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

Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time | July 25, 2021

**17th SUNDAY
 IN ORDINARY TIME**

When they had had their fill, he said to his disciples, "Gather the fragments left over, so that nothing will be wasted." - Jn 6:12

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCB.

WEEKLY MASS SCHEDULE

July 24 through August 1

Sat., July 24	4:00p	SM	Edward Campbell
	6:00p	SR	Parishioners of SM & SR
Sun., July 25	8:30a	SR	† Roland Weaver
	11:00a	SM	† Roger Haas
(Misa en español)	1:00p	SM	Priest Intention
Mon., July 26	No Mass		
Tue., July 27	8:00a	SR	† Jeffrey Huber
Wed., July 28	8:00a	SM	† Bonnie Laporte
Thu., July 29	8:00a	SR	† Tom Lindgren
Fri., July 30	9:00a	SM	† Sylvia Jones
Sat., July 31	4:00p	SM	† Doreen Bauer
	6:00p	SR	David Nowicki
Sun., August 1	8:30a	SR	† Wayne Kostka
	11:00a	SM	† Margo Gieremek
(Misa en español)	1:00p	SM	Parishioners of SM & SR

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

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

EUCCHARISTIC EXPOSITION & ADORATION

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

OFFICE HOURS

Mon-Thurs	9a-noon or by apt	SM
Sunday	noon-3p	SM
Tues/Thurs	9a-noon or by apt	SR

Pastor

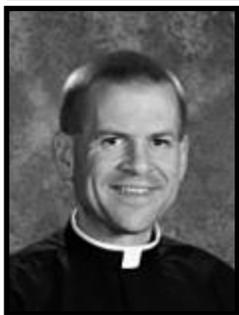
Fr. Derek Sakowski
 715-855-1294 ext. 101
FrSakowski@gmail.com

Parochial Vicar

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

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Reflections from Fr. Sakowski



From Wonder to Wisdom

Childlike wonder is a precious gift. It is so much fun to observe the awe of children as they plunge into the present moment. They exhibit an eager and relentless curiosity, whether exploring the flora and fauna in the backyard or dismantling their toys to figure out how they actually work.

They burst forth with such intense joy during spontaneous play as they gleefully cry out “Again!! Again!!” – tirelessly yearning for the eternal in their experience of the present moment. They instinctively and effortlessly convert a large open room into a playground or an adventure zone. They easily overlook the expensive Christmas gift their parents have purchased, delighting instead for hours in the large cardboard box or the shiny wrapping paper.

The common denominator in all of these experiences is a marvelous human capacity to be wholly and wholeheartedly present in the present moment. We do not need to teach our children how to do this; they do it effortlessly. It is hardwired into our humanity. God has put the timeless into our hearts (Ecclesiastes 3:11).

Sadly, the trials and traumas of our life often leave us splintered and fragmented, and we “grown-ups” can be much more guarded about entering freely and wholeheartedly into the present moment. We hold parts of ourselves back. It is sad because the present moment is the only thing that really exists. The past is irretrievably gone, no matter how much we cling to it or dwell upon it. The future is not yet here and is largely unknown to us, no matter how much we try to control it. Certainly it is wise to learn from the past and plan for the future, but ultimately the “now” of the present moment is the one and only space in which we can encounter the living God. All times are simultaneously and perfectly present to him. There is no before and after, only the “now” of his eternal existence. As God’s special creatures who are made in his own image and likeness, we humans are most fully ourselves when we abide in the present moment.

We learn in Scripture that the beginning of Wisdom is to be found in the fear of the LORD. The “fear” that leads to wisdom is not a cowering or groveling fear, and it is most definitely not the paralyzing fear that many of us know all too well.

St. Thomas Aquinas describes the difference between “filial fear” and “servile fear.” Servile fear is a slave-like fear, motivated primarily by avoiding punishment. This kind of fear can certainly be a strong motivator, but it is not what sets us apart in the image and likeness of God. The fear of pain or punishment is something that we share with all our fellow mammals. It can be a helpful beginning to wake us up or turn us away from a destructive path. But servile fear will not lead us to grow in Wisdom. Indeed, it is much more likely to pull us out of the present moment. From a brain science perspective, servile fear kicks in our survival response of “fight or flight or freeze.” In those moments, our prefrontal cortex (the higher and more rational part of our brain)

goes offline as our survival instincts take over. Survival mode is great when our life is on the line. But it does not allow for childlike wonder.

