

ISSUE NO. 110

29 SEPTEMBER 2019

# *Cathedral*

## WEEKLY



### TWENTY-SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

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# Cathedral WEEKLY

THE MOST REVEREND THOMAS JOHN PAPROCKI  
NINTH BISHOP  
OF SPRINGFIELD IN ILLINOIS

THE VERY REVEREND CHRISTOPHER A. HOUSE, V.J.  
RECTOR

THE REVEREND MICHAEL FRIEDEL  
PAROCHIAL VICAR

THE REVEREND DOMINIC RANKIN  
PAROCHIAL VICAR

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Mass Times: SAT 4PM, SUN. 7AM, 10AM, 5PM  
Weekday Masses: MON. thru FRI. 7AM, 5:15PM and SAT. 8AM  
Reconciliation (Confessions): MON-FRI 4:15PM- 5PM, SAT. 9AM-10AM,  
2:30PM-3:30PM, and SUN. 4PM-4:45PM  
Adoration: Tuesdays & Thursdays 4PM to 5PM

Diocesan Victim Assistance is available. For the Diocesan Victim Assistance Coordinator, please contact: Patricia Kornfield at 321-1155.

Please remember that if you or a loved one is in the hospital, a nursing home or home-bound, to contact the Parish offices or Sr. Francella at 522-3342 x 142. Hospitals may know you are Catholic, but not know you are from Cathedral. We would be happy to visit.

## Welcome to the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception!

On behalf of our bishop, the Most Reverend Thomas John Paprocki, our parishioners, deacons, and priests, I welcome you to the mother church of the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois.

The seat of the diocese was moved to Springfield from Alton in 1923. In the same year, "Old St. Mary's" church of Immaculate Conception Parish was named as the pro-cathedral of the new diocese until this cathedral church was built and dedicated in 1928. Currently, our diocese comprises twenty-eight counties in central Illinois, serving over 140,000 members of the Catholic faithful.

I hope that your visit to our Cathedral is one of grace and beauty and that you feel at home in the mother church. I also hope that you will find this edition of the *Cathedral Weekly* to be both informative and spiritually enriching. May God bless you and yours!



Very Reverend Christopher A. House  
Rector

## Mass Intentions for the Upcoming Week

### Monday – September 30

7 AM MARY ANN MIDDEN (WILLIAM MIDDEN)  
5:15PM EULALIA & RAYMOND OHL (FRIENDS & FAMILY)

### Tuesday – October 1

7 AM MARY PRIESTER (RITA & FRED GREENWALD)  
5:15PM RALPH WALTER, SR. (JEAN MOSS & RALPH WALTER)

### Wednesday – October 2

7AM DORIS DREA (MIKE & KAREN RELLIHAN)  
5:15PM CARL VENVERTLOH (MR. & MRS. RICO JOHNSON)

### Thursday – October 3

7AM Bonnie Donnals (CHERYL GALE)  
5:15 PM Sophia E. Bartoletti (Bartoletti Family)

### Friday – October 4

7AM Leoncia Amon (ROSE AMON)  
5:15PM RICHIUSA & LEO FAMILIES (FAMILY)

### Saturday – October 5

8 AM BETTY EDGAR (VIRGINIA GARNER)  
4 PM BILL CRUMLY (JEANNE & JACK MCCARTHY)

### Sunday – October 6

7 AM FOR THE PEOPLE  
10 AM IRVIN LARRY SMITH (FRIENDS FROM ISBE)  
5 PM SPECIAL INTENTION FOR LOST SOULS (CCCW)





## Comfort in Riches ... or Resurrection?

My life is one of far greater riches than the rich man in today's parable. Space-age wool, cotton, and polyester blends compose the clothes that I throw on every morning and the food I eat throughout the day is more abundant, nourishing, fresh, and appetizing than even the most sumptuous of meals that the un-identified "Dives" ["rich-man"] would have enjoyed. So how do I avoid his fate? A few take-aways immediately strike the attentive reader.

