



Cathedral WEEKLY

THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

THE NECESSITY OF SUNDAY MASS | FR. CHRISTOPHER HOUSE
CENTERED ON THE LIGHT OF CHRIST | ANGIE WINDNAGLE
HOW TO ENSURE YOUR KIDS KEEP THE CATHOLIC FAITH | MATT CHARBONNEAU
PLAY THAT ONE AGAIN | TRACY EARL WELLIVER

Cathedral WEEKLY

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

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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 217-522-3342 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 – January 27

7am: Doris Drea (G. Robin Vota)
5:15pm: George J. Nicoud, Sr. (Family)

Tuesday – January 28

7 am: Rodney Vlies (Family)
5:15 pm: Lennart Arnell (Family)

Wednesday – January 29

7 am: Helen Call (Kimberly Craig)
5:15 pm: John "Jack" McCarthy (Family)

Thursday – January 30

7 am: Katherine Muehl (Family)
5:15 pm: Rodney Vlies (Family)

Friday – January 31

7 am: John & Edith Bakalar (John Busciacco)
5:15pm: Thomas Rapps (Carolyn Yoggerst)

Saturday – February 1

8am: Alonzo Ferrel (Betty & Glen Rogers)
4pm: Doris Drea (4 o'clock Ushers)

Sunday – February 2

7 am: Mary Priester (Leo & Norma Dougherty)
10 am: For the People
5 pm: Barbara J. McGrath (Family & Friends)



The Necessity of Sunday Mass

Do me a favor and please read this all the way through, not stopping until you get to the end. Growing up, there were two basic rules at home (there were more than two but two in particular really stick out in my memory). One was that you were to get a job when you turned sixteen; the second was that you went to Mass every Sunday and holy day. If you were too sick to go to Sunday Mass, then you were obviously too sick to do anything else. When we would go on vacation, the first thing my Dad would do when we got to our hotel was to find out where the nearest Catholic church was and what their Sunday Mass schedule was. You can take a break from work, school, and many other things in life, but you can't take a break from God. Imagine for one moment if He took a break from us (and you think this world is messed up now?); it would be cataclysmic.

Sunday Mass is an obligation. The Third Commandment handed down by God to Moses is that the Sabbath Day is to be kept holy. In our Christian tradition, the Church understands this as participating at Mass on Sundays. Sunday is the Christian Sabbath (the original day being Saturday) because it was on Sunday that our Lord rose from the dead to new and everlasting life. Participation at Sunday Mass is a precept of the Church and to willfully miss Sunday Mass, without serious reason or without a dispensation, is a grave sin according to the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC 2181).

When an act is determined by the Church to be gravely sinful and the act is done freely and knowingly as being gravely sinful, then it is mortally sinful. What does this mean? The Church teaches that mortal sin that is not repented of excludes a soul from heaven. Having said this, in the same section of the Catechism, the Church teaches that final judgment ultimately belongs to the justice and mercy of God (CCC 1861). For those who willfully miss Sunday Mass or Mass on holy days of obligation, the Cathedral offers daily opportunities to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

So why am I bringing this up? Last weekend Mass attendance dropped significantly. This happens from time to time, sometimes due to holiday weekends and sometimes due to reasons known only to God. Last weekend I suspect it was due to the cold weather. It's not fun going out in the cold. For some, they should not venture out in extreme weather due to the necessity of not endangering their personal well-being. For others, it is not so much about necessity but convenience or preference.

At times, we can fall into the trap of misplaced priorities or false judgments about what is good and what is better: vacations, kids' sporting events, too much "fun" on Saturday night, personal comfort, etc. If we are contemplating missing Sunday Mass (not including being sick or caring for someone who is, or having to work for the sake of being able to live), we have to honestly ask ourselves if there is a duty or serious reason that necessitates our absence; put another way, is what I am doing instead of going to Mass going to deepen my relationship with the Lord or weaken it and possibly break it? Furthermore, if I am responsible for others getting to Mass, like children, how is this judgment going to help or hinder their relationship with God?

Am I casting judgments or aspersions? No; but I am trying to fulfill both my sacred duty as a shepherd of souls as well as fulfilling the prophetic call that we all have by virtue of baptism by calling folks back to right relationship with God. Like the prophets of old, I may be risking having stones thrown at me but I care enough about the salvation of those who come to this Cathedral that I am willing to risk the displeasure of some.