Filial fear, by contrast, is what sons and daughters have towards a loving, benevolent, and merciful father. They cherish him and their relationship with him. They desire that relationship to grow ever more intimate and shun anything that would turn them away from that joyful communion of love.

Many of us still need to make the journey of maturity from servile fear to filial fear, a journey described so beautifully by Paul in Romans 8: “For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you received a spirit of adoption, through which we cry, ‘Abba, Father!’ The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if only we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.”

Faith is a gift, utterly undeserved. It moves mountains, removing any and all obstacles that get in the way of us growing into the glorious freedom of the children of God. Restored by Faith, we can rediscover an even greater childlike wonder, which leads us to true Wisdom. We can rediscover the spontaneous joy and gratitude and praise that come from abiding in the present moment. What a special gift to grow into. The words of G.K. Chesterton come to mind: ***“There is no such thing on earth as an uninteresting subject; the only thing that can exist is an uninterested person.”***

If we become again like little children, even the smallest blessings of daily life can become an unmitigated experience of wonder and awe in God’s presence. All is gift, and his glory shines everywhere in the creatures he has made. Those who become again like little children can experience it.

What are the cardboard boxes God is dropping into your life today? What is holding you back from being wholeheartedly in the present? Are there parts of your heart that resist, hold back, or check out? Will you let the soothing balm of the Holy Spirit calm you, opening all of your heart to receive the glorious freedom of the children of God? It is a freedom that can only be experienced in the “now” of the present moment.

Job Opportunities

Marriage Prep & Wedding Coordinator: This is a part-time position, usually involving Sat. weddings and Fri. rehearsals, in addition to meeting with couples prior to the wedding.

St. Mary’s Faith Formation Coordinator: This a part-time position, with average of 10 hours per week. Position overview is to coordinate, organize, and execute the administrative details of all parish faith formation programs.

Applicants can send résumé and cover letter expressing interest and experience in Marriage Ministry or Faith Formation to JacquelineEVanHemert@gmail.com. (Subject Line: Marriage Prep & Wedding Coordinator or Faith Formation Coordinator)

Staff Directory

Pastoral Ministry

Jon Jones, Director

715-855-1294, x 108 (SM)

715-877-3400, x 121 (SR)

↳ SmSrPastoralMin@gmail.com

Shelli Julson, Parish Receptionist

715-855-1294, x 100 (SM)

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↳ StRaymondParish@gmail.com (SR)

Carmen Nuñez, Bilingual Office Assistant

715-855-1294, x 109 (SM)

↳ CarmenAide4@att.net

Heather Halberg, Communication Coord.

715-855-1294 (SM)

715-877-3400 (SR)

↳ SmCommCoord@gmail.com

Carla Kostka, Pastoral Outreach Coord.

715-225-7419 (SM & SR)

↳ KostkaCarla@gmail.com

Evangelization & Faith Formation

Jacqueline Van Hemert, Director

715-855-1294, x 106 (SM)

715-877-3400, x 119 (SR)

↳ JacquelineEVanHemert@gmail.com

Marianne Callaghan, Faith Formation Coord.

715-877-3400, x 119 (SR)

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Finance, Building & Grounds

Bonnie Firkus, Director

715-855-1294, x 146 (SM)

715-877-3400, x 118 (SR)

↳ bfirkusstraymond@gmail.com

Charles Thurner, Maintenance (SM)

715-855-1294, x 141 (SM)

↳ StMaryMainAltoona@gmail.com

Robert Grzyb, Maintenance (SR)

715-492-9677 (SR)

↳ AutoBobs@outlook.com

Music & Liturgy

Tyler Andreae, Director

715-855-1294, x 147 (SM)

715-877-3400, x 120 (SR)

↳ tja5300@gmail.com

St. Mary's Stewardship: This Week

Adults.....\$5,505.00

Offertory (Plate).....\$985.00

Total Envelope & Plate.....\$6,490.00

Thank you!

St. Mary's Stewardship: Last Week

Adults.....\$5,212.00

Offertory (Plate).....\$763.00

Total Envelope & Plate.....\$5,975.00

Thank you!

Upcoming Events



WITNESSES FOR CHRIST VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

How Rooted Are You?

4 Keys to remain faithful to Jesus Christ and His Church

AUGUST 7

REGISTER TODAY! DIOLC.ORG/WITNESS

St. Mary's Fall Fest Kick-off! Sunday, August 8th Starting at 2pm! Hosted by Fr Derek. Sign your team up on-line www.StMarys-Altoona.com Something for everyone! Kid Friendly and Competitive for adults.



