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

**The Holy Family | December 27, 2020**



**THE HOLY FAMILY**

The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom;  
 and the favor of God was upon him. - Lk 2:40

**WEEKLY MASS SCHEDULE**

December 26 through January 3

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 Intentions
Mon., Dec. 28	No Mass		
Tue., Dec. 29	8:00a	SR	†Jerry Verdegan
Wed., Dec. 30	8:00a	SM	†Rich Wahl
Thu., Dec. 31	5:30p	SM	†EF "Jake" Walker
Fri., Jan. 1	7:00p	SR	†Jackson Schneider
Sat., Jan. 2	4:00p	SM	†Doreen Bauer
	6:00p	SR	†Gertrude Dekan
Sun., Jan. 3	8:30a	SR	†Mary Geisert
	11:00a	SM	†Edward & Lucille Sutter
	1:00p	SM	Parishioners of SM & SR

**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

**Pastor**

**Fr. Derek Sakowski**  
 715-855-1294 ext. 101  
[frsakowski@gmail.com](mailto:frsakowski@gmail.com)

**Parochial Vicar**

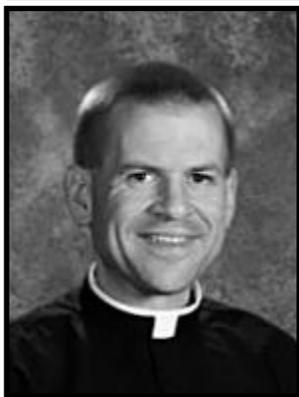
**Fr. Peter Kieffer**  
 715-855-1294 ext. 140  
[frpeterkr@gmail.com](mailto:frpeterkr@gmail.com)

Rectory: 715-514-0161

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## Reflections from Father Derek Sakowski

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### The Prayer of Prostration

“And on entering the house they saw the child with Mary his mother. They prostrated themselves and did him homage. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh” (Matthew 2:11).

For many Christians, prostration is a forgotten posture of prayer.

To prostrate oneself is to lie flat on one’s face, or to bow low and touch one’s face to the ground. It is the ultimate gesture of submission and worship. Our bodies speak outwardly the act of surrender we are choosing with our will.

We are probably more familiar with the prostrations of Muslim or Buddhist prayer, or the acts of groveling that courtiers made toward their rulers in ancient pagan cultures. But prostration also has deep Jewish and Christian roots.

If you google “prostration in the bible,” you might be amazed at how often this posture is utilized in both the Old and New Testament. Whether Moses in the meeting tent or the twenty-four elders around the heavenly throne of the Apocalypse, prostration is a fitting response to the glory of the living God.

Catholics regularly engage in a modified form of prostration by genuflecting in the Eucharistic presence of Jesus or by kneeling during the Eucharistic Prayer at Mass. Let’s face it, we often just go through the motions and don’t really think about the spiritual significance! We would do well to be mindful and intentional each time we engage in it.

Full-blown prostration also occurs in Catholic liturgy, but rarely. On Good Friday the priest and deacon enter in silence, reverence the altar, and then lay on their faces in prostration. The congregation accompanies them by kneeling in silence. The Latin instructions for the Missal use the verb *prosternunt* for both gestures (lying on one’s face vs. kneeling). Both are acts of humbling oneself and submitting to the living God.

For us priests, perhaps our most vivid memory of prostration is from our ordination day, when we lay face-down on the floor of the cathedral for several minutes. Meanwhile, everyone in attendance knelt down and chanted the Litany of the Saints, imploring all of heaven to pray for us so that God would bless and consecrate us in the ministry we were about to receive. I felt so blessed and loved and connected and supported in that humble moment. All was gift.

All is still gift, but I easily forget that truth. During the last year, I have found myself occasionally returning to that posture of prostration, and receiving much fruit from God.

Two years ago, as I entered into five days of silence for my

annual retreat, I found myself under spiritual attack. It happens. Certainly we shouldn’t try to see “the devil under every rock” or over-spiritualize daily life. Often the devil need not attack us because we are doing a perfectly good job of self-sabotage!

But the devil sometimes does attack— usually in the dark shadows of our heart, trying to get us to believe his subtle lies. Sometimes he ambushes us outright. The words of Paul are certainly true: “Our struggle is not with flesh and blood but with the principalities, with the powers, with the world rulers of this present darkness, with the evil spirits in the heavens” (Ephesians 6:12).

I found myself paralyzed by fear and anxiety and hopelessness – and without any obvious explanation of why this was coming over me so strongly and so suddenly. I struggled to go to the chapel and struggled to pray. I began reading Galatians and the call to live by faith in Jesus Christ rather than by our own efforts. I recognized that I was being paralyzed by my pride and self-reliance, that I was resisting a total surrender to God. I recognized that I was being oppressed by a spirit of fear and anxiety – indeed by that very spirit who is the evil master of this present age (cf. Galatians 1:4). Feeling the call to surrender to Jesus in faith, I followed a prompting of the Holy Spirit and prostrated myself, then and there. I renounced pride and self-reliance and begged Jesus to deliver me. It was liberating; the change was dramatic and lasting. The remaining five days of the retreat were a time of deep serenity and fruitfulness. Even months later, I find myself still reaping the fruits.

