

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
MONDAY, DECEMBER 8, 8:15 AM,
12:15 PM, & 7:00 PM



ST. RAYMOND
CATHOLIC CHURCH
SERVED BY DOMINICAN FRIARS



Second Sunday of Advent
December 7, 2025



MARCIN KWAŚNY ROWAN POLONSKI CHRISTOPHER SHERWOOD

TRIUMPH of the HEART

THE PASSION OF ST. MAXIMILIAN KOLBE



Sunday, December 14
6:15 pm St. Raymond Gym

Tickets: \$10
For tickets, use the QR code or visit
strmp.link/triumph



'Triumph of the Heart' Offers Tribute to the Heroic Witness of St. Maximilian Kolbe

Triumph of the Heart is truly a masterpiece of hope, an affirmation of life amid the horrors of a death camp.

The title affirms that idea, but so does the subject — **St. Maximilian Kolbe's** last days in the Nazi death camp of Auschwitz and how he led his fellow inmates also sentenced to death by starvation to triumph over their heartless and barbaric jailers.

To say the story moves from a somber opening to the ultimate triumphal conclusion is not giving away the plot, as the horrors of what happened to St. Maximilian at Auschwitz are well known. The steps along the way build the intensity, the emotion, and the glimmer that grows ever stronger that love and hope triumph over hate.

We get to know each man as he shares his feelings and slowly reveals bits of his life. A wise use of flashbacks — whether the men are recollecting or starting to hallucinate as the starvation takes its toll — makes understanding their suffering all the more intense: seeing what could have been an idyllic family life in the country now erased amid the suffering in Auschwitz.

As hopeless as the situation seems, Father Kolbe brings out that it is never without hope for each of them. In an early poignant scene, the imprisoned begin to introduce themselves to each other because, he explains, if they're going to die together, they should know each other's names. They are no longer merely the numbers on striped prison clothes.

TRIUMPH OF THE HEART CONTINUES ON PAGE 5

This Week

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2025

8:15 am Mass followed by Adoration & Confession until 9:15 am
3:30 pm Confession until 4:30 pm
5:00 pm Mass

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2025

8:00 am Mass
9:00 am Pre-K to 6 Religious Education
10:00 am Mass followed by ☕ & 🍩
5:00 pm Mass

MONDAY-SATURDAY

8:15 am Mass

MONDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2025

8:15 am Immaculate Conception Mass
12:15 pm Immaculate Conception Mass
6:00 pm Legion of Mary (Parish Hall)
7:00 pm Immaculate Conception Mass

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2025

10:00 am Bible Study
7:00 pm No Holy Hour this week
7:00 pm Catholic in Recovery

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2025

10:00 am The Essentials of Discipleship Series (Parish Hall) (p.3)

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2025

8:15 am Mass followed by Adoration & Confession until 9:15 am
3:30 pm Confession until 4:30 pm
5:00 pm Mass

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2025

8:00 am Mass
9:00 am Pre-K to 6 Religious Education
10:00 am Mass followed by ☕ & 🍩
5:00 pm Mass
6:15 pm *Triumph of the Heart* movie (Gym) (cover)

Mass Intentions

Sat., Dec. 6, 5:00 pm Janice Covolo †

Second Sunday of Advent

Sun., Dec. 7, 8:00 am Dn. Charles Seagren †
10:00 am Connie Auyeung †
5:00 pm St. Raymond Parish

Mon., Dec. 8, 8:15 am Alexandria (Lexie) O'Keefe †
12:15 pm Concepcion Sanchez 🎂
7:00 pm St. Raymond Parish

Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary (S)

Tue., Dec. 9, 8:15 am Carolina Reyes Pitera 🎂
St. Juan Diego Cuauhtlatotzin (m)

Wed., Dec. 10, 8:15 am Blach & Derry Families, L&D
Our Lady of Loreto (m)

Thu., Dec. 11, 9:30 am Janet Spagn †
St. Damasus I, Pope (m)

Fri., Dec. 12, 8:15 am Galvez, Herborn, & Ritzen Families, L&D
Our Lady of Guadalupe (F)

