



**ST. RAYMOND**  
CATHOLIC CHURCH  
SERVED BY DOMINICAN FRIARS



**The Nativity of our Lord/Holy Family**  
**December 24-28, 2025**



## HOLY CHRISTMAS

Growing up, Christmas meant no school for ten days, presents under the tree, and ice skating at “the pond” in town. Of course, my parents loaded all five of us kids into the car and took us to Mass. Truth be told, the Mass part wasn’t a highlight of my Christmas experience.

As my late teens kicked in, Mass went from not being a highlight to a real annoyance. Why did I have to go? My faith, if you could call it that, was on life support. Also, couldn’t we just wish the baby Jesus a happy birthday from the comfort of home?

In my mid-twenties, I started my journey back to faith. As I learned more about Jesus Christ and why He came into the world—to forgive my sins (and there were many)—Christmas took on a whole new meaning. Sure, I loved the time off work and exchanging presents. But now, my attention was drawn more and more to that little baby in the manger.

The reality of God—all-powerful and omniscient—humbling Himself to embrace our human nature and walk among us started to come alive for me. When His teachings and miracles opened my eyes to the depths of His love, I realized the greatest Christmas gift I could ever receive was to be a child of God and a believer in Jesus Christ.

It’s been a five-and-a-half-decade journey, with some detours along the way. But this Christmas, it’s nice to be home—truly home in my Father’s house.

As we gather this Christmas in our Father’s house, let the Christ Child remind us: no matter how far we’ve wandered, His love calls us home. Merry Christmas, and peace to you and your families!

Love, hugs and prayers,

Fr. Jerome

# This Week

## WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2025

3:30 pm Christmas Eve Family Mass  
6:00 pm Christmas Eve Mass

## THURSDAY, DECEMBER 25, 2025

12:00 am Christmas Midnight Mass  
10:00 am Christmas Day Mass

## SATURDAY, DECEMBER 27, 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 28, 2025

8:00 am Mass  
10:00 am Mass followed by ☺ & 🎄  
5:00 pm Mass

## MONDAY-WEDNESDAY, FRIDAY-SATURDAY

8:15 am Mass

## MONDAY, DECEMBER 29, 2025

6:00 pm Legion of Mary (Parish Hall)

## WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2025

5:00 pm Mary Mother of God Vigil Mass

## THURSDAY, JANUARY 1, 2026

9:30 am Mary Mother of God Mass

## SATURDAY, JANUARY 3, 2026

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, JANUARY 4, 2026

8:00 am Mass  
10:00 am Mass followed by ☺ & 🎄  
5:00 pm Mass

# Mass Intentions

Wed., Dec. 24, 3:30 pm	St. Raymond Parish <i>Vigil of the Nativity of the Lord (S)</i> 6:00 pm Neveve Polido 🎄
Thu., Dec. 25, 12:00 am	Galvez, Herborn, & Ritzen Families, L&D <i>The Nativity of the Lord (S)</i> 10:00 am Papa & Ruocco Families, L&D
Fri., Dec. 26, 8:15 am	Ray Lane <i>St. Stephen, the First Martyr (F)</i>
Sat., Dec. 27, 8:15 am	Jesse Sanchez 🎄 † <i>St. John, Apostle &amp; Evangelist (F)</i>
Sat., Dec. 27, 5:00 pm	Marta Bentolila † <i>The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph (S)</i>
Sun., Dec. 28, 8:00 am	Herb Pickard † 10:00 am Eleanor Jekot † 5:00 pm St. Raymond Parish
Mon., Dec. 29, 8:15 am	Connie Auyeung † <i>St. Thomas Beckett, Bishop &amp; Martyr (m)</i>
Tue., Dec. 30, 8:15 am	Katie Roach †
Wed., Dec. 31, 8:15 am	Fr. Daniel Derry 🎄 <i>St. Sylvester I, Pope (m)</i>
Wed., Dec. 31, 5:00 pm	St. Raymond Parish <i>Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God (S)</i>
Thu., Jan. 1, 9:30 am	Carmelita Sison
Fri., Jan. 2, 8:15 am	Conrad Reyes † <i>Ss. Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen, Bishops &amp; Doctors of the Church (M)</i>
Sat., Jan. 3, 8:15 am	Andrea Marie Aas † <i>The Most Holy Name of Jesus, Titular feast of the Western Dominican Province (F)</i>
Sat., Jan. 3, 5:00 pm	Gerald F. Carr † <i>The Epiphany of the Lord (S)</i>
Sun., Jan. 4, 8:00 am	Kalesi Fineasi † 10:00 am Marsha Walsh † 5:00 pm St. Raymond Parish

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



## ADA DOORS

"Lift up your heads, O gates; be lifted, you ancient portals, that the king of glory may enter." - Psalm 24:7

This Christmas, help us make St. Raymond more welcoming for all! We're raising \$9,000 to install ADA-compliant door openers on both the Mary and St. Joseph side entrances. These openers will serve parishioners with mobility challenges, parents with strollers, and anyone who could use a helping hand.

