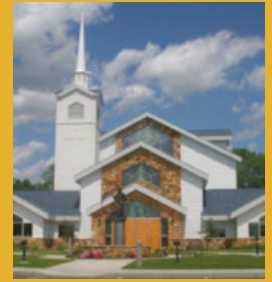




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 715-877-3400
 www.straymond.us



Welcome to the Catholic Parishes of

ST. MARY & ST. RAYMOND

OF PEÑAFORT

Sunday of Divine Mercy | April 24, 2022



2ND SUNDAY OF EASTER (DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY)

Thomas answered and said to him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you come to believe because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed." - Jn 20:28-29

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

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Pastor

Fr. Derek Sakowski
 715-855-1294 ext. 101
 DSakowski@diolclergy.org

Parochial Vicar

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

Rectory: 715-514-0161

WEEKLY MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday, April 23rd		
4:00pm	Priest Intention	(SM)
6:00pm	† Howard & Ruth Whipps	(SR)
Sunday, April 24th		
8:30am	† Ann Young	(SR)
11:00am	† Linda Boehm	(SM)
1:00pm	Parishioners of SM & SR	(SM)
<i>(Misa en español)</i>		
Monday, April 25th ---- No Mass ----		
Tuesday, April 26th		
8:00am	† Ray & Joan Ruiz	(SR)
Wednesday, April 27th		
5:30pm	Laura Rubenzer	(SM)
Thursday, April 28th		
8:00am	† Gelene Harrison	(SR)
Friday, April 29th		
9:00am	St. Mary & St. Raymond Catechists	(SM)
Saturday, April 30th		
4:00pm	† Mr. & Mrs. Kleinvachter	(SM)
6:00pm	Parishioners of SM & SR	(SR)

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

St. Mary	St. Raymond
Saturday: 10:00am-12:00pm	Thursday: 7:00-9:00pm

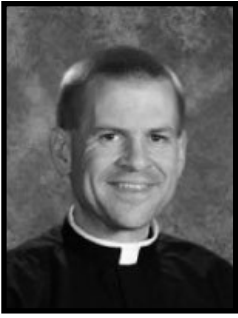
EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

St. Mary	St. Raymond
Tuesday: 5:00-9:00pm	Thursday 5:00-10:00pm

OFFICE HOURS

St. Mary	St. Raymond
Sunday Noon-3	Tues/Thurs 9am-Noon*
Mon-Thurs 9am-Noon*	
*or by appointment	

Reflections from Fr. Derek Sakowski



The Resurgence of Gnosticism

It seems like every Easter some journalist takes a swipe at Christianity by stirring up some “new” controversy about Jesus and the Church: *Did you know that there are “other” gospels the Church doesn’t want you to know about? Did you know that there were early Christian sects who believed in very different ideas – until they were suppressed by Church authorities?*

If you really want to see me fired up, just start talking about Gnosticism! Maybe it’s because I was ordained a priest on June 28, the feast day of Irenaeus of Lyons. His *Against Heresies* (written in A.D. 185) offers an in-depth refutation of the Gnostic sects of his day. Maybe it’s because – like Irenaeus – I truly and passionately believe in the dying and rising of Jesus. And I look to that Paschal Mystery for the answers to all our ultimate human questions.

For Gnostics, the answers are found, not in a relationship with Jesus Christ, but in esoteric knowledge. “Gnostic” comes from *gnosis*, the Greek word for “knowledge.” We find ourselves stuck in this corrupted cosmos, unable to escape. They affirm Jesus as the *logos* – “the Word” – but in a different sense. He is the spirit who comes from heavenly realms to bring secret passwords, with which we can escape this dimension and enter the *pleroma* – the spiritual fullness from which we are cut off.

For the Gnostics, Jesus was a spiritual being who only pretended to be human. He didn’t really take on human flesh; he didn’t really die; and he didn’t really rise. So much for Christmas and Easter!

Gnosticism also distorts the original goodness of God’s creation, including our human bodies. For Gnostics, fleshly existence is a burden to be escaped. Such views were common in many other religions of the ancient world. They are common today. Most people I know look at their bodies with some level of shame and contempt.

By contrast, in the Book of Genesis, Jews and Christians believe that God created us humans as bodily beings, male and female in his own image. He looks with delight upon what he has created and declares us to be “very good.”

