

A letter from our Pastor

*Lord Jesus, you came into the world to bring new life.
Pour out the gift of your Holy Spirit upon us.
Enable us to imagine our future boldly,
to discern your direction wisely,
to embrace the greater good generously,
to remain united in the bond of peace,
so that we may hand on your gifts to future generations.*

Dear Friends in Christ,

In the last few months, at the conclusion of the Mass intercessions, we have been praying together the archdiocesan prayer for Renew My Church (above). We have done this in preparation for our involvement in the Renew My Church process that has been going on in all parishes of the Archdiocese of Chicago over the past several years. This month, St. Raymond formally entered the Renew My Church (RMC) process.

The first step in the RMC process is the determination if a parish needs to merge with another parish. Since St. Raymond meets the current minimal benchmarks for parish vitality established by the Archdiocese of Chicago, thankfully, we will not need to be involved in a merger.

The second step in the process has been the formation of a core team representing the parish, that will be the primary coordinator for our Renew My Church efforts. The formation of the core team is the responsibility of the pastor. Members are invited based on criteria established by the Archdiocese of Chicago to represent the diversity of each parish. Please read the introductions of our core team members on the following pages. They bring a variety of gifts and experiences to their service on this team. I am grateful for their willingness to take on this important mission.

On Saturday, July 23 the members of our Renew My Church core team attended a first day of formation, together with the core team from St. Emily. We will attend a second formation day on Saturday, August 6. The formation days are led by members of the archdiocesan Renew My [Church](#) team. These formation days involve deepening our awareness of the basic vision of Renew My Church as missionary disciples. One that shifts our mindset, *From: opening the doors of the church to invite people inside - To: opening the doors of the church to send people out as ambassadors of the love of Jesus*. We are reflecting on what is involved in the change to which Pope Francis has called us: "I dream of a missionary option capable of transforming everything, so that the Church's customs, ways of doing things, times and schedules, languages and structures can be suitably channeled for the evangelization of today's world, rather than for her self-preservation." (*The Joy of the Gospel* 27)

Only by doing this can we reverse the trends of declining faith that we see throughout the Christian world in the United States. A recent Gallup poll finds that only 81% of the US population says they believe in God - an all time low. But if we are created in the image of God, as we believe we are, then it is certain that we will find meaning in life only in relationship with God.

There will be three dimensions to the **strategic planning** necessary to bring about renewal. First, there is **pastoral planning** - discovering the most effective ways to develop ministries that respond to the needs in our neighborhood for pastoral care and spiritual growth. Second, there is **discernment planning** - discovering how to identify spiritual gifts in the community and to direct them into ministries. Third, there is **financial planning** - discovering how we can best utilize our resources to invest in the cultivation of gifts and the growth of ministries.

All of this underlines the necessity for each one of us to become missionary disciples; sharing our faith actively with others and inviting them into Christian community. We may wish to hold on things as they have always been where we feel secure and comfortable. But our mission is to bring the joy and light of Christ to those who have left the church or have no sense of a Christian community. By seeking and discerning new approaches that help open our hearts and enlighten our understanding, we can see things differently than the ways we are used to and readily share Christ with those we encounter.

In the coming months more will be shared with the community about this important process of renewal. Please continue to pray for our core team and for new inspiration of the Holy Spirit to lead us forward in the path of renewal.

Peace Be With You,



Fr. Scott Hebden, Pastor

MEET THE ST. RAYMOND DE PEÑAFORT CORE TEAM



Ariel Arceo(left) with his wife, Glenda, and son, Andrew.

ARIEL ARCEO



Short Bio:



Parish Member for 24 years

I was born and raised in the Philippines with most of my formative years under the tutelage of Capuchin Franciscans. Their example of simplicity and service are the twin pillars of how I try to live my faith. My wife, Glenda, and I became parishioners of St. Raymond 24 years ago, shortly after our son, Andrew, was born, and we are actively involved with Pre-Cana. We also try to be active participants as individuals, with both Glenda and Andrew serving in the music ministry while I serve with both the Eucharistic ministry and MAC (Men of Action and Contemplation). Professionally, I work in corporate finance.

I am deeply honored to be part of the core leadership team during these most transformative of times. The challenges facing our church today reflect the complications each one of us has to manage as we try to live out the gospel. The blueprint that has been set 2,000 years ago and was dusted off with Vatican II is continually being witnessed by St. Raymond parishioners in their everyday lives. I look forward to simplifying this message with the faith community and with the guidance of the Holy Spirit and sharing the good news with current and future pilgrims. Pax et Bonum!

DONNA CULHANE



Short Bio:



Parish Member for 16 years

I am a librarian and have been a parishioner since my husband Eric and I moved to Mount Prospect in 2005, shortly before our first child was born. I was born and raised in Park Ridge and attended Mary Seat of Wisdom with my eight brothers and sisters. Eric and I have four children, all of whom attended St. Raymond School, two of whom are now in high school (junior and freshman) and two still at SRS in 7th and 4th grade. I was a member of the MDC, I am a lector at Mass and I am co-president of the St. Raymond School Board.



