



ST. RAYMOND MINISTRIES YEAR IN REVIEW

ST RAYMOND/ST MARK ECUMENICAL GROUP

The Pet Blessing on Saturday Oct 3rd was well attended. Deacon John welcomed everyone to this event. Fr. Gilbert, Fr Steve and Pastor Christie Wilson performed the blessings. Chris Barr played the guitar and sang with Cheryl Costello "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands" while the pets were being blest. The event was lived streamed for those who were unable to attend.

MOMS' ROSARY GROUP

For many years the Moms' Rosary Group met at the PMC to pray the rosary on the first Tuesday of every month. With the quarantine in Spring, our April meeting was on Zoom. Fr. Gilbert joined us and requested we pray the rosary via Zoom every Tuesday for the whole parish. Since April we've been praying the rosary on Zoom every Tuesday night for anyone who wants to join us, including friends from other states. Because many join every week to pray, we now have an online Rosary Ministry that will continue indefinitely and welcomes all.

THE BACKPACK MINISTRY

The Backpack Ministry continues to support local food-insecure families. Rebekah Stathakis and Megan Palm (we both co-coordinate the BPM) decided it would be best to limit our volunteers' exposure, particularly in our small pantry. So we did 2-months worth of packing OUTDOORS with gloves, masks, and our family members. We were able to prepare 320 boxes of food to deliver to students. We loaded up our minivans and made two deliveries to Districts 59 and 26 just last week. We were able to purchase all of our food supplies in bulk via Sam's Club and Aldi to get the best prices available. Special thanks to our generous parish for continuing their donations even during the summer. As the school year progresses, we will continue to check in with school administrators to see what their needs are and how best to deliver the goods we procure. At this time, we are not collecting food donations due to contact exposure. We are doing our best to assist families in need using the safest methods possible to all.

NORTHWEST COMMUNITY HOSP EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS

Northwest Community Hospital Eucharistic Ministers have not been allowed at the Hospital since March. We are not sure when, or if, we will be allowed to return as Joseph Marco who was in charge has retired. Waiting to find out, the woman in charge of Volunteers has our group last on the list to return in December but we'll see what happens then.

MINISTRY OF CARE

Through the courtesy of Walgreens, we were able to provide a flu shot clinic on Sunday, October 18th from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm in the Community Room. Mark Yap, the pharmacist who provides this service had three other pharmacists with him to give the shots and to sanitize the room as needed. Parishioners pre-registered and this event was very successful with a 100 shots given.

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

The Prayer Shawl Ministry has been meeting and wrapping shawls in bags, so it will be ready for pick up if need be. They are taking it month to month.

THE MATS FOR THE HOMELESS MINISTRY

The Mats for the Homeless Ministry is still making mats from plastic bags. About two dozen mats have been made during the pandemic. The completed mats are given to Hearts for Hope, Northwest Compass, and CUMALI for distribution on lower Wacker Drive. For information, contact Kathi Szott, email: srmats2020@gmail.com



ST. RAYMOND DE PEÑAFORT

SATURDAY 6 AM SCRIPTURE REFLECTION GROUP

You just can't keep good men down. The Saturday 6 AM Scripture Reflection Group was blessed by Our Father with what we needed when the Cov-19 pandemic hit. Informed that meetings in the PMC were closed, we ventured to McDonald's and held meetings. Eventually McDonald's closed their doors for dine-in service. So, we prayed and waited for the pandemic to end, and would you know it. Notification from the PMC came informing us that meetings can be held in August. Initially, with only 4 regular attendees, our group increased in September, when we received another dedicated 6 AM parishioner. But the pandemic had an agenda too and forced the PMC to close meetings once again in late October. But as I said, "you can't keep good men down", our new member, who was a God send, offered his home for Saturday 6 AM meetings. Following the requirements of wearing masks, we still hold Saturday 6 AM Scripture Reflection meetings. If you would like to be a part of our group, please contact Brian Murphy, 847-736-4423, or John Ruskuls, 224-678-3372, for more information.

SAINT RAYMOND YOUTH THEATRE

What a year! No one could have dreamed the scenario that happened. We were already into play rehearsals; many scenes had been blocked; many songs rehearsed and dialogue was being memorized when it all was abruptly stopped. We were hoping it would be a short-lived pause. It was not to be. Our Spring musical, The Music Man Jr, was canceled. Many of the students were devastated - hearts were broken, many dreams unfulfilled, especially for our eighth-graders. Eighth-graders were losing all those Spring activities that they were looking forward to. I know the eighth graders involved in the show were. They saw others before them in the spotlight and wanted to have that experience themselves, after all they had been waiting for this since second grade. Who wouldn't anticipate this and be disappointed when it didn't happen? We had an excellent cast and they will never be able to put on that show. While we cannot undo the past for those eighth graders I am hopeful that we will be able to perform a musical again this coming May so Saint Raymond students can experience the thrill of live performances again. We do not want this eighth-grade class to experience what happened to last year's graduating class. I am optimistic about the vaccines that have been developed and feel that their impact will impede the spread of the virus, especially if 100 million doses are administered before March. If that happens, we could be close to some type of normalcy soon and be allowed to restart after-school activities, including play practice. Let's be hopeful and pray that it happens.