We are spiritual bodies or embodied spirits – take your pick. To be non-bodily is to be less than human. God’s plan is to divinize our bodies – not just to cancel our sins, but to cause us to share (in human flesh) in his eternal glory.

For early Gnostics, one way or another, human flesh was “less than” or corrupt. They could take that one of two ways. Some sects pursued extreme asceticism, shunning all fleshly pleasures (including sexuality and procreation). Others were highly permissive of hedonistic indulgence because – after all – what you do with the shell of your body doesn’t matter; you are a

spiritual being at your core and will one day be rid of your body.

Can you see how these early heresies are finding new life today?

Then and now there is a tendency to look upon our bodies and our sexuality with shame and contempt. Then and now there is a tendency to avoid accountability about what we do with our bodies. Genuine accountability is radically different from shaming (which plenty of Christian families and churches are good at!). Accountability means I am willing to look honestly and truthfully at the impact of my choices upon myself and others. It means I care about my relationships and am willing to repent and repair if I see that I have caused harm. It means claiming the inherent goodness of my body as a temple of the Holy Spirit.

Gnosticism shows up at funerals: in the obituaries, in the eulogies, in the burial practices, and on the tombstones. A walk through a cemetery can be quite telling. Where once you found crosses and Scriptures reminding us of God’s promise of resurrection, you now find fishing poles and Green Bay Packers helmets. Where once Christian prayer remembered the story of the dying and rising of Jesus (and connected it to the baptismal faith of the deceased), there is now only a backward looking “celebration of life.”

Mind you, it is a blessing to celebrate with gratitude the earthly life of our loved ones. AND we Christians believe in the resurrection of the body and life everlasting. Or we used to. I find that few people actually, truly believe those two truths anymore.

The resurrected body of Jesus was the same body, yet new and different. So will it be with us. This very body – or what is left of it – will be raised from the grave (John 5:29). We will see God as he is and become like Jesus – he who is ascended and glorified in human flesh.

Gnosticism is so tempting because it avoids the pain of Hope. It is easier, in the end, to find a solution that gives up on the redemption of our bodies, and gives up on truly being transformed to be all-holy in Christ. It is easier to answer our deepest religious questions in a way that doesn’t have to enter into a relationship with the living God – and therefore doesn’t risk him disappointing us. It is easier to condemn our bodies in shame.

Disciples like Paul refuse to bypass Hope. If you read Romans 7, you see that he was a sinner like you and me – the good that he desires he often didn’t do; instead he did the evil that he hated. Then in Romans 8, Paul expresses the agony of Hope, using words like futility, labor pains, and groaning. Living a bodily existence this side of paradise very often feels that way! But Paul refuses to stop looking for answers in the promises of Jesus Christ. He **will** resurrect this lowly body of ours; he **will** redeem and restore us, causing us to be fully at peace in his Father’s presence. Where he has gone, we surely will follow – if we dare to Hope.

Staff Directory

Stewardship Totals

Evangelization & Faith Formation

Jacqueline Van Hemert, Director

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715-877-3400, x 119 (SR)

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Communication

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Pastoral Outreach

↳ Outreach@SMSRCatholic.com

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Easter.....\$2,035

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Total\$5,924.06

Thank you!



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St. Raymond's Stewardship:

Adults.....\$1,714

Easter.....\$2,935

Offertory (Plate).....\$1,709.60

Total\$6,635.36

Thank you!



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Join Our Team!

Faith Formation Coordinator for St. Mary's

A position for one who desires to authentically share their Catholic faith with others by organizing and administering faith formation events at the parish. Play an active role in helping families prepare their children for the sacraments and providing resources for parents to help grow their family's faith.

More details are located on the Parish Websites & Bulletin Boards



Usher Training

We are in need of more volunteers at both the Saturday and Sunday Masses! There will be an usher training following the 8:30am Mass on Sunday, April 24th. All current ushers should plan on attending. If you are

interested in becoming an usher or interested in learning more about the usher ministry, please contact John Jaenke at 715-429-0052.