Your donation—large or small—brings us closer to making our church accessible to everyone. To contribute, please contact the parish office or donate online at <https://strmp.link/doors>.



## Senior Bingo

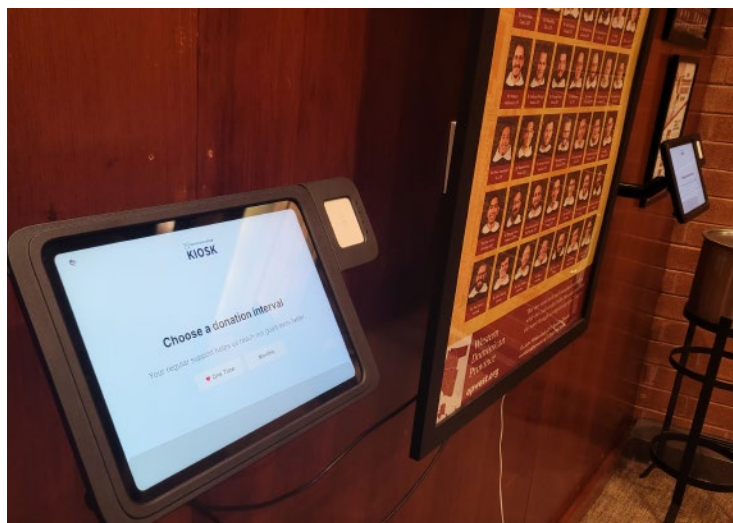
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 7, 2026

12:15 pm - Senior Mass  
1:00 pm - Lunch & Bingo

Please join us on **Wednesday, January 8** for a special New Year's gathering of STARS Senior Bingo.

We will begin in the church at 12:15 pm for a senior Mass. Following Mass, the beautiful sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick will be offered for those who wish to participate. We will then move to the Parish Center for a light lunch and delicious treats. Bring a friend or two to join in the fun with this wonderful group—all are welcome!

If you have any questions, please contact Karyn Leahy at [leahyfamily@msn.com](mailto:leahyfamily@msn.com).



## INTRODUCING OUR NEW DONATION KIOSKS!

We're excited to announce a new way to give at St. Raymond! Two convenient donation kiosks have been installed on the Marian side of the church, making it easier than ever to support our parish.

You can now contribute using: Credit or debit card, Google Pay, Apple Pay, Contactless payment methods.

Why Give Digitally? Whether you forgot your checkbook, prefer not to carry cash, or simply want a quick and convenient way to give, these kiosks are here for you. Your generosity supports our parish ministries, programs, and community outreach.

Thank you for your continued support of St. Raymond Parish!

## 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.

## FAITH FORMATION NEWS

If you haven't registered your children or your youth in the programs, you can still do it! Registrations in the Religious Education program are open throughout the year.

Children PreK-6th grade meet on Sundays 9:00-9:50 am.

7th-12th graders meet every Sunday 6:00-8:00 pm.

Parents of young children are also invited to meet every Sunday at the same time: 9:00-9:50 am. Parents of teens are invited to a monthly dinner party and discussion with Fr. Jerome and Florence de Bretagne. Contact [florence.debretagne@straymondmp.org](mailto:florence.debretagne@straymondmp.org) if you have any questions, if you want to join now, or if you would like to invite your friends—just do it!

We are grateful to have an amazing team of dedicated catechists and seminarians who contribute to the religious education of our children, teenagers, and parents.

Here is what a mother is saying:

"This first semester of CCD has absolutely blown my mind. From the parent sessions to praying the rosary together in the church, to parent dinners and catechists who are actually teaching the faith in a compelling way—I'm so grateful and so happy for my children to have something beyond our home to help them grow in their faith! My son's teacher is spectacular!! I can't believe how much Bible knowledge he's imparting on our 6th graders! Wow!!!"

