



**St. Mary**  
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www.straymond.us



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

**Second Sunday of Lent | February, 28 2021**



**2<sup>ND</sup> SUNDAY OF LENT**

Then a cloud came, casting a shadow over them; from the cloud came a voice, "This is my beloved Son. Listen to him." Suddenly, looking around, they no longer saw anyone but Jesus alone with them.  
Mk 9:7-8

**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: 715-514-0161

**WEEKLY MASS SCHEDULE**

February 27 through March 7

Sat., Feb. 27	4:00p	SM	Calista & John Weiss Jr.
	6:00p	SR	Pete & Lisa Melrose
Sun., Feb. 28	8:30a	SR	†Ronald Haggerty
	11:00a	SM	†Joseph Kilmisch
	1:00p	SM	Parishioners of SM & SR
Mon., Mar. 1	No Mass		
Tue., Mar. 2	8:00a	SR	†Bruce Womack
Wed., Mar. 3	8:00a	SM	†Joanne C Poppe
Thu., Mar. 4	8:00a	SR	†Deceased Family of Al Komrowski
Fri., Mar. 5	SM School Mass		
Sat., Mar. 6	9:00a	SM	†Charles Schultz Jr.
	4:00p	SM	†Mildren Fandel
	6:00p	SR	B J Wogernese
	6:00p	SR	Parishioners of SM & SR
Sun., Mar. 7	8:30a	SR	†Gertrude Dekan
	11:00a	SM	†Fr. Norbert Wilger
	1:00p	SM	Priest Intention

**SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION**

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

**EUCCHARISTIC EXPOSITION & ADORATION**

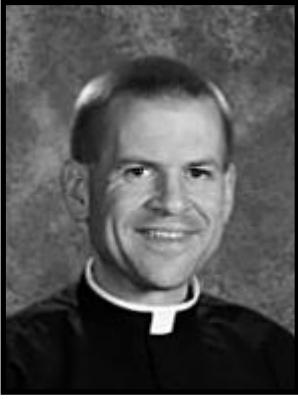
Tuesday	5:00-9:00p	SM
Thursday	5:00-9:00p	SR

*Please remember to wear a mask & to follow social distancing guidelines.*

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## Reflections from Father Derek Sakowski

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### Prayer as Desire

Lent is a sacred time in which many of us resolve to be deepened in prayer. Joining Jesus in the wilderness, we are invited to allow our heart to be captivated by God the Father, growing in our identity as beloved children of God, and claiming as our own Jesus' victory over the evil one.

The prophet Hosea describes God's invitation beautifully: "Therefore I

am now going to allure Israel; I will lead her into the wilderness and speak tenderly to her" (Hosea 2:14).

God awakens desire in our hearts. Deep and authentic prayer happens to the extent that we allow ourselves to experience and grow in that desire.

Have you ever considered prayer as an experience of desire?

I would say it took me a long journey with many detours before I really began appreciating the invitation to experience prayer as desire – and this was not for lack of pursuit on God's part! If I take the time to reflect on my life, I can recall with gratitude many times in which God sought to woo my heart in prayer. There were often obstacles to my response.

It turns out that deeply allowing the experience of desire is not so easy as it might sound! Feeling an ache that only God can satisfy can actually be painful – not unlike the experience of intense hunger or thirst. I used to laugh at the line in Matthew's Gospel about Jesus fasting and being tempted in the desert: "And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry." I always used to think to myself as I read those words, "Well, duh!" But the spiritual combat of the desert – whether in Jesus or in me – is not mainly about physical hunger or bread – it is about the deep longing of the human heart that can be satisfied by God alone.

St. Augustine perhaps put it the best when he prayed, "You have made us for yourself, O God, and our heart is restless until it rests in you."

Jesus allowed himself to go into the depths of human hunger and thirst – both physically and spiritually. He invites us to share in his experience: "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness; for they will be satisfied."

Have you ever felt a thirst for God, and allowed yourself to abide in that longing? Or to seek and receive a taste of him, only to long for him even more?

Even now, at a season in my life in which I understand the invitation at a much deeper level, I still notice myself avoiding it. Sometimes I numb out or keep myself distracted with lesser pleasures and lesser desires. Other times I stay plunged into busyness or activity; if I don't let myself slow down, I won't feel the ache. Still other times I try to make things happen my own

way – as though "getting it right" will somehow bend the will of the living God.

One of the benefits of being Catholic is also one of our greatest pitfalls – we have thousands of prayers and devotions we can turn to. Often, instead of slowing down and just being with God, we can easily pile on more prayers. We begin to think of holiness as a matter of being strong enough, disciplined enough, or doing all the right things. In this posture, prayer becomes something we "do," rather than time spent receiving, and the more we receive, allowing the desire of our heart to be expanded even more.

