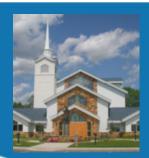
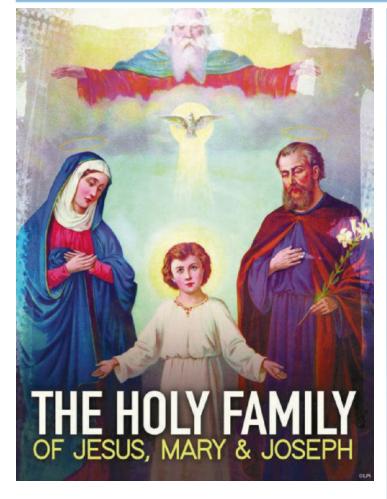


St. Mary 1812 Lynn Avenue Altoona, WI 54720 715-855-1294 www.stmarys-altoona.com St. Raymond of Peñafort E10455 Mallard Road Fall Creek, WI 54742 715-877-3400 www.straymond.us



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

The Holy Family | December 26, 2021



WEEKLY MASS SCHEDULE

December 25 through January 2

Sat., Dec. 25	9:00a*	SR	[†] Guy & Mary Wood
	11:00a*	SM	+ SM & SR Parishioners
Sun., Dec. 26	8:30a*	SR	+ SM & SR Parishioners
	11:00a*	SM	+ Louis Weiland
(Misa en español)	1:00p*	SM	Priest Intention
Mon., Dec. 27	I	lo Mass	; ———
Tue., Dec. 28	8:00a	SR	† Bob Severinski
Wed., Dec. 29	5:30p	SM	† Rich Wahl
Thu., Dec. 30	8:00a	SR	† Bill Ries
Fri., Dec. 31	5:30p*	SR	John Lehmann
Sat., Jan. 1	9:00a*	SM	SM & SR Parishioners
	4:00p	SM	Barb Black
	6:00p	SR	+ Bessie Whalen
Sun., Jan. 2	8:30a	SR	† The Souls of
			Albert's Parents
	11:00a	SM	† John & Arlene Weber
(Misa en español)	1:00p	SM	SM & SR Parishioners
	*Incense	Used	

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Thursday	7:00–9:00p	SR (Cancelled 12/30)
Saturday	10:00a-12:00p	SM

EUCHARISTIC EXPOSITION & ADORATION

Tuesday	5:00-9:00p	SM
Thursday	5:00-10:00p	SR

OFFICE HOURS

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

Pastor

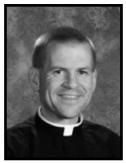
Parochial Vicar

Fr. Derek SakowskiFr. Pe715-855-1294 ext. 101715-855-DSakowski@diolclergy.orgPKieffer@Rectory: 715-514-0161

Fr. Peter Kieffer 715-855-1294 ext. 140 PKieffer@diolclergy.org

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Reflections from Fr. Derek Sakowski



Savoring and Resistance to Savoring

When I look into myself and others, I find that it's surprisingly hard to stay in the present moment and savor. We consume and devour, insatiably wanting more, and ruining ourselves or others in our gluttony or greed or lust. When we do so, there is a flitting moment of pleasure, but no joy. More often, we do not allow ourselves even to be in the present moment. Rather,

we numb ourselves and live a disembodied existence – buried in work, binging on pleasures, or staring at screen.

Meanwhile, God is always trying to allure us and amaze us with experiences of truth and goodness and beauty. What is it like to slow down and take in those moments of honor and delight? I struggle to savor because I am afraid to suffer.

When I discover a surprising new truth, I feel an intense arousal and delight, followed by even more longing. It's as though I am four years old again. I am eager to discover the truth and surrender myself to it. If I allow myself to stay in the experience, I'll desire to keep learning more. I'll ask "why?" a thousand different ways. I will eventually reach moments of disappointment or sadness. I may feel alone or rejected in a mocking world that doesn't allow time or space for such questioning. For sure, I'll discover the limits of human knowledge. No matter how much I learn, there will always be more that I don't know. Savoring means tolerating both the intense joy of learning and the ache of not-yet knowing.