For one, the obvious connotation: Dives now finds himself in anguish because he ignored the impoverished and ill Lazarus who lived literally under his very gate, and yet received neither attention, food, nor even the smallest gesture of love from him. Christ's words in the prior chapter of Luke that we heard last weekend should resonate again in our hearts: *"you cannot serve God and mammon"*. "Son", Abraham speaks to all of us, *"remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish."* Is my "lifetime", a word that not only speaks of physical length of days, but of the fullness of our lives, including and extending into eternity, comprised merely of the "good things" of this world? How often is my mood, disposition, and happiness dependent on merely earthly possessions and pleasures?

A couple weeks ago I bought one of those electrolyte-additive mixes that you drink after a hard workout, choosing "orange" because I thought it would be the best flavor. Well, it's terrible, and every time I try to drink the stuff, I think I should just toss it and try "cherry pomegranate" or "lemon" instead... Not after this Gospel! Lazarus did not have food at all. He did not even get the scraps and refuse that our rich man threw out, much less food that was palatable or nutritious. In eternity, am I going to be still be looking for a quick drink for myself (as long as it's not orange-flavored) or will my mind and heart be set on more important things? I make that decision now in the simple choice to not complain when my preference is not given to me, as well as in those greater acts of charity when I offer kindness, concern, and dignity to someone in need of it who crosses my path.

A second call resonates beyond this first one though, and it comes at the end of our Gospel today.

And he said, 'Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father's house, for I have five brothers, so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment. But Abraham said, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.' And he said, 'No, father Abraham; but if some one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' He said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced if some one should rise from the dead.' "

Our rich man shows concern for his brothers; he is not just a cold-hearted, wealthy, tyrant or something. What does this mean for us?: Kindness is not enough. Love of neighbor is not the extent of Christ's call, but only when it flows from, and is linked with Love of God! Our life must not merely be not serving mammon, but a conscious and constant choice to serve God! How might we do this? I think our Gospel today offers us a simple way: fill our minds and hearts with God's Word. Abraham's final message to our rich-man is that he (and his brothers) did not hear Moses and the Prophets, and so, they would also be ambivalent towards even the astonishing revelation in Christ's resurrection. Is my mind filled by the entertainment, distractions, and noise of our world? What happens when my phone dies or an ad rudely interrupts my YouTube watching? What is the first thing I read in the morning, or the last thing I hear or see before I fall asleep?

While running this past week, the Bluetooth earbuds I was listening to an audiobook with ran out of power. I had a couple miles to go on a long run, and it was annoying to not have the distraction of constant sound pumped into my head, but I was forced to go without them and ended up praying two decades of the rosary and greeting a couple people with a smile and wave as I trotted the last bit back to the rectory. It was a moment of insight: are the words that fill my mind and heart those of God, or a barrage of distraction that keep me far from appreciating His gifts and presence? Not only must we set aside time for silence in order to even notice God's work in our lives, but we also have to spend time to meditate on His Word – Moses, the Prophets, the Gospels – and let them percolate in our hearts, penetrate our minds, and polish the lenses through which we see our world.



*Father Dominic Rankin is a Parochial Vicar for the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception.*



## Responding to “I’m Spiritual, Not Religious”

Various polls in recent years have indicated the rise of “nones”, those declaring no religious affiliation whatsoever. This is particularly conspicuous among young people. It

has been noted that these “nones” are often of two types:

1. Those who show an outright hostility to all things religious, including merely believing in God;
2. Those who are interested in spiritual and religious matters, but are disenchanted with any kind of institutional or organized religion.

It’s from this latter group that one often hears, “I’m spiritual, not religious.” Typically, underlying this view is a sentiment which insists that religion is man-made.