### Upcoming in the New Year:

All our classes resume on Jan. 11.

**PreK-6th grade:** Our next "Family Mass" with children participating in the liturgy will be Jan. 25.

### 7th-12th grade "BEaST" youth group:

- Jan. 10, 8:15 am-12:00 pm: Confirmation morning retreat for confirmandi, parents, and sponsors in the Parish Hall
- Jan. 11: Ice skating with the whole family at Winter Lodge in Palo Alto! Secure your spot and register at <https://strmp.link/iceskating> (\$20 for skaters, Free for non-skaters, \$6 for skate rentals)
- Jan. 24-25: Next youth fundraiser—bake sale and tamales sale after each Mass



[strmp.link/iceskating](https://strmp.link/iceskating)

We thank all our BEaST students and families who participated in the bake/tamales sale last weekend, and we thank even more all the parishioners who bought some treats. We raised \$1,400 which helped cover the youth retreat we went on last Nov.! Our next fundraiser will go towards a service trip in Virginia to help migrant communities. More details to come.

If you have any questions regarding the BEaST youth group, please contact [brjohnpaul@straymondmp.org](mailto:brjohnpaul@straymondmp.org) or [florence.debretagne@straymondmp.org](mailto:florence.debretagne@straymondmp.org).

**13th Annual**  
**rummage**  
**sale**  
**SAVE THE DATE**

**April 25-26, 2026**

### THINKING ABOUT BECOMING CATHOLIC?

If you've been curious about the Catholic faith, we'd love to have you join us for OCIA (Order of Christian Initiation of Adults). It's a welcoming group where adults explore what it means to be Catholic—no pressure, just honest conversation and learning together.

Questions? Reach out to **Dn. Tom Kelly** at [tfk@sbcglobal.net](mailto:tfk@sbcglobal.net) or 650-670-2200. He's happy to answer any questions you might have.

# DOMINICAN CORNER

## Christmas, the Strategy of Christ, and the Mystery of the Holy Family

*The nativity of Jesus: a mystery of a personal victory that mobilized his friends and agitated his enemies.*

By Fr. Matthew Wanner, O.P.

The birth of Jesus Christ is a mystery of a personal victory that mobilized his friends and agitated his enemies. Christ came during a state of open conflict between those seeking the source of truth against those seeking distorted notions of self-gain and individual attainment. Christ, the divine Son and font of Wisdom, not only chose how and when he came, but also how he would face his primary adversary and the hidden host of hostile minions.

Through composing poetry on this mystery, St. Ephrem the Syrian (AD c. 306-373) sought to awaken the Christians of his age to the broader connection between Christmas and the unified mysteries that would later unfold. God descended to clothe himself with our nature before conquering, gifting, freeing, and ascending. Initiating this sequence, Christ comes forth like a bridegroom exiting his peaceful state of repose in a sealed, virginal womb.[1] For Ephrem, just as the Son chose to be born, this divine king also chose to remain for a designated time within the affectionate enclosure of a sacred family.[2]

Ephrem takes this further. For him, Christ came as a hunted hunter.[3] Instead of simultaneously confronting all humans led astray by the enemy of human nature, he entered the land of promise as a field of combat, applying genius-level tactics to a timeline of execution. By conquering the chief rebel, he conquered all rebels. By baiting the serpent, he entered the stomach of death as the radiant medicine of life.[4] Christmas marks the stage when Christ the victor passes through the sealed womb in view of the sealed tomb.[5] First, the womb, then the tomb. Rising from the earth as the seed of life, Christ would descend after all the proper preparations were made and snares set. All who join the enemy join the lost, who will one day be stripped of all they cherish. Those who align with Christ, however, will be rendered pure vessels of golden glory, wrapped in cloaks of everlasting victory. May Ephrem's message lift our gaze and rouse our wills to seek the font of Life who initiated his triumph through a sacred family.

[1] "Babe in the womb, since the seal of virginity abides, the womb was for You the royal palace, and the curtain." Ephrem the Syrian, *Ephrem the Syrian: Hymns*, ed. Kathleen E. McVey, Classics of Western Spirituality (New York: Paulist Press, 1989), 134. Ephrem, *Hymns on the Nativity*, 12.2.

[2] Cf. Ephrem, *Ephrem the Syrian*, 79. Ephrem, *Hymns on the Nativity*, 2.13-14.

