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[www.straymond.us](http://www.straymond.us)



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

**Third Sunday in Ordinary Time | January 23, 2022**



**WEEKLY MASS SCHEDULE**

January 22 through January 30

Sat., Jan. 22	4:00p SM	† Rosetta Nelson
	6:00p SR	† John Solomon
Sun., Jan. 23	8:30a SR	SM and SR Parishioners
	11:00a SM	† Roger Haas
(Misa en español)	1:00p SM	Priest Intention
Mon., Jan. 24	No Mass	
Tue., Jan. 25	8:00a SR	+Etta Birtzer
Wed., Jan. 26	5:30p SM	+ Ed and Lucille Sutter
Thu., Jan. 27	8:00a SR	Pete and Lisa Melrose
Fri., Jan. 28	9:00a SM	+ Rich Wahl
Sat., Jan. 29	4:00p SM	Priest Intention
	6:00p SR	+ Guy and Mary Wood Family
Sun., Jan. 30	8:30a SR	Priest Intention
	11:00a SM	+ Everett and Darlene Wolf
(Misa en español)	1:00p SM	Priest Intention

**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	5:00–10:00p	SR

**OFFICE HOURS**

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

**Pastor**

**Fr. Derek Sakowski**  
 715-855-1294 ext. 101  
[DSakowski@diolclergy.org](mailto:DSakowski@diolclergy.org)

**Parochial Vicar**

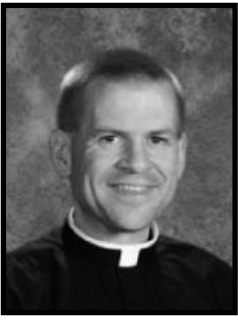
**Fr. Peter Kieffer**  
 715-855-1294 ext. 140  
[PKieffer@diolclergy.org](mailto:PKieffer@diolclergy.org)

Rectory: 715-514-0161

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## Reflections from Fr. Derek Sakowski

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### “Purity Culture” – Lie #1

Ours is not an age of flourishing relationships, joyful marriages, or healthy sexuality. For decades, Christians have been concerned about the toxic environment of the surrounding culture. So we have fought culture wars, trying to get the world to be more like us.

But what about us? What about our own marriages, our own families, and our own churches? Are we really as “pure” as all that?

Many Christian families and churches have rigidly created a “purity culture” in the hope of sheltering our children and keeping them pure. How has that worked for us?

All the latest research shows that church-going Christians struggle every bit as much with abuse, neglect, pornography, addictions, codependency, marital infidelity, and domestic violence – just to name a few. Isn’t it strange to “fight” to make the world just like us when our own house lies in ruins?

Jesus has a word for that: “You hypocrites!” In the Sermon on the Mount, he reminds us to remove the wooden beam from our own eye before we attempt removing the splinter from our brother’s eye (Matthew 7:5).

On my sabbatical this past fall, I engaged in multiple trainings, all of which focused on providing care in the area of trauma, unwanted behaviors, and addictions. Each training operated with this bedrock principle: take the beam out of your own eye first! You cannot be of support to your brothers or sisters (or sons or daughters) if you have not first truthfully faced your own story and your own behaviors.

Two generations of hard fighting from the “purity culture” have yielded struggling parents and struggling grandparents. Far from sheltering and preserving our children, the rigidity has actually plunged many Christians (or former Christians) into toxic shame, dysfunctional relationships, and unwanted behaviors.

That is because the purity culture is more rooted in fear than in love. In the fog of fear, it is easily hijacked by lies and distortions of sound doctrine. In the weeks ahead, I hope to unmask some of those lies and consider what Scripture and Christian Tradition actually teach about human love and sexuality.

**Lie #1: Purity as a Prize to be Lost.** Far too often, our Christian churches and families have upheld a standard of “purity” as a prize to be lost. In this view, purity is black or white, on or off. Don’t be impure like those people. Be pure like these people. It’s a damaging and deceptive dichotomy, rooted in self-righteousness, presumption, and pride.

In Catholic life, the false dichotomy of “pure” versus “impure” shows up in a distorted understanding of “mortal sin” versus “state of grace.” Many Catholics struggling with unwanted sexual behaviors feel tormented by fear and

shame. They view themselves as spending most of their waking and sleeping hours in a state of sin (cut off / lost / cast out / impure). Then they go to Confession and feel great, thinking themselves “pure” again, holy again, worthy again. Notice the presumption and self-righteousness, and the lack of confidence in God’s unchanging covenantal love.

Yes, Catholic teaching and the Bible (1 John 5:17) talk about mortal sin. But the Catechism of the Catholic Church (n. 2352) also talks about culpability, particularly in the area of sexual sins. It is only a mortal sin if it is done with full knowledge and deliberate consent. If it is “unwanted” sexual behavior that often means that there was not deliberate consent!

More importantly, the teachings of Jesus focus much more on organic growth into maturity in Christ. We abide in him as branches on the vine. We grow and bear fruit in him. We are members of his body, truly holy because he is holy in us. It is much more accurate to look at sin as a **disease** that needs tender and loving care than as an ON/OFF switch. Pride and self-sufficiency are far more damaging than lust! We are all sick sinners in need of the divine physician – each and every day of our lives.