The prevalence of this view dovetails with sociologist Christian Smith’s work. He describes the American religious landscape as one of moralistic therapeutic deism. The first (moralism) is the view that the essence of religion is about making people good, which is often equated with being nice. The second component (therapeutic) refers to the commonplace view that religion serves the purpose of providing comfort—it should make us feel better. And finally, deism is the view that acknowledges God’s existence, but denies that God is involved in our lives in any serious way: i.e., he doesn’t hear our prayers (and so no real relationship is possible), nor does he make any real demands over our lives.

### The Difference the Eucharist Makes

I have incredible respect for our Protestant brothers and sisters. In fact, I studied biblical languages and archaeology in a Protestant graduate program. However, I can understand the attraction to “I’m spiritual, but not religious” from a Protestant perspective. In Protestantism, what is the reason for attending Sunday worship—beyond merely the command to observe the Sabbath? Further, are there other ways of attaining the goods sought by physically going to church (e.g., sermons, music, fellowship)?

Indeed, in a Protestant framework, the answer would seem to be yes. After all, one can hear terrific talks, sermons, and praise and worship music on the internet. And one can certainly feel like they’re part of a community in many ways, even online.

When all is said and done, organized Protestant worship and ecclesial structure is largely man-made. For this reason, one can see the rise of “I’m spiritual,

not religious” as a secularized form of Protestantism. (See Brad Gregory’s *Unintended Reformation* for more on the historical connection between the Protestant Reformation and the rise of secularization.)

### Christ in Full Glory

But the case is different for Catholics. We don’t go to Mass because of the homily (though, we certainly appreciate it when it’s well done). Nor do we go to Mass for the music (though we love it when it’s done beautifully and with devotion). We don’t even go to Mass primarily for the community (though that’s the natural side effect of people gathering together in pursuit of a transcendent good).

We go to Mass in order to receive the Risen Body of Jesus Christ, and thereby have hope in our own resurrection. As St. Ignatius of Antioch put it in A.D. 107, the Eucharist is the “medicine of immortality, antidote against death” (Letter to Ephesians, chapter 20). Ignatius gets this teaching directly from Jesus:

*“He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day” (John 6:54).*

Everything about the Catholic Faith can be tied to the Eucharist as the Sacrament of Sacraments. Christ acts in all the sacraments by his power; but in the Eucharist, we have Christ Himself. In truth, at the end of time when Christ comes again, he won’t have an ounce more glory than he does right now in the Eucharist. The only difference will be in our ability to see.

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## What Is the Church?

All of the sacraments either prepare us to receive the Eucharist (baptism, confession); make the Eucharist possible (ordination); manifest the nuptial love of God to the world—which is manifest in the Eucharist (matrimony); or configure us to the Paschal Mystery more fully, which the Eucharist makes present (confirmation, anointing of the sick). All of the sacraments are either ordered to the Eucharist or flow from it. That is why the Eucharist is the “source and summit” of the Christian faith (Lumen Gentium, 11).

When we ask “What is the Church?” or “What makes the Church?” the answer is not buildings or architecture (though we have a wonderful and beautiful architectural tradition); nor is it simply hierarchy and bureaucratic structure (though hierarchy and authority play an important role in Catholic life and teaching).

## The answer is the Eucharist—for the Eucharist makes the Church.

In and through the Eucharist, we become the Body of Christ. The Eucharist is the nuptial union between the Church and her divine bridegroom; and it is through this one-flesh union that the Church becomes the Body of Christ.

All of the hierarchy really flows from this precious gift of the Most Holy Eucharist; for it is

necessary to bring the Eucharist about. The Eucharist implies an ordained priesthood through which Christ continues his priesthood, as well as bishops who ordain these priests through the laying on of hands. The Church’s moral teaching takes on its fullest dimension in light of this nuptial relationship we’ve been invited to with our Lord, a nuptial union which finds its consummation in the Eucharist.

Much of Catholic practice, devotion, and teaching stem from preserving the divine dignity of the Holy Eucharist or distilling this wondrous treasure for the faithful. The Eucharist is truly the “source and summit” of Christian life—the very fulcrum around which our faith turns and the centrifugal source of the outpouring of divine life.