I have focused on the "negative" aspects of missing Mass but the positive reasons should be our greater motivation. First and foremost, we come to Mass for love of God and in gratitude to Him for his graces and mercies; even here, the goodness of God cannot be outdone because when we come to Sunday Mass not only do we encounter Him but we are able to receive him truly and totally in the Eucharist. If we truly want to be disciples, holy Mass is where that desire should be strengthened and renewed each week: "the Sunday Eucharist is the foundation and confirmation of all Christian practice (CCC 2181)."

Sunday Mass is far more of an opportunity than an obligation. Faithfully coming to Mass on Sunday will not necessarily make your life easier nor will it make your problems and crosses disappear. It will, however, draw you closer to God and give you graces to push forward through challenges and difficulties, and families that worship together at Sunday Mass will find their bonds strengthened. Absence from Sunday Mass is absence from the divine presence in the Eucharist; removing ourselves from the Eucharist puts us, spiritually, on a dangerous and slippery slope.

So, literally, for love of God, come to Sunday Mass (and on holy days too). God in his goodness has given us 168 hours each week; rendering one hour back to Him in praise and thanksgiving is truly not too much to ask. Sometimes it may not be convenient, but so goes life. By faithfully participating at Mass you will find that the Lord will offer you more than you can offer Him and you will be all the better for it...we will be all the better for it because together we are the Mystical Body of Christ, called to be His presence in the world.

Father Christopher House is the Rector of the Cathedral and serves in various leadership roles within the diocesan curia, namely Chancellor and Vicar Judicial.

Centered on the Light of Christ

Looking up at the stars on a warm, quiet night is one of my favorite things to do. I revel in the chance to soak in the vastness around me, staring at the charming character of stars that are so massive and powerful in existence but seem so tiny to my eyes. I remember driving through the jungles of Honduras at night in the back of a pickup once in college. The sweet-smelling dirt swirled around me, the bump and thud of the truck hitting mud hummed under my feet, and I looked up. It was simply pure beauty. There were no lights from cities or towns to adulterate the sky. Miles of mountain villages and the deep Caribbean Ocean spilled darkness to everything around us. I couldn't make out a tree in front of me if it weren't for the headlights. Because of the impenetrable darkness, the stars sprinkled about the night sky became alive. Each one was more beautiful than the one next to it. There seemed to be thousands more than I had ever seen before.

The readings this Sunday remind me of this paradox — that within some of the darkest parts of our history, the light of Christ has shone even more brilliantly. Tertullian observed the same when he said that “the blood of martyrs is the seed of the Church.” Some of the most trying times in the history of the Church brought about the greatest saints who were willing to die for the faith. Those lights in the darkness allowed the Church to flourish. This reminds us that no matter how dark the world seems to get around us, the light of Christ shines even brighter, leading his people to healing and hope.



As I look around at our world today, I see this darkness. I see a darkening of intellect and will when celebrities like Michelle Williams publicly praise abortion and twist the truth of freedom to be self-serving. I see a darkening of hope when the world sits on the precipice of war. I see darkness when friends lose hope of ever being able to afford to pay bills and provide for their children. How are we to respond to the enveloping darkness around us? How do the readings this weekend teach us to respond?

In the second reading, St. Paul attempts to show us the answer. He chastises the Corinthians to avoid divisions and rivalries among them. While we aren't arguing who is a follower of Paul or Apollos in our times, we can see the divisions we've allowed to take root in our lives in a similar way. We hear things like “I'm a Trump supporter!” or “I will never vote Republican!” and more. The point Paul makes is that to combat the darkness, we need to follow the light. In other words, our lives must be entirely Christ centered, or Christocentric. Our primary identity must lie in belonging to Christ. Everything else must become secondary.

In the Gospel, Christ beckons the first Apostles to follow that primacy and light. The darkness they experienced in their day may have been in the context of different circumstances than we are in, but it wasn't completely unlike our own. Jesus spoke to the darkness surrounding the Apostles spiritually and answered it with the call to follow him. The challenge for us today is to be deeply convicted of that same call and to recognize that Christ is reaching into the impenetrable depths and darkness of our own hearts and cultures and calling us to follow him in a new, profound way. After this, we need to follow the example of the Apostles and act on it. We need to answer the question, “What is God calling me to let go of so that I will be freer to live a life for Christ?”

