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

**Solemnity of Pentecost | May 23, 2021**



**PENTECOST SUNDAY**

Jesus said to his disciples: "When the Advocate comes whom I will send you from the Father, the Spirit of truth that proceeds from the Father, he will testify to me." - Jn 15:26

Excerpt from the Letterary for Mass ©2021, 1998, 1973 CCC. ©LPI

**WEEKLY MASS SCHEDULE**

**May 22 through May 30**

Sat., May 22	4:00p	SM	John & Alice Bauer 50th Wedding Anniversary
	*6:00p	SR	† Teresa Thorson
Sun., May 23	*8:30a	SR	† Don Ida
	*11:00a	SM	† Helen Duffenbach
(Misa en español)	*1:00p	SM	Parishioners of SM & SR
Mon., May 24	No Mass		
Tue., May 25	8:00a	SR	† Rogern Haas
Wed., May 26	8:00a	SM	† Frances & Kathy Darby
Thu., May 27	8:00a	SR	† Kay Nix
Fri., May 28	SM School		† Otto & Ruth Hein
Sat., May 29	4:00p	SM	BJ Wogernese
	6:00p	SR	† Becky Eckman
Sun., May 30	8:30a	SR	Parishioners of SM & SR
	11:00a	SM	Family Faith Formation
(Misa en español)	1:00p	SM	Priest Intention

\*Will have Incense

**SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION**

Thursday	7:00p–9:00p	SR
Saturday	10:00a–12:00p	SM

**EUCCHARISTIC EXPOSITION & ADORATION**

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

**PLEASE REMEMBER TO  
 WEAR A MASK & TO  
 MAINTAIN SOCIAL  
 DISTANCING GUIDELINES**



**Pastor**

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

**Parochial Vicar**

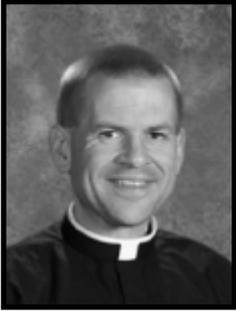
**Fr. Peter Kieffer**  
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Rectory: 715-514-0161

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## Reflections from Fr. Derek Sakowski

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### The Cloak of Bartimaeus

The cloak of Bartimaeus is a curious detail in Mark 10:46-52. The blind man throws it aside as he springs up and rushes to Jesus. He never goes back to retrieve his cloak. Healed of his blindness, he joins with Jesus and his disciples as they leave town.

Why does Mark even bother to mention it? Little details like these matter – especially when reading the shortest of the four Gospels. Mark mentions the cloak because he is trying to teach us something.

***“Jesus, son of David, have mercy on me!”***

It is intriguing that Bartimaeus cries out “have mercy on me!” – in Greek, *eleison me* – echoing the liturgical chant *Kyrie Eleison* that we pray every Mass. It is interesting that many Bible translations prefer to say “have pity on me” – which isn’t entirely wrong, but tends to reduce this story to a simple physical healing of a blind man. Rather, Bartimaeus’ blindness is far more comprehensive than a physical blindness, and his healing is far more comprehensive than regaining physical sight. Whatever the cause of Bartimaeus’ physical blindness may have been, Mark wants us to know that this man was deeply wounded by sin and its effects.

He is a beggar in Jericho, a city readily associated with sin in both the Old and New Testament.

And the cloak of Bartimaeus is so much more than a cloak. It represents a way of life for him – how he had learned to cope and survive in an existence devoid of intimacy, connection, kindness, or care. He was a beggar, yes, but (one can easily imagine) a highly manipulative and cunning beggar who knew how to take advantage of people and get what he wanted without making any actual connections or commitments.

Instead of real relationships, Bartimaeus had his cloak. It kept him warm – warm enough anyway. It wasn’t the warmth of hearth and home, but it was enough to survive and endure. More importantly, he could hide himself in his cloak, staying isolated physically, emotionally, and spiritually. I imagine that, most of the time, he did not want to be seen. Whatever scraps of pleasure he could manage to carve out for himself, he could then indulge in secretly. His cloak was perhaps the closest thing he had to a friend. His life was not one that knew much by way of nurture or soothing. In his cloak, he managed to find fleeting moments of comfort and safety. I can only imagine, over time, how dilapidated and disgusting his cloak became. But up to that day, it had been his most loyal companion. How many times had other people betrayed him or harmed him, rejected him or abandoned him? His cloak would not do that! It was predictable, even if it was only a surrogate – even if it was providing less and less authentic comfort or warmth.

How astounding it is that Bartimaeus cries out – repeatedly – “Jesus, son of David, have mercy on me!!” He makes himself so vulnerable. He risks more mocking and rejection. Apparently he had decided that he had nothing more to lose. He was ready to risk it all.