Experiencing prayer as desire usually includes engaging with all our human faculties – our thoughts, our imagination, our emotions, and even the very sensations in our bodies. Again, Augustine describes the experience quite well, describing how all five of his human senses were transformed by his desire for and encounter with the living God:

*You called and cried out loud and shattered my deafness. You were radiant and resplendent, you put to flight my blindness. You were fragrant, and I drew in my breath and now pant after you. I tasted you, and I feel but hunger and thirst for you. You touched me, and I burn with desire to attain the peace which is yours.*

There are moments in which we have no doubt we have tasted and seen the goodness of the Lord. Yet we resist! Sometimes it feels safer to put surrogates in God's place, predictable comforts that don't involve waiting or trust or surrender. I find it helpful at times to pray slowly the opening words of Psalm 63, words deeply familiar to anyone who prays the Liturgy of the Hours. I like to emphasize the words "you" and "your" in each line to remember Him whom I truly desire:

*O God, you are my God, for you I long;*

*For you my soul is thirsting.*

*My body pines for you*

*Like a dry, weary land without water.*

*So I gaze on you in the sanctuary*

*To see your strength and your glory.*

I am grateful for the experience of God awakening desire in my heart, even though it sometimes can be intense. It is good to long for the living God. Nor is it necessarily a bad thing that it took me a long time to experience a thawing of the desire he had placed in my heart. Scripture suggests that God waits until we are ready: "I adjure you, Daughters of Jerusalem, do not awaken or stir up love until it is ready!"

Hopefully, this Lent will be a season in which you and I can join with the Psalmist in praying, "My heart is ready, O God, my heart is ready!" (Psalm 57:7).

# Saint Mary and Saint Raymond of Peñafort Parishes

## St. Mary Parish News

### Job Opportunities

#### Director of Music & Liturgy

##### St. Mary & St. Raymond

We are hiring a full-time position, here is the position overview! To provide outstanding leadership and teambuilding in all areas of liturgical ministry, particularly sacred music— all with a view to leading disciples into deeper conversion and fellowship, while ensuring that the parishes' liturgical celebrations are uplifting and deeply prayerful. If interested in applying, send résumé and cover letter to Fr. Sakowski at [frsakowski@gmail.com](mailto:frsakowski@gmail.com)

*Check our SM or SR websites for the full description.*

## 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  
↳ [JacquelineEVanHemert@gmail.com](mailto:JacquelineEVanHemert@gmail.com)

#### Business & Finance

Bonnie Firkus 715-855-1294, x 146  
↳ [bfirkusstraymond@gmail.com](mailto:bfirkusstraymond@gmail.com)

### PART TIME COORDINATORS

#### Communication Coordinator

Ellen Hernandez 715-855-1294  
↳ [smcommcoord@gmail.com](mailto:smcommcoord@gmail.com)

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

Tyler Andreae  
↳ [tja5300@gmail.com](mailto:tja5300@gmail.com)

#### Marriage Preparation (SM & SR)

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

#### Pastoral Outreach (SM & SR)

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

#### Family Faith Formation (SM)

Maria Ricciardi 715-855-1294, x 106  
↳ [FaithFormationSM@gmail.com](mailto:FaithFormationSM@gmail.com)

#### Maintenance (SM)

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

## Part-time Marriage Prep & Wedding Coordinator

This is a part-time position, usually involving Saturday weddings and Friday rehearsals, in addition to meeting with couples prior to the wedding. Interested candidates should send a résumé and cover letter describing interest and experience with marriage ministry to Jacqueline Van Hemert, Director of Evangelization and Faith Formation, at [JacquelineEVanHemert@gmail.com](mailto:JacquelineEVanHemert@gmail.com). Please include the subject line "Marriage Prep and Wedding Coordinator."

### Looking to Volunteer?

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

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

Adults .....\$6,889.70  
Offertory (Plate) .....\$750.00  
Total Envelope & Plate..... \$7,639.70

### Diocesan Appeal Goal \$39,460.00

Received ..... \$28,270.00

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: This Week

Adults..... \$5,489.00  
Offertory (Plate) ..... \$155.00  
Total Envelope & Plate ..... \$5,644.00

### Diocesan Appeal Goal \$45,925.00

Received..... \$22,521.04

Thank you!

## St. Raymond Parish News

### St. Raymond's Mary Statue

Within the next few weeks our beautiful statue of Mary will be gone for some minor repairs. The plan is to have her back by Easter along with Joseph and the child Jesus as a very nice Holy Family. How wonderful to have this addition added to our church in the Year of St. Joseph.