Sat., Dec. 13, 8:15 am Jim Kelly, Jr. †
St. Lucy, Virgin & Martyr (M)

Sat., Dec. 13, 5:00 pm Cormick & Caletti Families, L&D
Third Sunday of Advent

Sun., Dec. 14, 8:00 am St. Raymond Parish
10:00 am Olga Mirek †
5:00 pm Aurelio Maestrini †

S - Solemnity; F- Feast; M - Obligatory Memorial; m - Optional Memorial; L&D - Living & Deceased

PRAYERS As a parish community we pray for the sick, including: Jackie Archibald, Nony & Penny Bantug, Anda-Louise Bozda, John Caletti, Modesta Cintron, William Cintron, Suzette Cram, Beverly Crawford, Andrea Edwards, Grace Cunningham, Ella DeLaMare, Maureen DeMoss, Esther Falsario, Anthony Galdes, Estela Gallegos, Anna Greco, Janice Hagy, David Huntzinger, Sandra Lecha, Gloria Margozi, Bonnie Morey, Red Morrow, Anjuli Nunn, Glenn Olsen, Leo Paule, Rosie & Roger, Nora Semaan, Joli Stieber, Connie Sutton, Karel Sykora, the homebound, those in our local hospitals and skilled nursing facilities, those formerly on the list, and those who wish not to be named.

We also pray for the recently deceased Joseph Semaan, Aldo Dossola, Dr. Ralph Yob, and Jim Kelly, Jr.

To add a name, please contact the Parish Office.

The Essentials of Discipleship Series

Want to take the next
steps in your faith life?
This is for you!

Dinner. Talk. Discussion
630-830PM
St Raymond Parish Hall



Dec 11
socialize



Join Fr Antony for a
discussion on the
importance of
COMMUNITY

Discover the power
of PRAYER with Fr
Jerome



Jan 15

pray



Feb 12

serve

Explore the meaning
of MISSION with Dn.
John Paul



Come join us for a crash course on the Essentials of Discipleship so you can be inspired and equipped to live out our parish mission: Pray, Serve, and Socialize.

NEXT WEEK'S SPECIAL COLLECTION



**Retirement Fund
for Religious**

Please give to those who
have given a lifetime.

retiredreligious.org

A lifetime of service deserves care in return. "Thanks to your generosity, we can provide the very best care to the sisters in our community," says Sister M. Stephanie Belgeri, 73, a member of the Sisters of St. Francis of the Martyr St. George in Alton, Illinois. Donations to the Retirement Fund for Religious provide housing, medical assistance, and essential support for thousands of aging religious. Please consider giving next week.

Mercy Night

Need healing? Renewal? A miracle?

Penance Service

Encounter God in Adoration,
Reconciliation, Fellowship
& Worship Music

Wednesday December 17th 7-8:30pm

ST RAYMOND CATHOLIC CHURCH
1100 Santa Cruz Ave. Menlo Park



ST. RAYMOND'S

YOUNG ADULTS (ages 20-40)

**4-D: Drinks, Dinner, and
Discussion with Dominicans**

RSVP in Partiful

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 18TH
6:30-8:30 PM PARISH HALL

ADVENTageous
(Prep for Christmas)
Discussion led by Fr Chysostom Mijinke, OP

FAITH FORMATION NEWS

Sunday, Dec. 14 – Rosary in the Church: All students in PreK-6th grade will gather to pray the rosary in the church at 9:35 am, just before the 10 am Mass. Families are warmly invited to join us!

Student Participation at Mass: Also on Dec. 14, our students are invited to take part in the liturgy—whether by reading Scripture, singing with the choir, or bringing up the gifts. We would love to see them involved.

Parents Group: Our parents group continues to meet every Sunday from 9:00-9:50 am, during the children's classes. These gatherings are meant to equip parents for faith conversations at home. It's never too late to join, and all parents are welcome.

Year-Round Registration: Registrations remain open throughout the year. Your children's friends are welcome to join us at any time.

BEaST news:

Service Trip: To make room for more youth participants, we are working on organizing an off-campus service trip for **June 13-19, 2026**. More details will be shared very soon—stay tuned!