AFGHAN GROUP

I set up a calendar for August to June the same as I always do. I turned it in July. I was told we could meet in our usual location. We have met 3 times. I send a message by email to my members that I will be there between 9 & 12 noon so that they can drop off finished work or pick up yarn. I had 6 come in on Aug 31. Three on the other days. They only stayed a few minutes and left.

HOME VISITATION MINISTRY

I've asked our ministers of care for our homebound parishioners to resume their visits only if they and the person(s) they visit are comfortable doing so. I and three other ministers have resumed visits and I'm taking care of any new requests. I don't know if we'll ever be able resume hospital visits at Northwest Community Hospital or the state of catholic ministry there.

EMMAUS WALK GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP

Our Emmaus Walk Grief Support Group was offered in two different formats ---via Zoom and an in-person group in October. The number of participants in this group is limited for safety and masks are required. Letters of invitation have been sent to families who had a funeral celebrated here, had a service at Friedrichs, or who had the name of a loved one listed in the bulletin.

PADS FOR THE HOMELESS

St. Mark PADS has provided over 4,236 meals to those sheltering in hotels. We have been and continue to do this with your help and support. God's work is being done through our hands! Wishing all a Blessed Christmas with Happy and Healthy days to come.



ST. RAYMOND DE PEÑAFORT

SACRAMENTS

While a pandemic cannot halt baptisms, it certainly can alter the way we celebrate. With safety guiding our every step, we are currently baptizing one child at a time with a limit of 10 guests present. We are scheduling one family at 1 pm on Saturdays and one family at 1 pm on Sundays. We have dedicated the area by the Holy Family shrine, along with 10 chairs as our baptism area during this time. This offers a wonderful space for the families to gather and it also makes it easier for the crew to clean and sanitize after each ceremony. We look forward to the day when baptisms can be celebrated as we once did, however, until then, we are thankful for the planning teams that have created a way to continue celebrating baptism in a very safe way.

Imagine the stress of planning a wedding during a pandemic. Each couple must create a Plan A and a Plan B, depending what the current guidelines allow. Guest lists are made with a full celebration in mind, but also create a guest list for 10 or 25 people. Many of our couples who had weddings scheduled in 2020 also chose alternate dates in 2021 and as it worked out, had to cancel their original dates. So far, 2021 is quite full of both the rescheduled dates and new dates from other anxious couples too. We will continue to work month by month with our engaged couples. We are dedicated to assisting them as they balance a church ceremony, along with a venue and all the details that are part of a wedding. During this pandemic, we have learned that despite all the planning and even the disappointments, this extra and holy time has allowed our couples to really take the time to focus on their relationships and truly prepare to celebrate the Sacrament of Marriage.

SANCTUARY ARTS MINISTRY

The Flower Studio in Rolling Meadows is a local grower we've supported for many years. Due to the pandemic they were gracious to reduce our Easter order by 1/3 to save funds in such a difficult time for everyone. We are proud to use them again for Christmas even though cutting back our flower order from 55 poinsettia and planters to 36 this year. We appreciate the ability to be in the worship space and continue to creating a scene seen in a whole new way. The bubble was kept small to stay within the CDC/Arch Diocese guidelines. Listening to the choir and liturgical dancers practice during set up has been sorely missed. The dancers would have helped with the Nativity and the parish as a whole who would have been helping in every way. We look forward to celebrate with the community.

THE BEREAVEMENT MINISTRY

The Bereavement Ministry is up and functioning again. We average about 1, or 2 funerals a week with all the SR safety protocols in place. Sr. Val, Mary Kirby and Kathy Hemler have been handling most of the funerals, with one of us as the bereavement minister and the other as sacristan and the other to be the greeter at the funeral. We are also now able to meet in person at the PMC with the family to plan the funeral, rather than handling all of the arrangements and discussions by phone and/or email. Of course, everyone wears a mask, and the minister then is responsible for sanitizing the room once the family leaves. Sr. Val and Kathy Hemler are there for all the funerals. It has helped the families since we have gone from the "50 people" limit to the "50 pews" limit. This means they are allowed to have more people at the funeral, and SRP now offers live-streaming of funerals when the family requests that service. Of course, there is a separate fee for the live-streaming.