## Is Moralistic Therapeutic Deism Really Satisfying?

In my youth, I didn’t care much for my Catholic faith. Looking back, there are likely a host of reasons for this, some of which

surely stem directly from me. Still, the Catholic Faith as presented to me in grade school and high school quite simply had no teeth—it made no real demands beyond “be nice.” I realized early on that I could get the gospel of “be nice” from lots of places—Confucius, Plato, or Buddha all could have taught me that. If that’s what this religion thing was about, why bother with Jesus? After all, what difference did Jesus make? For the truth is religion that demands nothing means nothing.

Jesus went to his death (as did the early Christian martyrs) not for asking people to “be nice.” In John the Baptist, Jesus, and the early Christians, we see the vigorous and even dangerous adventure of taking Christianity seriously.

## Therapeutic Religion

Which brings us to the next component of our current religious predicament: therapeutic. Does religion exist merely to comfort us and make us feel better? Once again, this good can be gotten

in lots of ways—not least from a local therapist. Here, we see the American consumer mentality stepping in: religion is not about God, but about me and how it makes me feel.

Further, a distinctively modern penchant is to view the question of truth as irrelevant to religion. That is, religion exists to make us good and to comfort us. But its truth claims are really irrelevant (hence, the modern aversion to questions of heresy or falsity with regard to religion). In fact, modernity tends to operate on the assumption

that religious truth is simply unknowable.

## Keeping Religion Objective

In the modern context, the whole notion of being “spiritual, but not religious” is an attempt to reclaim some of the goods of religion (a sense for the transcendent, a deeper purpose in life), without any of the demands of a religion rooted in truth (e.g., objective moral demands that don’t always match our immediate preferences). Being spiritual and not religious is a recipe for a self-designer religion. Given how easily our passions and desires can cloud our reason, this approach is bound to have us customizing our own spirituality in a manner that does not challenge us at all—an approach which is designed never to make us feel uncomfortable and confirm us exactly where we are.

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In other words: being spiritual and not religious is precisely the man-made religion we would expect fallen creatures like ourselves to create.

But as we noted, without the Eucharist, this would seem to be a perennial temptation. The Eucharist keeps religion objective; and the features of religion which those outside the fold generally find most irksome (e.g., moral teaching, hierarchy) make sense precisely in light of the Eucharist. If the Eucharist is the Risen Jesus among us, we would expect rigorous moral teaching and a sacred hierarchy charged with caring for and presenting before the faithful this most august treasure—as well as an insistence on the importance of the sacrament of confession after committing grave (mortal) sins before receiving Christ's precious Body and Blood.

### But Can't I Just Serve the Poor?

It's common to hear someone eschew prayer in favor of acts of service—often seeing the latter as the heart of the gospel and prayer as something extra. While service is certainly an essential part of the gospel, it is not the whole.

Consider the analogy of marriage: it would be a strange marriage if I spent all my days serving my wife—doing yard work, painting, cleaning—and quite literally never talked to her for months or even years on end. Serving my wife, as well as serving those she loves (our children), is an important part of showing my love for her. But these acts of service make sense only in light of the prior relationship I have with her.

God has invited us into a personal and even nuptial relationship with him. For this reason, in the analogy, serving my wife is like acts of service which show love for my neighbor; spending time talking with my wife (about the mundane and the depths of our hearts) is analogous to prayer; and renewing our covenant bond in the marital act is a foreshadowing of the Eucharist—where we become one flesh with our Lord.

### Religion as Adventure

Serving others is essential; but it does not replace or substitute for a living personal and nuptial relationship with God. In fact, the former flows out of the vitality of the latter.