This Sunday, Dec. 7: Dn. John Paul will offer Part II of his talk on The Theology of the Body for all 7th-12th graders. At the same time, Fr. Antony and Florence will be hosting another parent dinner: "Incarnation and Family Life: Recognizing Christ in the Ordinary." We hope many of you can join us for this meaningful evening.

Youth Fundraiser on Dec. 13-14: After the success of our BEaST youth retreat (with 37 participants), and with the project of a service trip next June, we want to start raising money for our BEaSTs. We will sell homemade tamales and cookies after most Masses on Dec. 13 and 14. Contact Florence.debretagne@straymondmp.org if you want to help or preorder!

Upcoming Events

- **Sunday, Dec. 14, 6:00-8:15 pm** — Movie Night: *Triumph of the Heart: The Passion of St. Maximilian Kolbe*
- **Saturday, Dec. 20, 10:30 am-12 pm** — Christmas Caroling & Celebration

SIMBANG GABI

FRIDAY, DEC. 19, 2025, 7 PM
MASS & DINNER

SUNDAY, DEC. 21, 2025, 5 PM
MASS

Simbang Gabi – December 15-23

What is Simbang Gabi? Simbang Gabi (translation: Masses at Night) is a long treasured Filipino spiritual tradition. In the Philippines, it was celebrated as a series of nine dawn Masses right before Christmas, each Mass followed by a reception and fellowship. For pastoral reasons, these daily novena Masses are now also celebrated in the evening. Set within Advent, Simbang Gabi invites participants to heighten their preparation for the birth of Jesus, as well as honor the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Our Simbang Gabi weeknight (12/19) collections will benefit Street Life Ministries.

CHRISTMAS CAROLING

JOY TO THE WORLD!
OUR SAVIOR IS BORN!

SHARE CHRISTMAS
JOY AND HOT
CHOCOLATE!

**Saturday,
December 20th**

10:30 AM to 12 PM

**Meet at St Raymond
Parish Hall**



**We will walk over to Atherton
Acute Care to sing for the
residents, making singing stops
downtown along the way.**

How in the world is that going to happen as the sadistic SS commandant of the death camp picks 10 men to starve to death because a prisoner escaped? The key is Father Kolbe, who decides to offer himself in place of one of those men who has a wife and children.

Such scenes emphasize how Kolbe brings out their humanity, little by little. He wants them to die as precious people who Our Lord suffered and died for.

His encouragement, of course, involves praying “till we can’t pray anymore, so we die with our eyes on God, as men and not as cattle.”

At first, none of the prisoners answers. They are crunched up in their corners, isolated from their world and each other. But in those two weeks, Kolbe’s example inspires.

Director Anthony D'Ambrosio gets credit not only for directing but for writing this exceptional screenplay. Obviously, much is conjecture about what the conversations were during those stark days of starvation. Only those trapped in that cell know what was said. Historic accounts chronicle that a fellow Polish prisoner overheard Kolbe leading the men in praying and singing hymns; and at inspections, Kolbe cheerfully faced the guards.

Though much was surmised for the film’s storytelling, the conversations seem as genuine and real as if a tape recorder captured the exchanges among the men, day to day. It is an inspired screenplay.

The flashbacks the men have aid to the poignancy, conveying their suffering even more, knowing what they are missing: loved ones and happier times before the German invasion. For some, the memories mean coming to terms with the past — even Father Kolbe.

In addition, beautiful flashbacks show Kolbe seeing statues of our Blessed Mother in a church, a mural of Our Lady of Czestochowa, and recalling his vision of the Blessed Mother at 9 years old, when Mary put a martyr’s crown on him. He starts singing *Hail Holy Queen*, as one by one others join him, all remembering the song from their youth. He gets them to sing Polish songs, stirring those

prisoners outside who hear them and throwing the Nazis into a frenzy.

This story moves hearts, bringing the intended message of hope and triumph in the worst of conditions.