In one of his sermons, St. Bernard says that “the incarnation teaches us how much God cares for us and what he thinks and feels about us.” Like the brilliance of the stars I experienced in that dark drive in Honduras, when we truly accept that Christ loves us and is calling us “out of darkness and into his marvelous light,” we can stop fearing the darkness and division around us (1 Peter 2:9).

Angie Windnagle, BSC is an author for Liturgical Publications, Inc. and writes reflections on the Sunday readings.

Sunday Reflection

The Word of God Living Among Us

We devote this day to the celebration, study, and spread of the Word of God. The Word is first spoken in Jesus who is, in fact, the very spoken Word of God. And when this Word himself speaks, things happen. Hear the gospel today: Jesus invites; Peter and Andrew follow right away. James and John immediately do the same. We also believe this: Jesus not only spoke long ago; when Scripture is read aloud in prayer, Jesus speaks today.

- What does Christ say to me in these Sunday readings?
- What “darkness” needs dispelling by his word?
- What word that I hear will I proclaim? To whom? When?





How to Ensure Your Kids Keep the Catholic Faith

Being a high school teacher and father of three children can carry a great feeling of reward and satisfaction, especially when it comes to passing on the Catholic Faith.

Serving as a role model for teenagers, one can realize tremendous fulfillment by helping guide students along a positive path in life and acting as an example of healthy influence for their decision-making in the future. Being a religious education teacher in a Catholic high school, however, can provide affirmation that is even more special.

How the Faith Takes Root

Such an educator has the unique privilege of presenting God to youth who may or may not have relationship with him. We have the opportunity each day to introduce God in all of his glory and mystery, revealing his presence and love through a wide array of prayers, lessons, discussions and activities.

Yet, this gratification does not necessarily come early. In fact, it has been my experience this encouragement and validation usually come far later, once students have advanced into their college studies and have grown through life encounters. It is usually around this time they have reflected on their past and have come to appreciate their faith with more mature perspectives.

Recognizing a far lesser awareness or depth of their Catholic faith when in my classes, it is my challenge and responsibility to meet students where they are in their lives, aiming to plant seeds of Jesus' good news that will hopefully take root and grow in time.

Passing on the Faith as Parents

So, as a religion teacher, I am tasked early and often to help my students come to know God and grasp what it means to be Catholic. As important as that assignment is, though, I take even greater pride in sharing that same message with our children. My wife Catherine and I are blessed with three kids, aged five and under. We both grew up in practicing Catholic families and we both held a passion for our faith prior to meeting and marrying. Now parents, we both willingly undertake the challenge to share and impress upon our kids the value of belonging to the Catholic Faith. This might be simple in theory, but not so easy in practice.

Labor of Love

Teaching children the importance of the Catholic Faith so they can come to understand and appreciate it themselves can be one of the hardest yet most critical roles of parenting. In our ever-changing world, kids of all ages are exposed to so many diverse and complex ideas and behaviors, not all of them aligned with our beliefs.

As parents are the anchors of the family, it is incumbent on us to teach and model our Catholic identity to our children. This will encourage their faith formation while helping preserve the healthy existence of family—the foundation for a strong society. Doing so can also prompt our kids to not only *know* Catholic teachings but

also to *practice* them; to not only *learn* Catholic lessons but also to *live* them.

This is not a process with instant results and such a labor of love will take years of attention and effort. So with that in mind, below are some ways parents can convey the meaning and importance of being Catholic to their children no matter what their age.

Power of Prayer

One of the key principles in our faith, parents can consider it their duty to teach their children both how and why to pray.

The Christian family is the first place of education in prayer. Based on the sacrament of marriage, the family is the "domestic church" where God's children learn to pray "as the Church" and to persevere in prayer. For young children in particular, daily family prayer is the first witness of the Church's living memory as awakened patiently by the Holy Spirit. (Catechism of the Catholic Church 2685)

Instead of looking at this as an unpleasant obligation, parents can view this responsibility more like a privilege. After all, spending quality time together and helping them learn to communicate with God can assist kids in developing a positive relationship with our Lord while also fostering a strong, virtuous life.