[3] Ephrem, *Ephrem the Syrian*, 154. Ephrem, *Hymns on the Nativity*, 17.3

[4] "Today let Eve rejoice in Sheol, for behold the Son of her daughter as the Medicine of Life came down to save the mother of His mother--the blessed Babe who will crush the head of the serpent that wounded her." Ephrem, *Ephrem the Syrian*, 137. Ephrem, *Hymns on the Nativity*, 13.2.

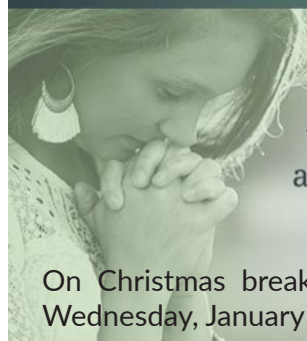
[5] Ephrem, *Ephrem the Syrian*, 129. Ephrem, *Hymns on the Nativity*, 10.2-10.

## CHRISTMAS PHOTOS

Send in your photos. Tag us on Facebook (straymondmp) or Instagram (straymond.mp). Or just send your photos to [jsanchez@straymondmp.org](mailto:jsanchez@straymondmp.org).

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



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

On Christmas break. Returns  
Wednesday, January 7, 2026



FAITH | FREEDOM | FELLOWSHIP

5



## HOW DO I RECEIVE THE EUCHARIST?

The Eucharist is the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Jesus Christ. He is really present in the Eucharist even if it only looks, smells, and tastes like bread and wine. This is one of the central mysteries of our faith.

Because of what the Eucharist is, we must approach the Eucharist with great respect and reverence; it is unjust to Jesus to receive Him without due respect or without preparing ourselves to receive Him. Our external action of receiving the Eucharist signifies that we are internally in communion with Jesus. To receive Him without being in this state would be to live a lie. This is why the only people who may receive communion are Catholics who are not in a state of mortal sin, and who have prepared to receive Jesus by prayer and the Sacrament of Confession.

This also means that Catholics who do receive Communion must do it with appropriate respect. We fast for at least an hour before receiving communion as physical preparation. We also spend time before the Mass quieting our hearts and minds and preparing ourselves to enter into prayer. When we come up to receive communion, we bow just before we get to the front of the line to show our respect for the real presence of Jesus.



We may receive Jesus in one of two ways. First, we may open our mouth and extend our tongue forward and flat so that the Eucharist may be placed directly on our tongue. This shows that we receive the Eucharist as our spiritual food from Jesus Himself and not by any power of our own. We may also receive the Eucharist in our hand. To do this, we place our left hand over our right, with our palms facing up, creating a little throne for Jesus to be placed in. We then reverently place the Eucharist in our mouth using our right hand.

Regardless of which way we do it, the most important thing is to be continuously aware of how precious a gift the Eucharist is, and to treat it with due respect and gravity.

Fr. Antony

## YOUNG ADULTS



We had another great turnout for our monthly 4D event ADVENTagous prep for Christmas with Fr. Chrysostom. Plug into our growing young adult community (ages 20-40) by joining our WhatsApp group. Every Sunday, young adults meet up after the 10:00 am Mass to enjoy coffee. We will also be starting a new series of men's and women's small groups on Theology of the Body on Jan. 26.



**ST. RAYMOND'S**

# YOUNG ADULTS

(ages 20-40)

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

**RSVP in Partiful**

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 22ND**  
**6:30-8:30 PM PARISH HALL**

**5-D: Discernment**  
Discussion led by Fr Jerome Cudden, OP



## 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](http://straymondmp.org/giving) or visit our new kiosks.



**LOW-GLUTEN HOSTS** are available at each Mass. Please visit the presiding priest's Communion line to receive the low-gluten host.

**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.

## PARISH STAFF

### DIRECTOR OF OUTREACH

Hallie Colorado [Hallie@straymondmp.org](mailto:Hallie@straymondmp.org)

### DIRECTOR OF FAITH FORMATION/CHILDREN'S LITURGY

Florence de Bretagne  
[florence.debretagne@straymondmp.org](mailto:florence.debretagne@straymondmp.org)

### PARISH COORDINATOR

Ronnica Hagy [rhagy@straymondmp.org](mailto:rhagy@straymondmp.org)

GROUNDSKEEPER - Javier Hernandez

### FACILITIES SUPERVISOR

Pedro Hernandez [phernandez@straymondmp.org](mailto:phernandez@straymondmp.org)