Filmed in Poland predominately with Polish actors, *Triumph of the Heart* works tremendously as a force to focus on the all-important story and message. (Award-winning Polish actor Marcin Kwaśny deserves mention for playing St. Maximilian Kolbe superbly.) Thus the story becomes that much more realistic and moving to see the change that comes about as the men slowly die — and how Kolbe keeps their hope alive and helps the men see the supernatural.

Father Kolbe died a martyr at 47 years old, executed on Aug. 14 and cremated there on Aug. 15, 1941, the Solemnity of the Assumption, a day honoring his beloved Our Lady.

The scenes chronicling the men’s last days are heart-wrenching. Together with all that they build upon (and an addition of lovely vignettes visualizing what takes place four years later), the beautiful ending should go down in the annals of filmdom.

Triumph of the Heart is a film that will touch Catholic hearts — and one that will move any viewer, inspiring them to never give up hope and belief.

Article courtesy of the National Catholic Register (EWTN). Photos from press kit.



Christmas
POINSETTIAS
HELP DECORATE THE CHURCH FOR CHRISTMAS
[STRMP.LINK/DECORATE](https://strmp.link/decorate)

**EMOTIONAL & MENTAL
WELLNESS MINISTRY**

If you or a loved one is experiencing mental or emotional wellness challenges, please contact our St. Raymond Emotional & Mental Health ministry at (650) 899-0370. This is a dedicated line and only co-leads of the ministry team will hear your message. You may also email the ministry team at emwm@straymondmp.org.



Winner, winner, 500 chicken dinners!

Thank you to everyone for your overwhelming support for this year's chicken drive. We were so successful that we were able to provide over 500 chickens to the St. Francis Center as well as some additional items that were needed for their holiday dinners. I am so grateful for all of the incredible support during this holiday season. I know there are many ways you all can spend your time and money, and I appreciate that you fully funded this amazing project!

We had so much help this year, including our Director of Operations, Fr. Antony, and the 6th grade class from the St. Francis Center. The children were eager to be put to work unloading all the chickens from our cars and hauling them to the freezers on their campus. The joy and excitement was so heartwarming. This year we were also lucky enough to have a tour of the center, including the school, food warehouse, the volunteer center, and the clothing shop.

We cannot thank you enough for your continued support! Thank you to everyone who took the time to donate to this worthy cause—I appreciate everything you have all done to make this drive such a success! Happy Advent!

— Hallie Colorado, Director of Outreach

Watch the video! <https://strmp.link/chickendelivery>

Legion of Mary

The Legion of Mary meets every Monday, rain or shine, at 6:00 pm in the Parish Hall. Feel free to join us and learn more about the Legion of Mary.

13th Rummage Sale

SAVE THE DATE

13th Annual World-Famous St. Raymond Rummage Sale

Saturday, April 25 & Sunday, April 26, 2026

Start collecting donations now! A storage container will be available in early January near the priests' home off Arbor Road for you to bring your items.

Questions? Contact Karyn Leahy at leahyfamily@msn.com.



CHESTERTON ACADEMY
OF ST. JAMES

THE CHESTERTON ACADEMY OF ST. JAMES invites you to a **Marian Choral Mass for the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception**, featuring the Chesterton Academy of St. James Choir, at St. Patrick's Seminary Chapel on **Monday, December 8th at 5:30 pm**.

Immediately following the Mass, all are invited to join us for a reception benefiting the Chesterton Academy of St. James' Junior/Senior Pilgrimage to Rome, where our students will have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to be in the heart of the universal church for the Holy Triduum and Easter Sunday! Baked goods will be available for an optional donation.

All proceeds will go to make this life-changing event possible. RSVP now! bit.ly/43dy424

DIACONATE FORMATION INFORMATIONAL EVENINGS

The Office of Formation for the Permanent Diaconate will hold Informational Evenings for men considering the possibility of serving the Church as Permanent Deacons. The evening will include discussion of the ministry of the Deacon in the Church, the Formation program and the application process. Please join us.