When I stumble on human goodness, I easily cry. It can be an inspiring scene in a movie or a book. It can be a heroic moment in the everyday life of a person that I've known for years. Suddenly I catch a glimpse of God's goodness blazing brightly, and the tears flow. I feel intense joy and gratitude. I feel regret for not having noticed and delighted in this goodness before. And again I feel that painful ache – an ache for this person's goodness to be celebrated, an ache for more goodness in myself and others. In the depths of my heart, I long to give myself freely and wholeheartedly in sacrifice. Yet so many other parts of me are terrified of feeling vulnerable and unprotected. I resist a tenderhearted trust in God for fear of what might happen.

I see beauty every day, when I take the time to notice it. Too often I feel an urge to rush past it, telling myself that I don't have time to savor it today. When I do pause to take it in, there is so much praise and delight in my soul – and again that longing, that ache, that sense of the eternal Beauty that cannot be contained in this passing world. My intuition knows that this moment of beauty is only a glimpse, and that it is going to fade. There is such a mixture of sweetness and sadness there. It feels easier just to avoid the ache by avoiding the intensity of the beauty.

Yes, even though God created my heart for truth and goodness and beauty, I sometimes resist those experiences. I consume and devour, rather than slow down and savor. I rush on to the next thing, rather than pause and delight. I gravitate towards "rest" that is actually disengagement and numbing out – disconnecting from my five senses and my body rather than being more intensely present in the moment. It takes emotional and spiritual effort to rest in an embodied way, even when I have the time.

I experienced this resistance the other day in the face of a spectacular winter sunset. It was a Sunday evening after an intense week of work, including several overwhelming moments of frustration, powerlessness, anger, anxiety, fear, and shame. I just wanted to "chill" or "veg out," as we often say. I turned around as I was about to enter my house, and saw the entire western horizon painted with a dozen contrasting shades, all reflecting upon the ice and snow. And I just wanted to go inside and veg out. I fought an intense spiritual battle just to stand there for fifteen minutes. I kept feeling an urge to exit the scene, to pull out my phone, or to go in the house and move on to the next thing. But a wiser and deeper voice within me told me to stay and to savor. I wept. I wept at the stunning beauty. I wept over the resistance within my heart. I felt shame and frustration. My heavenly Father doesn't mind my sins and struggles; sometimes I cannot stand them.

We resist savoring because we don't want to suffer; we don't want to die; and we most definitely do not want to wait in hope – all the while feeling the painful longing of the "not yet."

Isn't it interesting that we sabotage our deepest longings? Part of us would rather be disembodied and joyless rather than fully alive with our five senses in the present moment. I think of the words of the poet T.S. Eliot in the early 20th Century: "Human kind cannot bear very much reality." We prefer to be "distracted from distraction by distraction." Rather than desire and dream and risk, we will settle for "living and partly living."

God has created us for so much more, and he sent his own Son to awaken these desires in our heart. The child Jesus will awaken these longings that his Father has placed in us. It's a dangerous undertaking that will lead both him and us through suffering and death – and to eternal life. Will we follow?