Donna Culhane(far right) with her husband, Eric and family.

I am excited to be part of this important step in the evolution of St. Raymond's, as our parish strives to find the best ways to strengthen and grow in the years ahead. St. Raymond's has everything needed to be a robust and vibrant parish that welcomes current and new parishioners, engaging them and offering a home for all those who seek to know and love Jesus and learn about His saving grace. I am confident that through this renewal process we will put in place the foundation and pathways needed to ensure that our parish is dynamic and able to successfully continue its mission as a Catholic community.

KATHY NUELLE

 Short Bio:  Parish Member for 28 years

I am the mother of six children ranging in age from 12 - 29. All of our children have attended St. Raymond School. Since we became members in 1994, we have tried to be an active part of the school and church. Some years, we were only able to be on a few committees, but we always tried to give back in some way and attend Sunday Mass. As our children grew and we had more time, I became more active in school and parish positions. Most recently, I served as the co-chair of the Family and School Association and the president of the MDC of the parish. I am also the Adoration Chapel coordinator as well as the Welcome Team co-chair.



Kathy Nuelle (far right) with her husband, Todd, and family.

I am honored to be a part of the Core Leadership Team! St. Raymond has been such an important part of our family's faith life that I feel compelled and called to help that continue for our family as well as other families of the parish. I am filled with hope that the Holy Spirit will guide us to work together to create a faith-filled environment for all in the St. Raymond community. This renewal process is an incredible opportunity for all of us to become Missionary Disciples of Christ! Please pray for the leadership team and our parish as we move into this process!



Becky Zajac (second from left) with her husband, Luke, and family.

BECKY ZAJAC

 Short Bio:  Parish Member for 15 years

My name is Becky Zajac and I've been a parishioner at St. Raymond's for 15 years. My husband, Luke, and I joined St. Raymond's just before our triplet daughters were born. Our girls attended preschool, kindergarten, and first grade at St. Raymond's School. We moved them to public school in second grade, which is when I became involved in the religious education program. First, volunteering periodically and then becoming a catechist. In 2019 I began the process of RCIA and received my sacraments in November of 2020. This year, I took on the responsibility of altar server coordinator and have been asked to consider joining the RCIA team. I am a marketing professional and mom to 3 teen girls!

I am excited to be part of this important step in the evolution of St. Raymond's, as our parish strives to find the best ways to strengthen and grow in the years ahead. St. Raymond's has everything needed to be a robust and vibrant parish that welcomes current and new parishioners, engaging them and offering a home for all those who seek to know and love Jesus and learn about His saving grace. I am confident that through this renewal process we will put in place the foundation and pathways needed to ensure that our parish is dynamic and able to successfully continue its mission as a Catholic community.



Jill Heinking



JILL HEINKING



Short Bio:



Parish Member for 25 years

I was raised in Mount Prospect. Born a Lutheran and converted to the Catholic faith in my early 20s at St. Raymond parish. I studied at Catholic Theological Union, earning a Master's Degree in Theology in 1990. Then served as a missionary in Mexico with the Comboni Sisters and taught religion at Holy Trinity High School in Chicago. Left teaching to become a public health nurse and returned to Mount Prospect in 1995. Back at St. Raymond, I joined the music ministry and have been a member of the choir since. I have participated in other ministries in the parish, SPRED, Elizabeth Ministry, Religious Education, and Hispanic Ministry. Both my daughters attended St Raymond's School for several years and both serve in the music ministry with me.

What brought me into the Catholic Church was meeting a missionary priest in 1983 who inspired me with his teaching of the Second Vatican Council and vision of what "church" could be. The Church has faced serious challenges that have slowed, some might even say stalled, the implementation of Vatican II. As we watch our numbers decline and faith in general slip from mainstream society, it is my hope the renewal process will bring the core principals of Vatican II to life in our parish - equality, inclusion, dignity for all, ecumenism, involvement of the laity, peaceful respectful dialogue, and infusion of the faith into work places, community spaces and the neighborhoods in which we live.



ROB KING



Short Bio:



Parish Member for 6 years

I work in marketing and communications. I was actively involved in Young Adult Ministry (YAM) when I lived in downtown Chicago. As a family with young children, we are slowly becoming involved in the parish. Most recently, my wife, Tammy, and I served on the Tolton Teaching Parish Program that welcomed Mundelein Seminarians to our parish for a couple semesters. We have children in St. Raymond School and are actively involved in Cub Scouts.



Rob King (right) with his wife, Tammy, and family.

This is a great opportunity to create something that will help our parish, and maybe even faithful people Nationwide.

STAFF CORE MEMBERS

- FR. SCOTT HEBDEN, PASTOR
- FR. RODLIN RODRIGUE, ASSOCIATE PASTOR
- DIANA ARIZMENDI, DIRECTOR OF YOUTH MINISTRY GRADES 7-12
- SHARON MOEYKENS, DIRECTOR OF MISSION ADVANCEMENT