7:00 PM to 9:00 PM

Wednesday, January 7, 2026

St. Raphael Church, 1104 5th Avenue, San Rafael

Wednesday, January 14, 2026

Archdioceses of San Francisco, One Peter Yorke Way, SF

Wednesday, January 21, 2026

St. Mark Church, 325 Marine View Avenue, Belmont

WELCOME

If you are a visitor to St. Raymond Parish, we want you to know you are welcome here—whether you have come from another part of the country, from across the world, or another parish in the Bay Area. Say hello to any of our parishioners! For information about our parish or to register, contact us at office@straymondmp.org or register online at straymondmp.org/register.

Wednesdays @ 7:00 p.m. St. Raymond Church

Catholic sacramental recovery and fellowship for those seeking freedom from addictions, compulsions, and unhealthy attachments.



FAITH | FREEDOM | FELLOWSHIP

PACK THE PANTRY

As part of our parish mission to pray, serve, and socialize we will have a "Pack the Pantry" collection site at our parish. We will be collecting unopened non-perishable items to supplement our St. Raymond St. Vincent de Paul conference's mission to feed the vulnerable. Next time you're at the store, please grab a few extra items from our list! This will be an ongoing project.

Located in the black storage locker in the parish courtyard next to the parish hall.



MINISTRY TO THE SICK Do you know of anyone who is homebound or ill? If so, we want to hear from you. Please contact the parish office at (650) 323-1755 and help us get in touch with those who need ministry.

ST. RAYMOND PARISH

Served by the Dominican Friars of the Province of the Most Holy Name of Jesus (Western Dominican Province) since 2013.

1100 SANTA CRUZ AVENUE, MENLO PARK, CA 94025

TELEPHONE 650-323-1755

EMAIL office@straymondmp.org

PARISH WEBSITE www.straymondmp.org

SCHOOL WEBSITE www.straymond.org

PARISH OFFICE HOURS Mon-Fri. 9:00 am-5:00 pm

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PAROCHIAL VICAR

Fr. Antony Augustine Cherian, O.P.

frantony@straymondmp.org

DEACON/OCIA (RCIA) - Tom Kelly tfk@sbcglobal.net

TRANSITIONAL DEACON/BEAST YOUTH MINISTRY/YOUNG

ADULT GROUP/CHILDREN'S LITURGY/MERCY NIGHT -

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pastoralcouncil@straymondmp.org

FINANCE COUNCIL - Patrick Green (Chair), Dave Brenner, Caitlin Burke, Mark Secker
finance@straymondmp.org

ADVENT 2025

Mon., 12/8	8:15 am, 12:15 pm, 7:00 pm	Immaculate Conception (Holy Day of Obligation)
Thu., 12/11	6:30 pm	The Essentials of Discipleship - Community
Sun., 12/14	6:15 pm	Triumph of the Heart movie
Wed., 12/17	7:00 pm	Mercy Night Penance Service
Thu., 12/18	6:30 pm	4D Event ADVENTageous
Fri., 12/19	7:00 pm	Simbang Gabi Mass and Dinner
Sat., 12/20	10:30 am	Christmas Caroling at Atherton Post-Acute Care
Wed., 12/24	3:30 pm	Christmas Eve Family Mass
	6:00 pm	Christmas Eve Mass
Thu., 12/25	12:00 am	Christmas Midnight Mass
	10:00 am	Christmas Day Mass



ST. RAYMOND
CATHOLIC CHURCH
SERVED BY DOMINICAN FRIARS



GIVING: ONLINE AND IN PERSON

Make stewardship simple with eGiving! Set up secure automatic donations using your credit card, debit card, or bank account, and never worry about forgetting your weekly offering again. Manage your giving anytime at straymondmp.org/giving.



MASS SCHEDULE

Saturdays 5:00 pm Vigil
Sundays 8:00 am, 10:00 am, 5:00 pm
Weekdays 8:15 am (Mon-Sat)
Immaculate Conception 8:15 am, 12:15 pm, 7:00 pm

RECONCILIATION

Saturday 8:45-9:15 am & 3:30-4:30 pm;
Wednesday 7-8 pm, or by appointment

ADORATION

Saturday 8:45-9:15 am, Wednesday 7-8 pm

ANOINTING OF THE SICK, BAPTISMS, WEDDINGS, & FUNERALS - Please contact the parish office at 650-323-1755 or email office@straymondmp.org.