Our annual Mass of Remembrance was celebrated on Monday, November 2nd at 7:00 pm. Because of the large number of families who always attend this liturgy and our inability to accommodate them safely in the church, the mass will be live streamed only. Letters of invitation to those mentioned above are being sent in early October. This is still available on the website under past events.

THE WOMEN OF ST. RAYMOND

We have communicated via Zoom, phone calls and holiday postcards. We held a toy drive for Catholic Charities and made cash donations to St. Raymond and other local charities. Our hope is to resume activities in the late spring.

NEWCOMER MINISTRY

Even through the pandemic, we've had 58 new families register with St. Raymond.



ST. RAYMOND DE PEÑAFORT

MUSIC MINISTRY - 2020 IN HINDSIGHT -

A key word in our vocabulary this year has been the word “safe” and so I think it is “safe” to say that this has been a year like no other and one that none of us could have seen coming. As I reflect on this past year, I have nothing but gratitude for the way in which the community of St Raymond has remained connected through this unprecedented time. Thanks to the dedication and hard work of Brandi Sulak and our technology team, we have been able to offer live stream masses throughout the pandemic, and so whether we are connecting live or online, we have continued to gather in faith, and I have been greatly inspired by how this community has risen to the occasion. Though due to current regulations, our choirs are not currently able to convene and we have had to reduce the number of instrumentalists that can play weekly, the music has never stopped, nor has the faith of the people of this wonderful parish. I am grateful that we continue to come together to worship and that music can continue to be a part of it. Here is some more of what has been happening with music ministry:

- In addition to our weekend liturgies, we have held 2 Taize prayer services. If you have not experienced this powerful form of prayer, I encourage you to check them out online under past events at www.st-raymond.org
- Early in the pandemic, my fellow staffers and I were looking for ways to reach out to the community since we could not be physically together. One result of this was a live-stream-only solo “unplugged” concert I performed on March 28. It felt strange playing to an empty church, but I was far from alone. In the days that followed, more people reached out to me to offer encouraging words and thanks for the event than has ever happened to me in my life as a musician. I felt more connected to you all than ever before.
- During the Easter season, the St Raymond website hosted a series of daily reflections, which tied together the scriptures for the season with music and prayer. I am grateful that I could be a part of this, and for the encouraging response we received from many of you who partook.
- Music ministry is more than singing or playing an instrument. It’s about the people and our bond with one another. Even though choirs are not physically together, our Parish Choir has stayed connected through monthly Zoom meetings so we can continue to stay in touch and support one another. All of our choirs and instrumentalists that have not been able to take part in music ministry are missed dearly right now, and we look forward to the day when their voices and instruments will once again fill the church and our hearts with song.
- I have said this many times; the community of St Raymond has inspired me as a liturgical composer in ways unlike any other time in my life and it has continued to do so during the pandemic. I have composed musical settings for several responsorial psalms, and one in particular that had significance for me during this Advent season is The Magnificat, Mary’s prayer of gratitude and praise to God. Though this has been a difficult time for so many of us, we do not walk alone and for this, I am truly grateful. Perhaps Mary’s words can be an encouragement for all of us. You can find this mass online under past events and masses at www.st-raymond.org.

A blessed Christmas season and new year to all of you. Brian Fife

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTRY

With the closure of our church for liturgical celebrations the Eucharistic Ministry went into a hiatus. However the team of coordinators kept in touch through email and a zoom gathering. When Masses resumed our team acknowledged the need to keep the ministry of Eucharist to the presider only. The Feast of Christmas provided the first opportunity for our ministers to serve their parish community sharing their love of the ministry and the joy of this Blessed Season.

RCIA

The Easter Vigil is a beautiful time for so many reasons, and was our welcoming four candidates into our community. The pandemic slowed this process, but it surely happened. We've had two celebrations this fall and look forward to others soon. We are excited to have a new candidate looking forward to the Easter Vigil. Please keep them in your prayers.



ST. RAYMOND MINISTRIES YEAR IN REVIEW

THE GREETER MINISTRY

The Greeter Ministry is so proud of our work this year! We have pulled together with smiles and grace to welcome parishioners to church and keep them safe! We would love to welcome you to our ministry! We need two to four greeters at every mass to check in the parishioners, guide them to their seats and answer any questions they might have. We are a happy and welcoming group that feel honor to part of this great ministry! We are so privileged to help with masses so we can keep our Church doors open for in person worship!!If you are interested in joining our ministry, please contact Kathy Nuelle - todd1025@att.net or 847.253.5812

THE LECTOR MINISTRY

The Lector Ministry has continued to proclaim at our Masses throughout the pandemic. We have modified our procedures a bit, moved to only one lector per Mass rather than two and had a number of lectors take a break from the ministry until things return to normal. In addition, we have recently recruited several new lectors to the team.