Even if I have just gone to Confession, I still have a lifelong journey of conversion ahead of me. God will keep purifying me, like gold in the furnace (*i.e., the fire of his love*). *Meanwhile, sinner though I am, God will relentlessly pursue me in love, even if I keep going back to the same sins. Purity is not something I gain or lose. Purity is the flowering that slowly emerges as I learn to receive and give love. It is the fruit of maturity in Christ.*

Apart from Jesus we can do nothing. God alone is pure, and he deeply desires us to share in his eternal love. That sharing is an “already but not yet,” a gradual growth in discipleship, a lifelong journey. We are already members of Christ’s body. He has truly given us a share in his life and his love. We can grow in maturity throughout our life. One day, we will definitively be pure as God is pure – when we see him face to face and become totally like him (1 John 1:1-3).

Yes, purity is a battle to be fought. But the battleground is not primarily in senate chambers or school boards or courtrooms. The battleground is in the desert and on Mount Calvary. The Victor is Jesus Christ, the new Adam. And we already know who wins!

Lifelong growth in purity happens when we learn to have an unshakable confidence in the victory of Jesus. We bring that victory into our own daily battles – not just with sexual seductions, but with **all** areas of our life. We consecrate all of it to him, in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health. We welcome his shed blood and the new and eternal covenant that alone can save us. We let ourselves be loved and let him teach us how to love. Perfect love will cast out all fear!

*To be Continued...*

## Staff Directory

### 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  
Coordinator**

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**Carmen Nuñez, Bilingual Faith Formation  
Coordinator (SM)**

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**Marianne Callaghan, Faith Formation  
Coordinator (SR)**

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### Finance, Building & Grounds

**Bonnie Firkus, Director**

715-855-1294, x 146 (SM)

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**Charles Thurner, Maintenance (SM)**

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**Robert Grzyb, Maintenance (SR)**

715-492-9677 (SR)

↳ RGrzyb@SMSRCatholic.com

### Music & Liturgy

**Tyler Andreae, Director**

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### 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

## Happy Birthday!

### January Priest and Staff Birthdays

Robert Grzyb (January 3)

Fr. Derek Sakowski (January 9)

Marianne Callaghan (January 15)

Jon Jones (January 21)

Fr. Peter Kieffer (January 23)

## Stewardship Totals: 01/16/2022

### St. Mary's Stewardship:

Adults.....\$4,240.00

Offertory (Plate).....\$680.25

**Total Envelope & Plate.....\$4,920.25**

*Thank you!*

### St. Raymond's Stewardship:

Adults.....\$2,851.00

Offertory (Plate).....\$466.50

**Total Envelope & Plate.....\$3,317.50**

*Thank you!*

## Join Our Team

### Communication Coordinator for St. Mary's and 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.



### Pastoral Outreach Coordinator for St. Mary's and 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.



### Faith Formation Coordinator for St. Mary's

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 send a résumé and cover letter to Jacqueline Van Hemert at JVanHemert@SMSRCatholic.com.



## Save the Date

- Jan. 30** Start of Catholic Schools' Week
- Feb. 1** Claim Your Inheritance Faith Study 6:00pm @ SM
- Feb. 2** FFF/Edge in English @ SM
- Feb. 5** 1st Saturday Confessions, Devotions and Mass @ SM
- Feb. 6** FFF/Edge @ SR
- Feb. 6** FFF in Spanish @ SM
- Feb. 7** Guadalupe Council KC Meeting 6:00pm @ SM
- Feb. 12 & 13** Anniversary Blessings at Weekend Masses
- Feb. 14** Trinity Council KC Meeting 7:00pm @ SR
- Feb. 16** Parent/Child Activity Night: 1st Communion Prep. 6:00pm @ SR
- Feb. 17** Elizabeth Ministry Meeting 6:00pm @ SM

**\*The Newcomers' Dinner originally scheduled for Feb. 5 has been cancelled.**

### Subscribe to the Friday Fiat

Do you want to know more about what is happening at St. Mary's Parish or St. Raymond's Parish? Sign up and join the group "St. Mary's Parish News" or "St. Raymond's Parish News." Through our weekly email we highlight some amazing ministries and introduce new things our staff have been working on. Sign up by either calling your parish office or by scanning your parish's code below.

St. Mary's



St. Raymond's



DIOCESE of LA CROSSE

The Most Reverend William Patrick Callahan, D.D., Bishop of La Crosse, makes the following announcements:

The Reverend **George R. Szews**, Pastor of St. Joseph Parish at Prescott, has submitted his letter of resignation from the office of pastor and has been granted the status of senior priest, effective January 3, 2022.

The Reverend **John L. Parr**, Pastor of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish at Holmen, has submitted his letter of resignation from the office of pastor and has been granted the status of senior priest, effective January 31, 2022.

The Reverend Monsignor **Steven J. Kachel**, Pastor of St. Patrick Parish in Onalaska and Dean of the La Crosse Deanery, is also appointed Parochial Administrator of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Holmen, effective January 31, 2022. He retains his other assignments and his residence will remain at St. Patrick Parish rectory in Onalaska.





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Preschool Open House

<p><b>St. James Elementary School</b></p> <p>Tuesday, February 8   4 to 6 p.m.</p>	<p><b>St. Mary's Elementary School</b></p> <p>Thursday, February 10   4 to 6 p.m.</p>
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Kindergarten Preview

<p><b>St. James Elementary School</b></p> <p>Tuesday, February 8   6 p.m. Friday, February 11   1 p.m.</p>	<p><b>St. Mary's Elementary School</b></p> <p>Thursday, February 10   6 p.m. Friday, February 11   10:30 a.m.</p>
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Tuesday, February 15 | 6 p.m.

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## First Sacrament of Reconciliation



**Congratulations to all from St. Mary's and St. Raymond's who made their First Confession this past week!**

**A big thank you to all who helped them prepare at their retreat on January 12.**



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