Upcoming Events

- Apr. 25** Healing the Whole Person Retreat 6pm - *St. Mary*
- Apr. 26** Men of the Beatitudes Reading 7:30pm - *virtual*
- Apr. 27** FFF/Edge 6:30pm - *St. Mary*
- Apr. 27** Parish Ensemble Rehearsal 6:30pm - *St. Raymond*
- Apr. 28** Catechesis of the Good Shepherd 10am - *St. Mary*
- Apr. 28** Hispanic Choir & Spirit Choir Rehearsal 4:30pm - *St. Mary*
- Apr. 30** Men of the Beatitudes group discussion 9am - *St. Mary*
- May 1** FFF/Edge 9:45am - *St. Raymond*
- May 1** Formación de Fe en Familia 2pm - *St. Mary*
- May 2** Healing the Whole Person retreat 6pm - *St. Mary*
- May 3** Men of the Beatitudes reading 7:30pm - *virtual*
- May 4** First Communion Rehearsal & Prayer Service 6pm - *St. Mary & St. Raymond*
- May 4** Parish Ensemble Rehearsal 6pm - *St. Raymond*
- May 5** Hispanic Choir & Spirit Rehearsal 4:30pm - *St. Mary*
- May 5** PCCW Meeting 6pm - *St. Raymond*



Throughout the Catholic Church worldwide, the Sunday after Easter is called Divine Mercy Sunday. This feast is based upon what we already know and believe from the Scriptures as well as the messages that Jesus gave to Sr. Faustina Kowalska about God's mercy. A key aspect of Divine Mercy message is growing in trust in our relationship with Jesus Christ.

"I desire that the whole world know My infinite mercy. I desire to grant unimaginable graces to those souls who trust in My mercy."
- Our Lord to Sr. Faustina Kowalska



Eau Claire DCCW Spring Assembly



The Eau Claire Deanery Council of Catholic Women would like to invite all women in the Eau Claire and Chippewa Falls deaneries to attend their Biannual DCCW Assembly on April 28th. It is being held at St. James the Greater Parish, 2502 11th St., Eau Claire. Registration will begin at 5:15pm and a Mass will be celebrated at 6:00pm. Following the Mass we will have a speaker (Tina Morning), refreshments and a general meeting. We would appreciate a RSVP by April 18;

however, walk-ins are welcome. Please RSVP by e-mailing: St.JamesPCCW@gmail.com. If you have any questions, please contact Jan Legge (chairperson) at 715-559-1643.

Subscribe to the Friday Fiat!

Receive our weekly emails that highlight the amazing ministries going on in the parishes and introduce new things our staff have been working on. Sign up by either calling your parish office or by scanning the code below.



Please pray for our students as they prepare to joyfully receive their First Communion on May 8th.



Friday, May 13

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Elementary School

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[www.RegisCatholicSchools.com/events/walk-for-virtues/!](http://www.RegisCatholicSchools.com/events/walk-for-virtues/)



La Crosse Diocesan Council of Catholic Women Annual Collection

Thank you for supporting the La Crosse Diocesan Council of Catholic Women (LDCCW; www.ldccw.org.) The LDCCW is dedicated to supporting the women of the La Crosse Diocese and providing direct service to the Church. While the LDCCW is not part of the Bishop's budget, as are CCWs of other Dioceses, we do contribute to the needs of our Bishop and Diocese through your generosity. Bishop Callahan grants permission for the LDCCW Collection each year. In the past year, your generosity contributed to the following:

Spirituality

- Prayer
- Embracing Your Call to Holiness Catholic Women's Retreat
- Vocation Purse Club to help student loans for those pursuing religious life and the priesthood
- Mini retreats on Dignity of Women, Our Spirituality through Sacraments, and Gifts of the Visitation
- Helping to build the Domestic Church in our homes

Leadership

- Leadership Development
- Connecting the Diocese (Relevant Radio) and Televised Masses
- Mentorship and Renaissance Team
- Natural Family Planning Education
- Scholarships for women
 - Camp Scholarships for youth
 - Faith Education for Adults
 - Lay Formation Institute
- Books for Kids in Catholic Schools
- Legislative Education and Advocacy
- Building the Domestic Church
- Anti-Pornography Programs

Service

- Grant to Aid Victims of Human Trafficking
- Project Milk and Rural Life
- Supporting Fair Ethical Trade
- Casa Hogar in Lurin, Peru
- Ministry for People with Special Needs
- Gifts of Love providing caskets for babies who die in utero or shortly thereafter
- Recordable Books for parents in jail or prison so they can read to their children
- Domestic Violence Support
- Fighting against Human Trafficking
- Partnerships with Catholic Relief Services
 - Water for Life
 - Madonna Plan bringing pregnancy and early childhood healthcare
 - Refugee Women Emergency Relief



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