

A letter from our Pastor...

St Raymond De Penafort
"Welcome. Love. Serve."
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AN ANNIVERSARY OPPORTUNITY

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

"Where's the tabernacle?" This is a question that is often asked by visitors to St. Raymond.

In all pre-Vatican II churches, the tabernacle was located in the center behind the altar. The priest faced the tabernacle, with his back to the people, as he celebrated Mass. After the Second Vatican Council, there was a renewed desire to focus attention on the presence of Jesus in all the dimensions of the Mass. The priest then faced the people as a more visible part of the gathered community. The tabernacle was often moved, so that the Eucharist was not visible from the very beginning of Mass, and the gradual revelation of Christ could be better appreciated - "first in the faithful gathered in his name, then in his Word as the Scriptures are read and explained, and finally in a unique way in the Eucharist." (*Instruction on the Worship of the Eucharistic Mystery* 55)

As the insights of the Council were applied, the general recommendation for parish practice stated that: "As a rule, each church should have only one tabernacle, and this tabernacle must be safe and inviolable...The Blessed Sacrament should be reserved in a solid, inviolable tabernacle in the middle of the main altar or on a side altar, but in a truly prominent place. Alternatively, according to legitimate customs and in individual cases to be decided by the local bishop, it may be placed in some other part of the church which is really worthy and properly equipped." (*Instruction on the Worship of the Eucharistic Mystery* 52, 54).

The recommendations led to different designs in different churches. There was a desire to balance focus on the Eucharist in the church with opportunity for adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. In Holy Name Cathedral in our own archdiocese, the tabernacle is located in a dedicated space to the side of the altar. At the same time, permission was given for some parish churches to be designed like St. Raymond, in which the tabernacle was placed in a side chapel, instead of in the church.

As we move into the 21st century, we face the unique challenge of sharing the gospel with people who have had little contact with the Christian faith, and with Catholics who have become distanced from the teachings of the faith. A Pew Research Center poll in 2019 found that only 31% of Catholics clearly understand and believe in the actual presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. The visibility of the tabernacle in the church is increasingly important as the presence of Jesus in the Eucharist is less understood.

As we seek to evangelize and to attract people to our community, we see the importance of reminding both Catholics, as well as people exploring Christianity and Catholicism for the first time, that the Lord is constantly present with us in the sacrament of the Eucharist. We are called to be missionary disciples of Christ, and this journey will require strength and understanding that can only be found in the presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. It is the

presence of the power of Jesus in the Eucharist that makes us into the Body of Christ in the world. If that is not central to our spirituality, we cannot fulfill our mission. *Just as the living Father sent me and I have life because of the Father, so also those who feed on me will have life because of me.* (John 6:57)

In honor of the 60th anniversary of the laying of the cornerstone of St. Raymond Church in 1961, I would like to offer the community an opportunity to give the tabernacle a more prominent place in our worship space. I would like to invite the St. Raymond community to support a project of relocating the tabernacle from the prayer chapel to the church. This relocation project will also entail some remodeling of the chapel. The chapel will continue to serve as the prayer and adoration chapel. We will enhance the dedicated chapel space to add a focus for the monstrance used in Adoration, while keeping the chapel a peaceful oasis of prayer.

This project will be made possible solely by contributions given for this specific purpose. So it is really up to the people of St. Raymond to make it possible for us to go forward with this project. I would like to set a goal of raising \$200,000. This will enable us to complete the project at a high level of quality that will enhance our worship space. Should any donated funds remain following completion of the project, they will go to the account designated for the future maintenance and improvement of the St. Raymond campus.

I invite you to prayerfully consider participating in this project. It is important to note that this is an invitation to give above and beyond regular giving to the parish. Please do not divert funds from your regular giving to this project. Please make donations by check payable to ST. RAYMOND with TABERNACLE PROJECT noted in the Memo line. The QR code below will go straight to the Give Central Tabernacle Project.

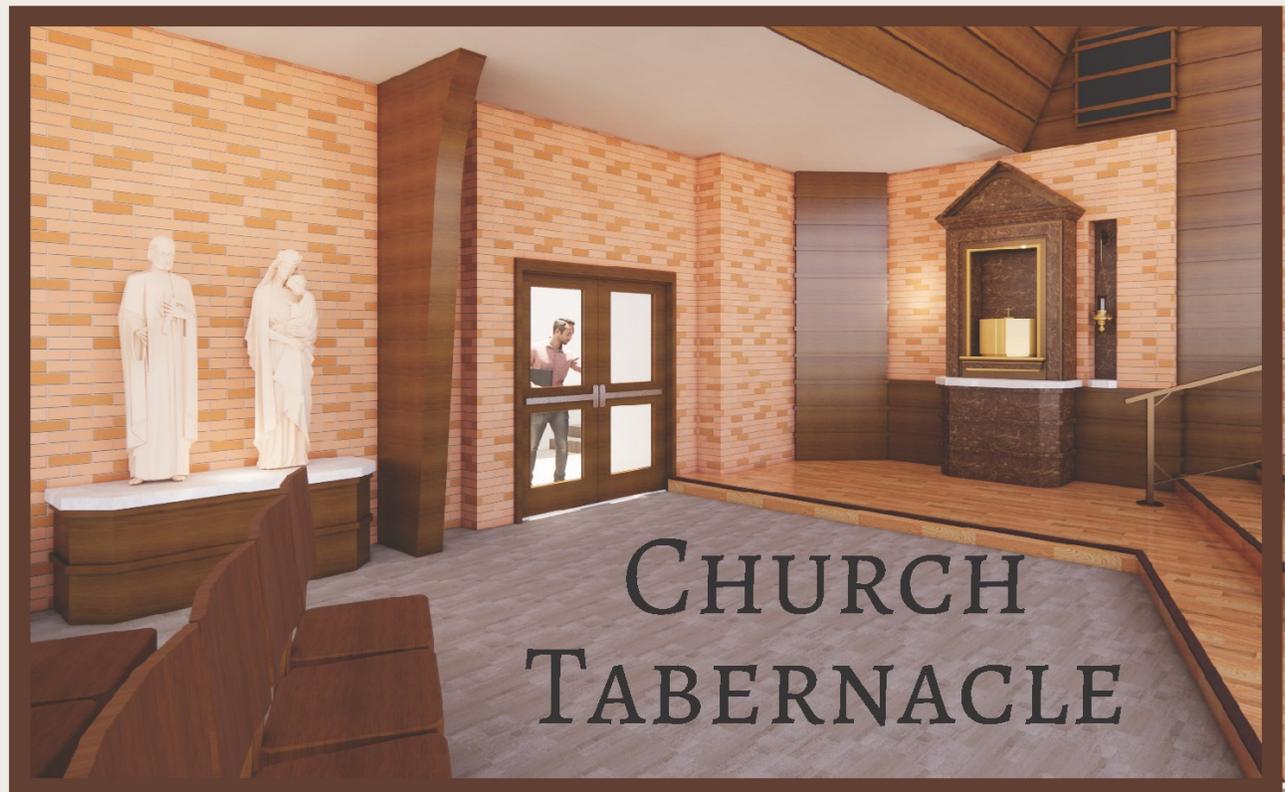
Peace Be With You,



Fr. Scott Hebden, Pastor



ST. RAYMOND DE PEÑAFORT



60TH ANNIVERSARY PROJECT 2021