### Knights of Columbus (SR)

Interested in joining the Knights of Columbus??? Now through March 15th is your opportunity! Contact Andy at 715-828-3625 or [frenchy3625@yahoo.com](mailto:frenchy3625@yahoo.com) for more information!

## 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  
↳ [macallaghan115@gmail.com](mailto:macallaghan115@gmail.com)

### Business & Finance (SR & SM)

Bonnie Firkus 715-855-1294, x 146  
↳ [bfirkusstraymond@gmail.com](mailto:bfirkusstraymond@gmail.com)

### Maintenance (SR)

Robert Grzyb 715-492-9677  
↳ [autobobs@outlook.com](mailto:autobobs@outlook.com)

### Communication Coordinator

Ellen Hernandez  
↳ [smcommcoord@gmail.com](mailto:smcommcoord@gmail.com)

### Sacred Music (SM & SR)

Tyler Andreae  
↳ [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)

# What's Happening

## Family Faith Formation

We look forward to seeing you on Sunday, March 7th for our next class! Our session will be on the 10 Commandments. Kids will be learning in their classrooms about what it means to live in a safe environment and what to do if they feel unsafe. See you then!

## Food Drive



Bring those nonperishable items that you have in your homes!

Beginning February 27 through March 28, St. Raymond's will be collecting food items to donate! Some items that are most needed are; peanut butter, jelly, cereal, and canned items with pop tops! Keep your eye out for a virtual food drive! We will be providing a link where you can donate money if that is easier! Thank you!

## SM & SR Ministries

Greetings Parish Family! Our next MSP (Ministry Scheduler Pro) schedule has been finalized, and begins on **March 1st!** Please use your MSP account to view your scheduled times. Please note, we have quite a few open positions throughout the various ministries. Please prayerfully consider volunteering for any of these openings as your qualifications allow. You can do so by going to the schedule and simply clicking "volunteer now." If you have any questions about your schedule or MSP account, please reach out to Tyler Andreae at [tja5300@gmail.com](mailto:tja5300@gmail.com). Thank you for your ministry!

Let us know if you want to be apart of any of these amazing ministries or have questions on how to create an account!

Lector  
EMHC  
Sacristan  
Server  
Usher  
Music  
Confession Ministry

## Lenten Opportunities

### Liturgy of the Hours

Join us in praying Morning and Night prayer every Thursday of Lent! March, 11, 18, & 25, April 1! Check out the St. Mary or St. Raymond Facebook pages for the zoom link!

### Stations of the Cross

Join us at St. Mary for Stations of the Cross at 7pm every Friday of Lent, and at St. Raymond at 5pm every Sunday of Lent!

## Immaculate Conception

### Job Opportunity

#### Part-time Music Director

Check out the bulletin board in the Narthex for more information on qualifications and responsibilities! Submit a statement about the purpose of music ministry and résumé to [immaculateconceptionec@gmail.com](mailto:immaculateconceptionec@gmail.com)

## Regis News

### Virtual Guided Preschool Tours


Curious about kindergarten or know someone who is? Our elementary schools are hosting guided virtual tours for interested families!

**St. James Elementary School**  
Tuesday, February 23  
7 p.m.

**St. Mary's Elementary School**

Wednesday, February 24  
7 p.m.

Participants will be able to see and interact with our school principals online as they share information and answer your questions. We also invite you to check out our new "Welcome to Kindergarten" web page to learn more about our great kindergarten classrooms.




# REGIS

Catholic Schools

## Witness the Difference!

Enrollment for the 2021-22 school year is now open.



**ST. JAMES  
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2502 11th Street | Eau Claire

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ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**  
1828 Lynn Avenue | Altoona

**IMMACULATE CONCEPTION  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**  
1703 Sherwin Avenue | Eau Claire

**LEARN MORE ABOUT KINDERGARTEN**

We know you have a lot of questions as you prepare your little one for this big step. We invite you to visit [www.RegisCatholicSchools.com/kindergarten/](http://www.RegisCatholicSchools.com/kindergarten/) to learn more about what you can expect in our kindergarten classrooms.

Tuition assistance is available, including the Wisconsin Parental Choice Program.