It is even more remarkable to me that he leaves his cloak behind – even *before* Jesus heals him. He recognizes that the cloak – his loyal and faithful companion – is actually an obstacle to real connection. It has hindered him from receiving and will continue doing so if he doesn’t change his ways. More importantly, such intense and deep desire is welling up in his heart that it overcomes his “settling” for survival. He wants to be well. He intuits that Jesus can give him more. No doubt, he also hears the whispers of his cloak – warning him that he is making a fool of himself, gently enticing him to hide himself away once again and return to the safety of self-protection. But desire wins the day. Bartimaeus not only cries out all the louder; he actually casts aside his cloak and runs up to Jesus. He wants to see. Jesus heals him. He begins following Jesus.

If you are like me, I imagine that you can relate to the cloak of Bartimaeus! Like Adam and Eve with their fig leaves, it sometimes feels safer to isolate and self-protect rather than to surrender ourselves totally into the hands of the living God.

The invitation to Adam and Eve, the invitation to Bartimaeus, and the invitation to you and me is the same invitation captured beautifully in the erotic love poetry of the Song of Songs 5. The bride has cast off her cloak and pursues intimacy with her beloved. She will not put her cloak back on when he is inviting her to be one flesh with him! These images of vulnerability and intimacy are mere foretastes of the ultimate invitation God offers to each of us in Jesus. He desires to heal every rupture and restore true intimacy and eternal communion with him and with each other, in a way that will satisfy every ache and longing of our hearts.

What does your cloak look like? Where in your life do you find yourself hiding or isolating, pulling away from relationships, or preferring the predictable comfort and safety of self-soothing or self-protection? How do you feel about casting aside your cloak and running vulnerably to Jesus? Do you want to be well? Do you trust that the healing, love, and communion offered by Jesus will be enough?

Perhaps we need time to grapple with these questions. The Lord honors our freedom, and does not arouse our desire until we are ready (*cf.* Song of Songs 8:4). When we are ready, we can cast aside our cloak and run to the bridegroom.

# Job Opportunity

## 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. Please include in the subject line "Marriage Prep and Wedding Coordinator".



# Stewardship

## St. Mary's This Week

Adults .....\$8,146.75  
 Easter ..... \$10.00  
 Offertory (Plate).....\$159.00  
**Total Envelope & Plate.....\$8,315.75**

## St. Mary's Diocesan Appeal

**Goal: \$39,460.00**

Received: \$31,035.00

Thank You!

79%

## St. Raymond's This Week

Adults .....\$1,774.00  
 Holy Day .....\$45.00  
 Offertory (Plate) .....\$234.00  
**Total Envelope & Plate .....\$2053.00**

## St. Raymond's Diocesan Appeal

**Goal: \$45,925.00**

Received: \$26,602.04

Thank You!

58%



**Are you considering providing your child(ren) with a Catholic Education for the year 2021-2022?**

St. Mary's Elementary School is now enrolling students from 3 year old Pre-School through 5th Grade! Financial assistance is available, making Catholic Education more affordable. Please Contact Carisa Smiskey, School Principal to learn more! Call: 715-830-2278 or Email: CSmiskey@RegisCatholicSchools.com



## Knights of Columbus

For updates from the KOC, call St. Raymond Parish (715-877-3400) and push "3" to reach the KOC mailbox. There you will hear the latest news and meeting info.

## ST. MARY & ST. RAYMOND OF PEÑAFORT PARISHES

# DIRECTORS

### Evangelization & Faith Formation



Jacqueline Van Hemert  
 715-855-1294, x 106 (SM)  
 715-877-3400, x 119 (SR)

JacquelineEVanHemert@gmail.com

### Finance, Building & Grounds



Bonnie Firkus  
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 715-877-3400, x 118 (SR)

BFirkusStRaymond@gmail.com

### Pastoral Ministry



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 715-855-1294, x 108 (SM)  
 715-877-3400, x121 (SR)

SmSrPastoralMin@gmail.com

### Music & Liturgy



Tyler Andreae  
 715-855-1294 x 147 (SM)  
 715-877-3400 x 120 (SR)

TJA3500@gmail.com

### St. Mary's Dedicated Staff



Faith Formation Coordinator,  
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 FaithFormationSM@gmail.com

Maintenance,  
 Charles Thurner  
 715-855-1294, x 141  
 StMaryMainAltoona@gmail.com



### Office Support Staff



Parish Receptionist, Shelli Julson  
 (Serving Both Parishes)  
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 StMaryRecAltoona@gmail.com (SM)  
 715-877-3400, x 100 (SR)  
 StRaymondParish@gmail.com (SR)

Bilingual Office Assistant,  
 Carmen Nuñez (SM's Only)  
 715-855-1294, x 109  
 CarmenAide4@att.net



### St. Raymond's Dedicated Staff



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 Marianne Callaghan  
 715-877-3400, x 119  
 MaCallaghan115@gmail.com

Maintenance,  
 Robert Grzyb  
 715-492-9677  
 AutoBobs@outlook.com



### Coordinators Serving Both Parishes



Communication Coordinator,  
 Heather Halberg  
 715-855-1294  
 SmCommCoord@gmail.com



Marriage Prep & Wedding Coordinator  
**COULD THIS BE YOU?**  
 Send Résumé to Jacqueline Van Hemert  
 JacquelineEVanHemert@gmail.com



Pastoral Outreach Coordinator  
 Carla Kostka  
 715-225-7419  
 KostkaCarla@gmail.com

For Baptism Prep, Marriage Prep & RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) Contact Faith Formation Coordinator



## “Theology of the Body”

### St. John Paul II’s Roadmap to Happiness

Would you like a roadmap to a fulfilling life and a heavenly destiny?