It's not surprising that people find half-baked religion uninspiring—that's exactly what I came to growing up. But the real thing—in all its glory and grandeur—is the most riveting and exhilarating adventure we could ever go on. How can we reclaim our sense of purpose and God-given mission in light of what Jesus has done for us—in the Cross and in the Holy Eucharist?

*Dr. Andrew Swafford is an associate professor of theology at Benedictine College. He is a general editor and contributor to The Great Adventure Catholic Bible, published by Ascension. He holds a doctorate in Sacred Theology from the University of St. Mary of the Lake and a master's degree in Old Testament & Semitic Languages from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. He lives with his wife Sarah and their four children in Atchison,*



## Back-Pew Comforts

To say that the devil had been playing around with the REBOOT event would be an understatement. From computers and printers not working, to the Atrium projector suddenly breaking, and to mic-issues which seemed just fine during sound-check... yes, you could say there were some challenges. But, were those challenges enough to stop conversion? Were those challenges enough to stop the smiles, positive body language, or laughter coming from the pews? Nope!

What we had been hoping for during the planning process for REBOOT was "back-pew hospitality." Unfortunately, we knew not everyone would be sitting in a "prime spot" and that some of our paying guests would end up in the back. However, thanks to the many amazing volunteers, we pulled it off! Volunteer instruction the night-of was pretty simple: Be Kind.

Why? Because that is what Jesus would do. In fact, anytime we talk about service or hospitality in a church- setting it should always involve a commitment to kindness. Are we really being ministers and servers, if we are not being kind? It is surely hard to be a reflection of Jesus' hands in feet in the world without being kind.

The kind people I know have an understanding and appreciate for the gift of life. Stewardship is ultimately an act of gratitude, a sharing of all the good things God has placed in one's life and gifting it back to God's people. A gracious heart is a characteristic

naturally of a kind person. When you live a life that is full of wants, desires, and foolish materialism, you will get sucked into sadness, not kindness. Ultimately, I can't really imagine a truly kind person who is not also self-sacrificing, generous, and a good steward, can you?

When asked by the New York Times what Saint Teresa of Calcutta would say in her Noble Peace Prize acceptance speech, she said, "I will say, 'Love one another as God loves each one of you,' Isn't this simple? This is what we teach our young children!

Why do we let our worldly desires get in the way? Temptation, revenge, resentment, all of these feelings are distractions from the hope and peace found in a stewards way of life.

In the pursuit of becoming a parish filled with disciples who intentionally choose to live stewardship as a way of life- rooted in prayer, service, and giving- we must choose kindness. We must choose love. We must choose to think of others before ourselves. If we are kind in our ministries, if we are kind in our relationships with others, if we are kind with ourselves, we will

find the love that Mother Teresa has now found. And, to that end, no matter what pew you end up in, you will know you are loved.

*Katie Price is the Stewardship Coordinator for the Cathedral and the Director of Discipleship and Stewardship for the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois.*



## Activating a Stewardship Way of Life

In preparation for the Season of Stewardship this fall, let's reflect on stewardship as a way of life. The four pillars: *Prayer, Formation, Hospitality, and Service* create the framework and model for our Parish mission. This week we are considering a stewards way of life. Commonly, we refer to one's individual stewardship tool kit as- time, talent, and treasure (or pray, service, and giving). How will you answer the call to a stewardship way of life? How do you make an intentional effort to be kind and to be a disciple?

## Stewardship Activity

### Stewardship of Prayer

Time is a gift. How can we return the gift in prayer for others this week?

### Stewardship of Service

There is still time to participate in the Habitat for Humanity Catholic build. Go to <https://habitatsangamon.volunteerhub.com/> for more information!

### Stewardship of Gifts- September 21st & 22nd

Envelopes:	\$5,678.51
Loose:	\$1,862.01
Maintenance:	\$35.00

Total:	\$7,575.52
July EFT	(\$17,870.60)

*Congratulations to Mr. & Mrs. Paul and Nicole Avila, who recently celebrated the sacrament of marriage! Please keep them in your prayers!*