Staff Directory

Pastoral Ministry Jon Jones, Director 715-855-1294, x 108 (SM) 715-877-3400, x 121 (SR) → JJones@SMSRCatholic.com Shelli Julson, Parish Receptionist 715-855-1294, x 100 (SM) 715-877-3400, x 100 (SR) → SJulson@SMSRCatholic.com Communication └→ Communication@SMSRCatholic.com **Pastoral Outreach** → Outreach@SMSRCatholic.com **Evangelization & Faith Formation** Jacqueline Van Hemert, Director 715-855-1294, x 106 (SM) 715-877-3400, x 119 (SR) → JVanHemert@SMSRCatholic.com Breanna Munns, Marriage Prep & Wedding 715-855-1294, x 106 (SM) 715-877-3400, x 119 (SR) → BMunns@SMSRCatholic.com **Carmen Nuñez, Bilingual Faith Formation** 715-855-1294, x 109 (SM) └→ CNunez@SMSRCatholic.com Marianne Callaghan, Faith Formation Coord. 715-877-3400, x 119 (SR) → MCallaghan@SMSRCatholic.com Finance, Building & Grounds **Bonnie Firkus, Director** 715-855-1294, x 146 (SM) 715-877-3400, x 118 (SR) → BFirkus@SMSRCatholic.com Charles Thurner, Maintenance (SM) 715-855-1294, x 141 (SM) → CThurner@SMSRCatholic.com Robert Grzyb, Maintenance (SR) 715-492-9677 (SR) → RGrzyb@SMSRCatholic.com Music & Liturgy Tyler Andreae, Director 715-855-1294, x 147 (SM) 715-877-3400, x 120 (SR)

→ TAndreae@SMSRCatholic.com

St. Mary's Stewardship: Last Week

Adults	\$5217.00	
Offertory (Plate)	\$1030.00	
Total Envelope & Plate \$6247.00		
Thank you!		

St. Raymond's Stewardship: Last Week			
Adults	\$4147.00		
Offertory (Plate)	\$2616.00		
Total Envelope and Plate\$6763.00			
Thank you!			

From Outside Our Parishes

Student Exchange Program

Host an international student for Regis High School. We are currently looking for host families for international students who will attend Regis High School for the spring semester of 2021/22. Please meet: Tuong from Vietnam (14). She has traveled the world online so far and is now excited to really explore the American culture. Tuong loves the STEM programs and likes to play the piano. Host families provide a room to sleep and study and 3 meals a day and receive local support by a coordinator and a monthly stipend. Call or text Anita Wahl at 715-271-6098 or anita.educatius@gmail.com.

Respect Life Christmas Prayer

O Mary, Mother of Jesus and Mother of us all, we turn to you today as the one who said "Yes" to Life. "You will conceive and bear a Son," the angel told you. Despite the surprise and the uncertainty about how this could be, you said yes. "Be it done unto me according to your word. "Mary, we pray today for all mothers who are afraid to be mothers. We pray for those who feel threatened and overwhelmed by their pregnancy. Intercede for them, that God may give them the grace to say "Yes" and the courage to go on. May they have the grace to reject the false solution of abortion. May they say with you, "Be it done unto me according to your word." May they experience the help of Christian people, and know the peace that comes from doing God's will. Amen. Prayer provided by Martin Reiser at www.Pro-LifeArticles.org.

Ukrainian Christmas Dinner - January 8, 2022

You are invited, January 8, 2022, to the Chalice of Mercy Ukrainian Christmas Dinner. Each year, Valentyna Pavsyukova, founder of Chalice of Mercy, a pro-life mission to Ukraine, hosts a Ukrainian Christmas Dinner at the Lillydale Event Center in Chippewa Falls. All proceeds from this delicious, multicourse meal served by young people in full Ukrainian garb, go to benefit the work of the mission. To learn more, visit diolc.org/ chalice-of-mercy.

Pray for Dobbs, Pray for our Supreme Court Justices

Dobbs vs. Jackson Women's Health is the Supreme Court case that could overturn Roe v. Wade—the decision that made abortion legal in all 50 states. Nine justices stand between life and death for millions of innocent children and their mothers. The hearing began December 1, with a ruling expected in June. Please fast and pray for God's grace to touch our Supreme Court justices. Pray for them by name: John Roberts, Samuel Alito, Amy Coney Barrett, Brett Kavanaugh, Clarence Thomas, Neil Gorsuch, Sonia So-tomayor, Elena Kagan, and Stephen Breyer. For more information and resources, visit PrayforDobbs.com.