Well, back in the 1980’s Pope St. John Paul II gave us an extraordinary one. Calling it the “Theology of the Body,” he unfolded that map bit by bit through weekly audiences over the course of five years. Because of his philosophical mind and vocabulary, the Pope’s map needed some ‘decoding’ for the average person. We have that now, thanks to the dedication of people like author Brian Butler, who will be presenting a virtual conference on “Formation for Theology of the Body: Unlocking the Meaning of Our Humanity,” on Sat., June 5, 10:00 am - 3:30 pm.

Before I explain how you can register for this conference, let me tell you why it is so valuable.

*You see, every Catholic school in the diocese, and every parish religious education program, has been asked by Bishop Callahan to form our young people using the Theology of the Body through a curriculum whose primary author is Brian Butler. That makes the June 5 virtual conference a golden opportunity for parents, grandparents and any interested adult to gain key insights from the author himself on what their children are being taught.*

But there’s more. Several of us in charge of diocesan offices see the Theology of the Body as a central thread in all our efforts of

formation, at every level. We are working and planning to weave it into everything we do.

Why? Because it has a powerfully inspiring message that God created us in a burst of His infinite Love, that He wired us for relationship with Him and with each other, that we become who God created us to be when we live a life of self-giving love, and that by His grace we can experience a freedom and contagious joy that lights up the world.

The Theology of the Body has been especially helpful in teaching people the positive Catholic vision of human sexuality. To our culture that looks at sex as a commodity, it declares that women (and men) are always to be respected and loved, and never to be objectified and used. And in this age of gender confusion, its profound insights into the God-given uniqueness and complementarity of man and woman are a healing balm.

Pope John Paul II showed a marvelous ability to speak to the human heart in a way that is real and relatable, addressing both our fears and our yearnings. That is why our young people are responding to it with such enthusiasm. It resonates with their experience and gives hope and meaning to their lives.

But the Theology of the Body does much more than help us understand sexual morality. It considers all the ways the body expresses the person – our gaze, a smile or a frown, our tone of voice, our manners and

posture, our touch. These bodies of ours are not “containers” for our souls, nor are they “accessories” that we can manipulate as we wish.

No, our bodies are *us*, central to our very identity. They will be raised up on the last day and we will be embodied forever. Our bodies speak a language. Think of a closed fist vs. an open hand, a shove vs. an embrace. Jesus took on a body and He “spoke” with it. He wept in grief at the tomb of Lazarus. He made a whip in righteous anger and overturned the tables of the moneychangers in the Temple. He fed his people, first with loaves and fishes and then with His very Body and Blood. He opened His arms upon the Cross. He rose in glory and ascended bodily into Heaven.

We live and move and express ourselves through our bodies. This is what Pope St. John Paul II understood so keenly and wanted us to take seriously, in our age that fails to respect the body and thus also fails to respect the person that the body represents.

So, join Brian Butler on June 5 as he shares vital insights into this treasure from Pope John Paul II that is having such a powerful impact in our Catholic schools and parishes. It will speak to your heart, too!

By Christopher Ruff

*Virtual Conference Cost: \$10/person.  
To register, visit [dioc.org/tob](http://dioc.org/tob).*



DIOCESE of LA CROSSE

# Welcome Heather!

From Convert to New Communication Coordinator



Heather Halberg is a member of St. Mary's in Altoona. She is a recent convert and entered the Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil held at St. Raymond's in April of 2020. She will be taking over the part-time Communication Coordinator position for both Parishes effective June 1, 2021. Heather has a K-8 teaching license and currently does Adult Foster Care in her home and runs a small hobby farm with her husband of nearly 10 yrs.



She began exploring the Catholic Faith while she was pregnant with her son Jeremy Paul. He was born in March of 2019 and Baptized on Pentecost. She likes to joke that he was Catholic before her. Her first experience with St. Mary's was the Corpus Christi Procession and potluck where a kind parishioner met her in line and took her over to the RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) leaders. She met Father Sakowski and started RCIA in the Fall of 2019 and things have never really been the same since!!!!

## Thank You Ellen!

Please pray for Ellen as she relocates in preparation for her new vocation of marriage. We are so happy to have had Ellen Hernandez as our Communication Coordinator for both St. Mary and St. Raymond of Peñafort Parishes. Her last day with us will be May 31, 2021.

Ellen, thank you for sharing your gifts with us and may you be blessed in wherever your faith journey leads you.



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