Questions? Please call (715) 830-2273, ext. 1400

[www.RegisCatholicSchools.com](http://www.RegisCatholicSchools.com)

## WEEKLY PRAYER



### READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF FEB. 28

SUN 2/28	GN 22:1-2,9A,10-13,15-18/PS 116:10,15,16-17, 18-19[9]/ROM 8:31B-34/MK 9:2-10
MON 3/01	DN 9:4B-10/PS 79:8,9, 11, 13[CF.103:10A]/LK 6:36-38
TUE 3/02	IS 1:10,16-20/PS 50:8-, 16BC-17,21 AND 23[23B]/MT 23:1-12
WED 3/03	JER 18:18-20/PS 31:5-6,14,15-16[17B]/MT 20:17-28
THU 3/04	JER 17:5-10/PS 1:1-2,3,4 AND 6[40:5A]/LK 16:19-31
FRI 3/05	GN 37:3-4,12-13A,17B-28A/PS 105:16-17,18-19,20-21[5A]/MT 21:33-43, 45-46
SAT 3/06	MI 7:14-15,18-20/PS 103:1-2,3-4,9-10,11-12[8A]/LK 15:1-3,11-32
SUN 3/07	EX 20:1-17 OR 20:1-3,7-8,12-17/PS 19:8,9,10,11[19:6-8C]/1COR 1:22-25 OR EX 17:3-7/PS 95:1-2,6-7,8-9[8]/ROM 5:1-2,5-8/JN 4:5-42 CR 4:5-15, 19B-26, 39A, 40-42



# God Guides Us

## Through Our Thoughts

This is the seventh in a series on the ways that God guides us. God uses the gift of reason – the thinking process – to provide helpful direction for everyday life. Thoughts are indeed significant!

There are both good sources and bad sources for our thoughts. Good thoughts come from God whereas anything that is uncharitable toward ourselves or others is from the “enemy.” The enemy here refers to the devil, “the father of lies,” or any influence he has upon people and the world. We do not have to accept these thoughts as our own. The important thing is that we reject a thought when we recognize it as ungodly, as it is not a sin if we reject such a thought immediately. A saying that captures this point of rejecting unwanted thoughts is “...**you can’t stop birds from flying over your head, but you can stop them from building a nest in your hair.**”

We want to protect our mind from thoughts that are not of God. If we have the standard of truth – Sacred Scripture and the Teachings of the Church – then we have a means to determine if we should accept or reject any particular thought. That is why it is essential to be reading the Bible. God will only guide us through thoughts that are in line with His Word.

Some people have experienced God guiding them through their thoughts in an unforgettable way. Powerful instances like these, when God’s guidance “breaks through” in a big way, are less common. Far

more often are the subtle signs that God puts in our thoughts; those that “quietly” lead us toward Him in peace, helping us to leave behind uncertainty, anxiety and frustration. These gentle, God-given signs can happen in any place and at any time. God is always with us and He will guide us in our thoughts, not only during prayer, but also in any other life situation or circumstances.

We refer to thoughts from God as “inner promptings of the Holy Spirit.” Continuous noise proves to be a blockage for people who are seeking God and who want to hear His voice. A way of facilitating the process of listening to our thoughts, and what God might want to speak to us through them, is to provide times of quiet both around us and within us so that we can be open to these promptings from God. **The more we turn our thoughts to God, the more we will be tuned into how He is willing to guide us in our thoughts.**

The best way to become increasingly aware of God’s presence is our focused attention. There are simple things that we can do to be more available for Him to speak to us in our thoughts:

- Take opportunities during any moment i.e. waiting in line, preparing a meal, to be quiet and make a decision “on purpose” to turn your attention to Our Lord.
- You may repeat a prayer, such as “Jesus, please guide me!” or “Jesus, I trust in You!”

There is a person who can show us how to have an ongoing exchange of thoughts and words, a conversation

with God. Brother Lawrence, a 16th Century Carmelite monk, who served in a monastery kitchen in Parish, models these simple ways for us. His way, as expressed in his book *The Practice of the Presence of God*, is a helpful guide for those who seek to know how God guides us, when we practice conversing with Him.

Brother Lawrence’s desire was simple: He persevered in focusing his attention on Jesus no matter what he was doing. He spoke with God while he washed the dishes and he thanked God doing menial tasks. He sang to God in his heart while setting tables and asked God for His blessing while he cleared them. Brother Lawrence grew continually mindful of God in this practice, recognizing Jesus’ presence continually within His soul. Even amidst “the clatter of my kitchen,” he stated, “I am united with God in great peace” and can still hear His words of guidance “while people are chattering at the same time.”

Now is a good season to spend some quiet time on a daily basis to converse with Jesus. **As you share your thoughts and feelings with Him, you will begin to sense the reality of His caring Presence in the everyday moments of your life, becoming more and more aware of His guidance along the way.**

By Ann & Carol Lankford



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