Help Catholic Charities Love Our Neighbor

Thousands of Afghan refugees are being housed temporarily at Ft. McCoy near Tomah. At last they have hope, but imagine how hard it is to start over with nothing, trying to adjust to a new language and culture. Catholic Charities of the Diocese of La Crosse is right there helping them. Catholic Charities reaches out to our neighbor in need in many other ways as well, from providing shelter to the homeless in our midst, to assisting families in need. Find out more, and how you can help, at cclse.org. Let your heart be touched to those in need in our area.

From the Diocese of La Crosse

Join our Pilgrimage for Life to Washington, D.C.,

January 19-23. There has never been a more important time to join the March for Life in our nation's capitol, with the Dobbs case being heard by the Supreme Court and the possibility of Roe v. Wade being overturned. Deliberations will go on for many weeks, with a decision expected in June. Let us show the Supreme Court justices by our numbers and our passion that we stand strong for life. For the registration letter, tentative schedule, and details, visit diolc.org/yya and click on the Pilgrimage for Life tab.

Save the Date!

- Dec. 25 Mass at St. Raymond's at 9:00a
- Mass at St. Mary's at 11:00a Dec. 31 Solemnity of Mary, Holy Mother of God (not a Holy day this year) Mass at St. Raymond's, 5:30p(incense)
- Jan. 1 Solemnity of Mary Mass at St. Mary's at 9:00a(incense)
- Jan. 1 Epiphany Vigil Mass at St. Mary's at 4:00p
- Jan. 2 Epiphany of the Lord
- Jan. 9 Baptism of the Lord
- Jan. 9 Faith Formation/Edge at St. Raymond's
- Jan. 9 Social Sunday at St. Mary's Noon-1:00p and Marriage Anniversary Blessings
- Jan. 10 St. Raymond's Knights of Columbus meeting 7:00p
- Jan. 11 SM & SR Joint Pastoral Council Meetings
- Jan. 12 Reconciliation Retreat at St. Mary's 6:00-7:30p
- Jan. 13 St. Raymond PCCW meeting 6:00p in Library
- Jan. 15 "End of Life Seminar" at St. Mary's 12:30-4:00p
- Jan. 19 SM & SR Confirmation Class at St. Mary's, 6:30-8:00p
- Feb. 5 First Saturday Mass and Confessions at St. Mary's
- Feb. 5Newcomers Dinner at
St. Raymond's, 7:00p

First Saturday Devotion

First Saturday's at St. Mary's:

7:40-9:00am--Confessions

- 8:10 am--Entrance Procession
- 8:11 am--Holy Rosary
- 9:00 am--Holy Mass

10:00 am--Confessions resume

Join us for this special devotion!

Men of the Beatitudes

Would you like to grow in your faith while connecting with other men? Men of the Beatitudes is a small group of men sharing their faith, holding one another accountable, and deepening their prayer life. Together they discuss vulnerably how they experience the Beatitudes as a path to healing of their own brokenness and woundedness. These groups will start a new 8-week segment in early November. If you are in need of fellowship and connection and would like to join a group, contact Lucas Munns at munnsld@gmail.com.

Faith Study at St. Mary's

Starting November 9, we will begin a new series on claiming our inheritance from the early Church. Focusing on the first three centuries of Christianity, we will explore important writings that laid the foundations for the Church and how we continue to benefit from this living Tradition today. Topics will include apostolic authority, the Eucharist, and more! Come join us every-other Tuesday in the St. Conference room Mary starting on Tuesday, November 9 from 6:00-7:00p. For more information or to RSVP, contact John Glassbrenner at jaglassbrenner@gmail.com.

Formed.org

On this packed Liturgical week-end in addition to celebrating the birth of Our Lord, we also celebrate the Feast of the Holy Family. This important Feast reminds us of the need to help our own families grow in holiness. With this in mind, join Scott Hahn as he shares his advice on how to bring sanctity into the home. Marriage and Family: Love Unveiled this week on Formed.org.

Friday Fiat

Subscribe to our Friday Fiat! Are you getting our weekly email updates? Do you want to know more about what is happening at our parish? Sign up by contacting your parish office at 715-855-1294 or 715-877-3400. Through our weekly email we highlight some amazing ministries and introduce new things the staff has been working on.