THE GARDENING MINISTRY

The Gardening Ministry added some new gardeners to our dedicated team, giving us the ability to tend to more areas on the campus, particularly on the south and west sides of our block. We also helped with the area around the school entrance after the reconstruction. We look forward to Spring and resuming our efforts to keep the parish grounds beautiful -- and we are always interested in anyone willing to join in the effort!

THE AFGHAN GROUP

So many need kindness and help, a comforting afghan can bring a cozy peace to their lives. This year we have provided 37 afghans to the residents at Wings and their children. We have been staying busy and are continuing to work to provide the necessary comfort through these donations. We receive donations of yarn throughout the year and make good use of them. Thank you all for helping as we continue to do the work our mission provides. Cheryl Zalinski, Chairman of the Afghan Group.

WHERE'S YOUR MINISTRY UPDATE?

Please send your update to editor@st-raymond.org by Tuesdays and we'll update the community on your ministry. It's important for us to stay connected in every way we can during this crazy time.

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

JAN 2021
UPDATE



ST. RAYMOND DE PEÑAFORT

LATEST INFORMATION FOR THE
"TO TEACH WHO CHRIST IS" CAMPAIGN

CAPITAL PROJECTS AND MAINTENANCE COMMISSION UPDATE

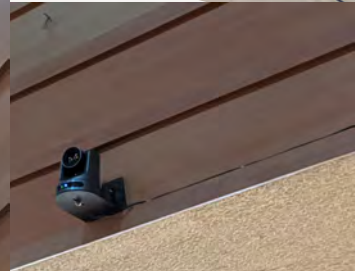
Dear Sisters and Brothers of Saint Raymond;

We are pleased to offer an update on the “To Teach Who Christ Is” campaign at Saint Raymond. The pledge solicitation portion of this capital campaign was formally closed in January of 2018. To date, contributions and pledge payments of 2.2 million dollars have been received from generous parishioners to support a variety of projects designed to improve the St. Raymond campus and provide enhancements for the St. Raymond community.

Over the past three years, a great deal has been accomplished and we are truly thankful for all the parish support that has made this possible. We remain particularly grateful to those parishioners who have remained faithful to their multi-year pledges. For our part, we will continue to be prudent stewards of these resources and we again thank everyone for their generosity to the St. Raymond community.

Capital Projects and Maintenance Commission

- | | | |
|--------------|------------------|--------------|
| Fr. Scott | Fr. Gilbert | Bill Stark |
| Trent Bohacz | Bob Cummings | Pam Doucette |
| Kathy Hemler | Chuck Hemler | Dave Humbert |
| John Semerau | Bill Shillington | Todd Sulak |



THE UPDATES

When we began this campaign, we had the goal of completing a number of projects that are essential to the future of St. Raymond:

- Rebuilding and repaving the church parking lot and improving safety throughout the campus by upgrading lighting and the addition of security cameras.

STATUS - Completed \$310,468
- Beginning the process of upgrading parish technology by improving the church sound system.

STATUS - Completed \$ 45,230
- Replacing the twin, 60 year-old boilers that service the Parish Ministry Center and part of the school.

STATUS - Completed \$197,391
- Completing air conditioning of the remaining classrooms of the school.

STATUS - Completed \$131,983
- Increasing handicap accessibility to the existing church restrooms and the addition of a new family and handicapped-friendly restroom.

STATUS - Completed \$107,098
- Providing greater accessibility to the main school entrance with new stairs and the addition of an entrance ramp, as well as improving accessibility to the church by expanding the drop-off area along Lincoln Street.

STATUS - Completed \$175,534
- Upgrading parish technology with the addition of new cameras and equipment to enable live-streaming of church services and parish events.

STATUS - Completed \$ 6,879
- Investigating potential projects through various studies, conceptual sketches, and drawings.

STATUS - Completed \$ 31,217
- Upgrading the church HVAC system (some of which is 60 years old) Update: In the bidding and evaluation phase for major project. Some initial pump repairs

STATUS - In progress \$ 4,211
- Developing a reserve fund for the repair or replacement of the roof-top HVAC units that service the Parish Life Center, Community Room, Parish Ministry Center, and middle school wing. Update: To date, four of these units have been repaired or replaced. More will likely need attention.

STATUS - In progress \$ 24,773
- Satisfying our obligation to the Archdiocese's To Teach Who Christ Is effort which is aimed at supporting Catholic education and formation through scholarships and teacher training throughout the Archdiocese of Chicago. Update: To date, three of the five annual \$156,400 payments have been made.

STATUS - In progress \$469,200

\$1,503,984