

Fr. James Kurzynski is no stranger to St. Raymond's. Whether it be Mass coverage or listening to him play saxophone, we all have some connection with Fr. James. It is with joy we welcome him to St. Raymond's on a full time basis as we continue to mourn the loss of Fr. Hogan.



Fr. James grew up in rural central Wisconsin. He was a parishioner of St. Patrick's of Lanark Catholic Church before it merged with three other parishes into St. Maximilian Kolbe Parish. Fr. James attended Amherst Public Schools through grade school and high school and then attended the University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point. At Stevens Point, he majored in Applied Music (Saxophone, Voice, and Composition). Fr. James also has a deep love of Astronomy, which he also studied at UWSP.

After graduating from UWSP, Fr. James was offered a job at the University of Nebraska at Kearney in University Housing where he worked as a Hall Director and managed the student computer lab supervisors. In addition to his work duties, Fr. James pursued a M.S.ed. in Group Counseling. After a year at UNK, Fr. James discerned his call to the priesthood and left his position to attend Mundelein Seminary in Mundelein, Illinois (north Chicago suburbs).

In his first year of seminary, Fr. James found his home as a future priest. At his time at Mundelein, Fr. James earned a Bachelor of Sacred Theology (with distinction), a Master of Divinity, and a License in Sacred Theology. Fr. James graduated *Summa Cum Laude* in both his M.Div. and S.T.L. degrees. While pursuing these degrees, Fr. James also studied Spiritual Theology with the Institute of Priestly Formation at Creighton University. As a part of this program, Fr. James participated in a 30-day silent retreat, completing the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola.

Fr. James was ordained a transitional Deacon June 24, 2002 (feast of the Birth of John the Baptist) and a Priest June 28, 2003 (feast of St. Irenaeus of Lyons). These past eight years, Fr. James has been assigned to the Tri-Parishes of St. Mary's, Durand; Holy Rosary Parish, Lima; and Sacred Heart Parish, Mondovi. After two years, Fr. James was assigned as Chaplain of Regis Middle and High School and Associate Vocation Director. Fr. James will continue these assignments as he begins to serve as Parochial Administrator of St. Raymond of Peñafort Parish.

To have Fr. James present to our parish during this time of pain and loss is a source of stability. We thank God for Fr. James' presence as we continue our prayers for Fr. Hogan.