St. Raymond's KOC

Joining the Knights of Columbus can change your life! As a Knight you have the opportunity to strengthen our parish,



give back to the community and grow in your Catholic faith. The membership number in the Knights of Columbus, in the world, is over two million! To join the Knights of Columbus call Grand Knight John Jaenke at 715-429-0052.

Rosary/Chaplet at St. Raymond's

St. Raymond's will begin praying together again before Sunday Mass. The Divine Mercy Chaplet will begin at 7:50a and the Rosary at 8:00a. Please come and join in with these beautiful devotions.



Parish Secretary Position

St. Joseph Parish in Elk Mound is in need of a new parish secretary. Please contact Fr. Tim at 1-608-518-1338 if you are interested in this position. Thank you.

Job Opportunities

Pastoral Outreach Coordinator for St. Mary's & St. Raymond's

This is a part-time position, usually 8-10 hours per week. Position overview, responsibilities and qualifications are available on both parishes' websites. Interested candidates should send a résumé and cover letter to Jon Jones at JJones@SMSRCatholic.com.

Communication Coordinator for St. Mary's & St. Raymond's

This is a part-time position, usually 15-20 hours per week. Position overview, responsibilities and qualifications are available on both parishes' websites. Interested candidates should send a résumé and cover letter to Jon Jones at JJones@SMSRCatholic.com.

St. Mary's Faith Formation Coordinator

This is a part-time position, usually 10 hours per week. Position overview, responsibilities and qualifications are available on both parishes' websites. Interested candidates should contact Jacqueline Van Hemert at

JVanHemert@SMSRCatholic.com.

The Holy Family - Contemplation

ALL IN THE FAMILY

At first glance, we can often find the image of the Blessed Mother, St. Joseph and the Christ Child intimidating — who are we to aspire to that level of discipleship? How could we ever hope to conform ourselves to that mold? Sometimes, it can even be painful — perhaps we hail from a broken family or struggle with a broken relationship within our family, or perhaps we long to be a mother or a father ourselves and that state in life has eluded us.

But the image of the Holy Family is, in reality, a beautiful invitation to us all, no matter our vocation or our state in life, and the example of Mary, Joseph and Jesus is rich with the symbolism of stewardship.

You need not be a biological mother who has carried a child in her womb to be a mother

in spirit. Who in your world needs you to love them with the heart of a mother?

The same goes for fatherhood. The Church and the world are crying out for the courageous witness of Christian men like St. Joseph. Who can you love with the steadfast, selfless protection of a father?

Who in your life needs you to love them with the faithful, unconditional love of a son? Who needs your gentle and constant love as a daughter?

We are the Body of Christ, friends. Those of us rejoicing in heaven, those of us suffering in purgatory, and those of us struggling here on earth. We are the great family. Let us love each other well.

-Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS

I HAVE BEEN AWAY FROM THE CHURCH FOR A FEW YEARS AND REALLY WANT TO GET ACTIVE AGAIN, NOT SO MUCH FOR ME, BUT FOR MY CHILDREN. IS THIS A BAD REASON TO COME BACK TO CHURCH?

If you are on your way to the supermarket, and you are forced to detour from your

usual route because of road work, does the food you buy taste different? Is the meal less filling? Are the vegetables less tasty? Of course not. In our faith journey, there are many detours called sin. Some are greater than others, some are even a bit longer.



But God's grace comes to us in ways we understand and recognize and need. Your children leading you back to the Church is not as important as the fact that you are back.

This is an opportunity for you to renew, strengthen, and deepen your faith. Regardless of how we get to Church, or what draws us closer to God, the fact is

we are there. Do what you need to do to get right with God and the Church. Go to confession, begin good family religious practices, and be involved in the ministries your parish offers. Be more than a lukewarm parishioner. Be the kind of Catholic you want your children to be.

DECEMBER 26, 2021



For ad info. call 1-800-950-9952 • www.4lpi.com

St. Mary, Altoona, WI

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