### DIRECTOR OF MUSIC & LITURGY

Lauri Hofstrom [music@straymondmp.org](mailto:music@straymondmp.org)

### DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

Angie Robbiano [dirofOPs@straymondmp.org](mailto:dirofOPs@straymondmp.org)

### BULLETIN EDITOR/SACRISTAN

John Sanchez [jsanchez@straymondmp.org](mailto:jsanchez@straymondmp.org)

## COUNCILS

**PASTORAL COUNCIL** - Lori Mirek (Chair), Lindsay Craig, Karyn Leahy, Chris Terndrup, Stephanie Howard  
[pastoralcouncil@straymondmp.org](mailto:pastoralcouncil@straymondmp.org)

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

## 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.



All items MUST be NON-PERISHABLE. Items needed:

Peanut Butter (16oz preferred)  
Canned Tuna  
Canned Chicken  
Canned Fruits  
Canned Vegetables  
Pasta  
Rice  
Beans



## Legion of Mary

The Legion of Mary meets every Monday at 6:00 pm in the Parish Hall. Feel free to join us and learn more about the Legion of Mary. Members have been Praying, Serving, and Socializing since the 1950s.

## MISSION STATEMENT

St. Raymond is a Catholic parish where we Pray, Serve, and Socialize together as we live out our faith in Jesus Christ.



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](mailto:emwm@straymondmp.org).

## VISION STATEMENT

St. Raymond Catholic Church is a vibrant parish in which every parishioner is engaged in ministry and all parishioners pray-serve-socialize together to keep the fire of our faith growing.

## A CHRISTMAS GIFT IN HONOR OF THE HOLY FAMILY

# WELCOME

Dear Parish Family,

As Christmas draws near, we reflect on the profound mystery of the Incarnation: God taking on our human nature in the person of Jesus Christ. We picture the infant King in the manger, loved by Mary and Joseph, and later honored by the Magi with gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Today, the Holy Family - Jesus, Mary, and Joseph - are in heaven; they need no earthly treasures. However, our parish does.

This Christmas, consider making a monetary gift in honor of the Holy Family to support the mission and ministries that make our parish thrive. Also, your support is needed for the ongoing care of our Church and parish hall, beautiful grounds, and unexpected expenses that always arise.

Imagine a donation in honor of the Holy Family in the amount of:

Treating the Holy Family and yours to dinner at a local restaurant.

Booking the Holy Family a week at a local Airbnb. Remember, there was no room at the inn.

Sending the Holy Family on an all-expense-paid two-week trip to Hawaii.

Your Christmas offering, made in honor of the Holy Family, ensures our parish remains a vibrant center of worship, service, and community.

Please know we gladly accept donations of stock and other financial instruments. Also, many employers offer gift-matching programs—please check with yours. Your gift can have great meaning at whatever feel your family can afford. Contact the parish office for more information if you are interested in one of these options. Or give today in one of three ways:

Online: <https://straymondmp.org/giving>.

Drop your gift in the collection basket at Mass.

Scan the QR code.

Thank you for your generosity. May God bless you with a joyful and peace-filled Christmas.

Fr. Jerome Cudden, O.P.



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](mailto:office@straymondmp.org) or register online at [straymondmp.org/register](https://straymondmp.org/register).

### 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](mailto:office@straymondmp.org)

**PARISH WEBSITE** [www.straymondmp.org](http://www.straymondmp.org)

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

#### PASTOR

Fr. Jerome Cudden, O.P. [jcudden@straymondmp.org](mailto:jcudden@straymondmp.org)

**PAROCHIAL VICAR** Fr. Antony Augustine Cherian, O.P. [frantony@straymondmp.org](mailto:frantony@straymondmp.org)

**DEACON/OCIA (RCIA)** - Tom Kelly  
[tfk@sbcglobal.net](mailto:tfk@sbcglobal.net)

**TRANSITIONAL DEACON/BEAST YOUTH MINISTRY/  
YOUNG ADULT GROUP/MERCY NIGHT** -  
Dn. John Paul Puschautz, O.P.  
[brjohnpaul@straymondmp.org](mailto:brjohnpaul@straymondmp.org)

#### MASS SCHEDULE

Saturdays	5:00 pm Vigil
Sundays	8:00 am, 10:00 am, 5:00 pm
Weekdays	8:15 am (Mon-Sat)
New Years	Vigil Wed. 5:00 pm, Thu. 9:30 am

#### 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](mailto:office@straymondmp.org).