Scavenger Hunt

 Ephesians Bible Study Summer Series *Maturing in Christ* Continues Meeting Every Tuesday at St. Mary's in the Library/Conference room from 7pm-8:30pm now until Tuesday, August 17th.

Celebrating your Anniversary in August? Marriage Blessing Sign-up now available in the narthex/gather space.



St. Raymond's Stewardship: This Week

Adults\$2,532.00

Offertory (Plate).....\$315.00

Total Envelope and Plate\$2,847.00

Thank you!

St. Raymond's Stewardship: Last Week

Adults.....\$3,395.00

Offertory (Plate).....\$763.00

Total Envelope and Plate.....\$4,158.00

Thank you!

The Altoona Knights of Columbus will be hosting a blood drive at St. Mary's on August 18th from noon-6pm.

Your donation is urgently needed at this time. You can sign up for a time, either by calling 1-800-RED-CROSS (1-800-723-2767) or by visiting redcrossblood.org and selecting St. Mary's Blood Drive. Please be generous.



National Natural Family Planning Awareness Week July 25-31

“Be Her Joseph!”

By
Tom Mealey



When we first married, my wife, Misty, and I were the typical secular couple. We relied on hormonal contraception. Due to bad side effects, that didn't last long.

Misty found out about Natural Family Planning (NFP) through a Catholic friend. Admittedly, I was suspicious of all the “hocus pocus” involving thermometers at o' dark-thirty in the morning and observations written down in cryptic symbols on the NFP chart. That would all change in surprising ways once we got into living the NFP lifestyle.

Before having children, Misty had been an atheist and I had been an agnostic. With our first child, the miracle of life spurred a spiritual awakening in us. We realized the Holy Spirit had already led us into a Catholic life. Even after our conversion, however, NFP grew our relationship with each other and with God in ways we never expected.

We studied Pope John Paul II's “theology of the body” and became excited about living out our faith and sharing it. It was thrilling to learn the compelling reasons behind the Church's beautiful teachings on sex and marriage.

Much to my surprise, I also learned how grateful my wife was that I was willing to learn how her body worked. Sharing the family planning responsibility, as well as finding non-sexual ways of expressing affection and intimacy when we had good reasons to postpone pregnancy, strengthened our marriage and made me a better husband and father.

When we became Catholic, I knew I wanted to be the spiritual leader of our family, but I didn't understand what that entailed besides herding our children to church on Sundays. Through NFP and Scripture, I discovered that I had a choice in the kind of man—the kind of husband—I was going to be.

We often blame Eve for eating the forbidden fruit. But in Genesis, we learn that after taking a bite, she turned and offered the fruit to Adam, who was with her. Adam didn't stop her and say, “This is a bad idea, let's go.” He did not protect his wife, but stood by silently while the serpent convinced her to surrender her holiness and damage her relationship with God.

Then there was St. Joseph. When Joseph obeyed the angel who told him to bring Mary into his home, he was accepting the public shame and embarrassment of a pregnant fiancée. He sacrificed his personal honor and reputation to obey God and protect Mary and Jesus.

The choice for a husband is clear: he can be his wife's Adam or he can be her Joseph. A man can stand by silently and allow his wife to suffer the physical and spiritual consequences of contraception. Or he can defend her virtue, body, and soul by using NFP. Today, contraception is accepted and expected. Any man who forgoes it for NFP will likely be exposed to ridicule and criticism. But as St. Joseph taught us, there are some things more important than the opinion of others. May we husbands choose to be Joseph to our wives!

Tom and Misty Mealey have four children and live in the Diocese of Richmond.

ALL NATURAL!

TIRED OF LIMITING YOUR LOVE?

Look to Natural Family Planning for a fresh, natural way to open up to God's plan for love and life.

For more information, go to diolc.org/nfp

Natural Family Planning
Good for the body. Great for the soul!

To have, To hold, To honor. Did you take a course in NFP during your marriage preparation but put practicing it on hold? Now is the perfect time to begin. Contact Christy at ckitzhaber@diolc.org for information on a refresher course.



World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly

“I am with you always” are the words that I, as Bishop of Rome and an elderly person like yourselves, would like to address to you on this first World Day of Grandparents and the Elderly: the whole Church is close to you – to us – and cares about you, loves you and does not want to leave you alone!

Dear Grandfather and Grandmother, at this crucial moment in history, you have a renewed vocation. You may wonder: How this can be possible? Isn't my solitude already a sufficiently heavy burden? It can happen, the Lord replies, if we open our hearts to the working of the Holy Spirit!

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