Teaching Kids How to Pray

As it is such a crucial building block of faith, parents can teach and practice prayer in a variety of ways. Certainly, we can introduce kids to relationship with God early on through song and age-appropriate reading. Reading together before naps or bedtime or playing Catholic music while traveling can inform children about famous biblical characters and events while teaching them the immense power of God's love for his people.

Praying the Rosary as a family can demonstrate to our kids the beauty and richness of the Catholic Faith through the drawing of grace from God and our Blessed Mother Mary. While strengthening certain qualities such as patience and solidarity, the Rosary can teach several specific traditional prayers, including the *Apostles' Creed*, *Our Father*, *Hail Mary*, and *Glory Be*. It can also introduce others like the *Fatima* prayer and *Hail Holy Queen*.

Prayers before meals can refocus kids and remind them to always recognize and be grateful for their many blessings in life. Having a constant time of prayer at such moments and others such as bedtime can reinforce to children the importance of talking with God for any and all reasons. Prayer can also spur youth to ask questions about God, leading to some meaningful chats between parents and their kids. Additionally, children can come to better appreciate the meaning of prayer as they grow, as well as its importance for calling on God's guidance and aid. Kids can realize this not only for themselves but also for others—family, friends, the leaders, and the weaker, less fortunate members of society.

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Talk It Out

In such a busy world, conversations of any substance between parents and children can seem scarce. Discussing the Catholic Faith with our kids, then, can provide a refreshing break from the daily small talk that can bombard our routines. Whether chatting in the car, reading the Bible or sitting down for a heart to heart talk, addressing life lessons with connections to Jesus' parables or Old Testament proverbs can help youth reflect and mature in their attitudes and outlooks. Sharing with them information from one's personal testimony can also offer children a genuine glimpse into how impactful God is. This can be particularly helpful as our youth grow older, as they may very well need such a reassurance to lean on God during times of struggle or doubt:

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.

Proverbs 3:5-6

Regular verbal reminders that God loves them and that they are blessings from heaven can emphasize to our kids just how God views them, how we care for them and how they are commissioned to live. Impressing on our children the value of the Catholic Faith through our emotional sharing in authentic conversation can therefore help reveal to them its significance while encouraging them in their own spiritual journey.



Walk the Walk

We read in the Bible how we must back up our words with actions. Anytime we say something, we are called to support our speech with tangible justification. This is why it is so necessary to show our children the meaning of their Catholic faith and its worth through how we live with them.

A vital example of this is regular Mass attendance. To talk at home about Jesus and his unconditional love for us is one matter, but to celebrate God's Holy Word recited and unite fully with our Savior through the Holy Eucharist is quite another. Despite the many scheduling commitments that may exist on a calendar each week, going to Mass as a family can teach kids from an early age the art of tradition, the special quality of time spent together and the spiritual benefit of being present in the house of the Lord. While each of the sacraments is important, attending Mass regularly and receiving the Blessed Sacrament can provide children of all ages the best opportunity

to encounter entirely Jesus' love and presence by entering into complete communion with him.

Catholic Education

Another way parents can share the meaning of the Catholic Faith with our kids is through education. If possible, sending children to a Catholic school (or enrolling them in a Catholic religious education program outside of school hours) can promote and bolster the Christian values inspired by the Bible and taught at home. Receiving such an education can offer youth an environment of wholesome, virtue-laden teachings that support Catholic theology and social teaching.

A Catholic school background introduces our children to opportunities to serve in their community, humbling and motivating them to make a positive contribution in the world. Whether cleaning up litter from a local park, visiting the elderly in a nearby retirement home, serving food for the homeless at a downtown shelter, or any other act of community volunteerism,

students in a Catholic school learn and feel the impact of giving back. Coupled with their own families' acts of service, students can truly witness and live corporal works of mercy, coming to more fully understand the notion of defending and displaying our Catholic beliefs through actions.

Valuing Our Catholic Identity

There are so many other ways that parents can teach their children the meaning and impact of being Catholic. Family retreats, children's Bible study camps, a parent's blessing over kids before bedtime and faith-friendly TV or movie programming (or healthy

discussions following content that is not supportive of the Faith) are all subtle yet strong examples that can help nurture kids' understanding of and appreciation for their Catholic faith.