Since then, I have often returned to that posture of prostration – especially when I find my own will getting in the way or find myself struggling to trust and surrender. Mind you, I always look around to make sure that no one is watching. I am still way too insecure and self-conscious. Even if I don’t physically prostrate myself, I sometimes do so spiritually.

Trusting God as a loving Father has been hard for me. My wounds of fear and shame get in the way; lies about who I am and who God is get in the way. But above all else, my pride and self-reliance get in the way. Jesus alone can deliver me from these lies and proclaim his truth in my heart.

There is nothing magical about the gesture of prostration. But we are a unity of body, mind, and spirit. God made the whole person, not just our souls. It makes so much sense to worship him with our whole self. Yes, we Catholics have much to learn from our non-Catholic brothers and sisters. But on this point of bodily worship, I think we Catholics have much to teach (if only we can appreciate it ourselves!).

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Whether we prostrate ourselves physically or spiritually or both, let us all, like the Magi at Bethlehem, submit ourselves to the King of kings and allow his wisdom to reign in our heart.

# 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...This is it!? Did you get it?

**"It's a NEW TABERNACLE!"**

### 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!

### Knights of Columbus

Interested in joining the Knights of

Columbus??? December is a great month to do so! Contact Ralph Melgard for more information!

### 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!

### New Years Eve & Day Retreat

The St. Anthony Spirituality Center is putting on a retreat December 31-January 1st! Fr. Tom Zelinski will be speaking about how to process the experiences of this past year and how to move forward with optimism and courage in 2021! The retreat is limited to 19 participants. Register early if interested or contact for virtual options. info@sarcenter.com

## St. Raymond Parish News

### Pastoral Council

Did you know that both St. Mary and St. Raymond have a pastoral council?? Over the next few weeks we will be introducing the members of the individual councils! A date to keep in mind is January 12, that will be the first meeting for the St. Raymond Council in the New Year! More details to come!

### March for Life

This year Wisconsin will be hosting their own March for Life! When? Join Pro-Life Wisconsin on the sidewalks outside the Wisconsin State Capitol to march for the preborn on January 2nd in Madison, WI at 11am. Pro-Life signs will be available, but you are welcome to bring your own!

## ST. MARY'S PARISH STAFF

### FULL TIME DIRECTORS (SM & SR)

#### Pastoral Ministry

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

#### Evangelization & Faith Formation

Jacqueline Van Hemert 715-855-1294, x 106  
↳ JacquelineEVanHemert@gmail.com

#### Business & Finance

Bonnie Firkus 715-855-1294, x 146  
↳ bfirkustraymond@gmail.com

### PART TIME COORDINATORS

#### Communication Coordinator

Ellen Hernandez 715-855-1294  
↳ smcommcoord@gmail.com

#### Sacred Music Coordinator (SM & SR)

Tyler Andreae  
↳ tja5300@gmail.com

#### Marriage Preparation (SM & SR)

Kaylee Peikert 715-855-1294, x 142  
↳ Kaylee.Peikert@gmail.com

#### Pastoral Outreach (SM & SR)

Carla Kostka 715-225-7419  
↳ kostkacarla@gmail.com

#### Family Faith Formation (SM)

Maria Ricciardi 715-855-1294, x 106  
↳ FaithFormationSM@gmail.com

#### Maintenance (SM)

Charles Thurner 715-855-1294, x 141  
↳ Stmarymaintaltona@gmail.com

## St. Mary's Elementary School

### Regis High School

We are looking for volunteers to sanitize the pews after Mass for the month of January. All volunteers are welcome to attend Mass they sign up for. Please see attached link for more information. <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F094BADA823A1F94-sanitizing>

### Virtual Learning Dates

January 19th-29nd

### St. Mary's Stewardship: This Week

*Totals will be Available next week*

**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: This Week

*Totals will be Available next week*

## ST. RAYMOND'S PARISH STAFF

### Parish Secretary (SR)

Carla Kostka 715-877-3400  
↳ straymondparish@gmail.com

### Family Faith Formation (SR)

Marianne Callaghan 715-877-3400, x 119  
↳ macallaghan115@gmail.com

### Business & Finance (SR & SM)

Bonnie Firkus 715-855-1294, x 146  
↳ bfirkustraymond@gmail.com

### Maintenance (SR)

Robert Grzyb 715-492-9677  
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### Communication Coordinator

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### Marriage Preparation (SR & SM)

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### Pastoral Outreach (SR & SM)

Carla Kostka 715-225-7419  
↳ kostkacarla@gmail.com

### Senior Priest In Residence (SR)

Fr. John Schultz 715-271-0018  
↳ schultzjohna@gmail.com

**THANK YOU!**

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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!

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## A New Home

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Over the last few weeks we've had clues of a special surprise! Here it is! On December 23rd we welcomed this beautiful Tabernacle into its new home at St. Mary. Just in time for the celebration of the birth of Jesus.

Thank you to the special donor!



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