again logicians tried to solve the riddle of God-plus-man-equals-Emmanuel. Either they tried this by taking away from Christ’s humanity, which just meant that God was not really united with us, or from Christ’s divinity, which meant that whoever was among us it was not really God. Our faith stands or falls on this truth, that God names Himself as the One who wants to be in every way “with us”. Either way to compromise on this is to trust more in ourselves than in Him and thereby loses our chance for salvation, and that is why Arius’ (and others’) teaching was condemned as heresy.

What does this mean for me personally? In my moments of greatest loneliness, I can turn to God and rest in confidence that he is with me. He knows my heart with all its loneliness and fears and wants to be there with me. This is why He came. That will be the end of the story: “God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God” (Rev 21.3). In this Advent season, at the close of such a difficult year, let us open our hearts to the One who wants desperately to be with us. Anticipation and waiting are a difficult burden. It forces us to be present in this moment with all its pain and suffering. But, if we pray through the pain and sit in our loneliness inviting the Lord, he will come and he will meet us there. We proclaim this truth every time we speak his name, Emmanuel.

# 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!

### "Father goes to this in every Mass"

#### 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!

### St. Mary's Christmas Decorations

This year decorating for Christmas looks a little different, but nonetheless we are looking forward to it! This year Diane Selvig and Courtney Addis are leading the church decorating festivities at St. Mary. If you are interested in helping please don't hesitate to

join us on Monday December 21 from 5p-9p! Feel free to stay as long as you can. Masks will be required during the night so remember to bring your favorite mask!

### Job Opportunity

St. Mary is looking for a part time janitor custodian, Mon-Fri 12:30p-3:30p Contact Bonnie Firkus 715-533-1294 ext. 146 if interested!

## 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

retreat with videos and daily reflections sign up for free at [coaching.reallifecatholoc.com/unshakeable-joy](http://coaching.reallifecatholoc.com/unshakeable-joy)

Bishop Robert Barron- Daily Gospel Reflections: Sign up for free at [adventreflections.com/](http://adventreflections.com/)

Matthew Kelly—Dynamic Catholic with Daily Gospel Reflections: Sign up for free video meditations on the Gospel Reading for each day of Advent. [dynamiccatholic.com/best-advent-ever](http://dynamiccatholic.com/best-advent-ever)

### Knights of Columbus

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

## ST. MARY'S PARISH STAFF

### FULL TIME DIRECTORS (SM & SR)

#### Pastoral Ministry

Jon Jones 715-855-1294, x 108  
↳ [smsrpastoralmin@gmail.com](mailto:smsrpastoralmin@gmail.com)

#### Evangelization & Faith Formation

Jacqueline Van Hemert 715-855-1294, x 106  
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#### Business & Finance

Bonnie Firkus 715-855-1294, x 146  
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### PART TIME COORDINATORS

#### Communication Coordinator

Ellen Hernandez 715-855-1294  
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#### Sacred Music Coordinator (SM & SR)

Tyler Andreae  
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#### Marriage Preparation (SM & SR)

Kaylee Peikert 715-855-1294, x 142  
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#### Pastoral Outreach (SM & SR)

Carla Kostka 715-225-7419  
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#### Family Faith Formation (SM)

Maria Ricciardi 715-855-1294, x 106  
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#### Maintenance (SM)

Charles Thurner 715-855-1294, x 141  
↳ [Stmarymaintaltoona@gmail.com](mailto:Stmarymaintaltoona@gmail.com)

## Online Advent Reflections

Looking for some thing to get you into the Advent spirit? Here's three great choices!

Chris Stefanick—Unshakable Joy, a 26 day

### St. Mary's Stewardship: Dec. 5-6

Adult Envelopes .....	\$14,508.50
Offertory (Plate) .....	\$359.00
Holy Day .....	\$86.00
Flowers .....	\$195.00
Christmas .....	\$235.00
Offertory (Plate) .....	\$359.00
<b>Total Envelope &amp; Plate.....</b>	<b>\$15,418.50</b>

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: Dec. 5-6

Adult Envelopes .....	\$3,509.00
Capital Campaign .....	\$4,550.00
Offertory (Plate).....	\$140.00
Holy Day Env .....	\$10.00
Flowers .....	\$105.00
Christmas/East.....	\$50.00
Building Env .....	\$60.00
Youth Env.....	\$1.00
<b>Total Envelope and Plate.....</b>	<b>\$8,425.00</b>

## ST. RAYMOND'S PARISH STAFF

### Parish Secretary (SR)

Carla Kostka 715-877-3400  
↳ [straymondparish@gmail.com](mailto:straymondparish@gmail.com)

### Family Faith Formation (SR)

Marianne Callaghan 715-877-3400, x 119  
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### Business & Finance (SR & SM)

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### Maintenance (SR)

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### Sacred Music (SM & SR)

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↳ [tja3500@gmail.com](mailto:tja3500@gmail.com)

### Marriage Preparation (SR & SM)

Kaylee Peikert 715-855-1294, x 142  
↳ [Kaylee.Peikert@gmail.com](mailto:Kaylee.Peikert@gmail.com)

### Pastoral Outreach (SR & SM)

Carla Kostka 715-225-7419  
↳ [kostkacarla@gmail.com](mailto:kostkacarla@gmail.com)

### Senior Priest In Residence (SR)

Fr. John Schultz 715-271-0018  
↳ [schultzjohna@gmail.com](mailto:schultzjohna@gmail.com)

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## What's Happening

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### 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](https://rescuevocations.org/Joseph)

**LABOURÉ**  
HELP RESCUE VOCATIONS

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## Information about Returning Safely to Public Masses

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### ***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!



# ST. MARY

*In Memory of*

Gary Soley

Garret Soley

Patricia Cohoon

Frank Thorn

Helen & Forest Bowman

Hegenbart Family

Farley Family

Mr. & Mrs. Anton Leidl

Mr. & Mrs. Arthur Bohl

Daniel Redlich

Robert & Patricia Devney

Don & Marie Devney

Marge Weiler

Christine Swagger

Gary Kleist

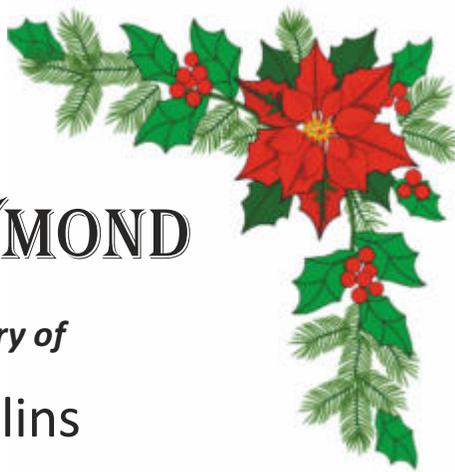
William & Annabelle Planert

Kenneth Ross Sr

Rich Hall

Ralph & Rosella Bechly

Allene Freimuth



# ST. RAYMOND

*In Memory of*

Jay Collins

Natalie Bosse

Teresa Dimmitt

Helen & George Dimmitt

Leon & Roma Schmidt

Romie & June Krueger

Charles & Joanne Grasskamp

Bernice Green

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