No matter the method, we as parents are called to share and to show how God is always present in the world, leading our children each day of their lives. If we can do that with devotion and humility, we can be confident our kids will know and value their Catholic identity, always remembering they are blessed and loved.

Matt Charbonneau is a high school religious education teacher who inspires his students to explore a deeper relationship with God. Applying uplifting lessons, engaging activities and insightful experiences, he strives to demonstrate the powerful presence and unconditional love of God in everyday life. For more of Matt's writing, visit God's Giveaways at www.mattcharbonneau.com.

Stewardship Activity

Stewardship of Prayer:

Most High, glorious God,
enlighten the darkness of my heart and give me
true faith, certain hope, and perfect charity,
sense and knowledge, Lord, that I may carry out
Your holy and true command.
Amen.

Stewardship of Service:

An Altar Server is an extension of the community's need to participate actively in the celebration of the church's public ministry. Altar Servers may be called upon to serve in any number of situations including Sunday Mass or weekday Mass celebrations, funeral liturgies, Eucharistic Adoration, or any other public worship service in the church. Contact the Parish Office at 217-522-3342 for more information on how to become an Altar Server.

Stewardship of Gifts

Stewardship of Treasure January 18th & 19th

Envelopes:	\$5,836.00
Loose:	\$1,783.83
<u>Maintenance:</u>	<u>\$165.00</u>
Total:	\$7,784.83
December EFT	\$28,254.70

This week's second collection is for the *Church in Latin America*. This second collection helps strengthen families, fund Catholic education, and foster priestly and religious vocations in Latin America. For over 50 years, Catholics in the United States have expressed solidarity with the Church from Mexico to the Caribbean, to the southern tip of South America through this collection. For more information about this second collection, visit <http://www.usccb.org/catholic-giving/opportunities-for-giving/latin-america/>.

Did you know you can make a gift online? If you would like to extend a special gift to the Cathedral, go to <https://spicathedral.org/give-online/>. We appreciate your generosity!

Catholic Schools Week

January 26th - February 1st, 2020 is National Catholic Schools Week. For more information about Catholic schools in the Springfield Diocese, please visit <https://www.dio.org/schools/home.html>.

The Cathedral Parish believes in the value of Catholic education and is committed to assisting parishioners who choose a Catholic education for their children. More information on the 2020 Cathedral Parishioner Catholic School Tuition Scholarships will be released in the coming weeks.



Play That One Again

How many times have you sung the church song, "Here I Am, Lord"? If you grew up Catholic and are around my age (still 50!), the answer is more than you can count. The song that quotes various verses of Scripture is sung using guitar, piano, or organ, by cantors and choirs, in traditional and modern churches. It is truly a Catholic greatest hit of the modern Church. The question is how many times when singing the refrain have you really taken to heart what you were singing?

"Here I am, Lord; is it I, Lord? I have heard you calling in the night." Like the biblical figure Samuel, we are responding to the call of God by asking for clarification that we are indeed the one being called. We then follow up the question with a profound statement: "I will go if You lead me." It is profound because we are pledging to our

God that we are willing to go wherever He wants. We are accepting the challenge put forth in the U.S. Bishops' pastoral letter, "Stewardship: A Disciple's Response," to become mature disciples who respond to the call of Jesus Christ regardless of the cost. We have sung this pledge repeatedly for many years.

We never have any idea what God will call us to do and where to go. Sometimes the request can ask us for quite a lot. Hopefully, we respond like a mature disciple. If not, maybe we should reflect more the next time this song is played. The melody will not allow for the words, "I will see if I am busy and then decide to go if you lead me." Then again, I don't want to sing that to God, the source of all life anyway. Do you?

Tracy Earl Welliver is a Catholic author, speaker, consultant, and Gallup-certified Strengths coach with over 25 years experience in parish ministry. He is currently the Director of Parish Community and Engagement for LPI where he manages the company's coaching and consulting efforts. Tracy also currently sits on the ICSC Board of Directors and is a Gallup-certified Strengths coach. He has spoken on and coached dioceses, parishes, and individuals on stewardship, engagement, Strengths, and discipleship all over North America, Australia, and New Zealand.