



Cathedral

WEEKLY

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

THE WELL OF MERCY | FR. CHRISTOPHER HOUSE
THE CHARISM OF MERCY | VICKI COMPTON
HOW NOVENAS KEEP ME ON TRACK WITH MY LENTEN PROMISE | MEGAN STOLZ
REMEMBER AND BE TRANSFORMED | BR. SILAS HENDERSON

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

DEACON IRVIN LAWRENCE SMITH

DEACON T. SCOTT KEEN

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Website: www.spicathedral.org

Mass Times: Saturday - 4:00pm; Sunday - 7:00am, 10:00am, & 5:00pm

Weekday Masses: Monday through Friday - 7:00am & 5:15pm; Saturday - 8:00am

Reconciliation: Monday through Friday - 4:15pm-5:00pm; Saturday - 9:00am-10:00am & 2:30pm-3:30pm; Sunday - 4:00pm-4:45pm

Adoration: Tuesday & Thursday - 4:00pm to 5:00pm

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.

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 – March 16

7am: Boyan Petkov (Judith Mohler)
12:05pm: Doris Drea (Missouri AFL-CIO)
5:15pm: Mary Elizabeth Forrester (Betty & Glen Rogers)

Tuesday – March 17

7am: Helene O'Shea (Bud O'Shea)
12:05pm: Deceased Members of the Ricco Piccinino Family (John Busciacco)
5:15pm: Thomas McGee Family (Tom McGee)

Wednesday – March 18

7am: Special Intention (Ann Johnson)
12:05pm: Patria & Rufino Gotanco (Joe & Hati Uy)
5:15pm: Helen F. Call (John Cernich Family)

Thursday – March 19

7am: Doris Drea (Missouri AFL-CIO)
12:05pm: Mario Rosa (Iris Miranda-Kirschner)
5:15pm: Mary Corrigan (Carl & Lou Ann Corrigan)

Friday – March 20

7am: George Zeigler (William & Debra Stonikas)
12:05pm: Doris Drea (Missouri AFL-CIO)
5:15pm: Repose of the Soul of Elmer Harold Pontzious (Betty & Glen Rogers)

Saturday – March 21

8am: Billy Crumly (Michael & Mary Crumly)
4pm: For the People

Sunday – March 22

7am: Mary Ann Midden (William Midden)
10am: Charles & Mercedes Nesbitt (Kathy Frank)
5pm: Repose of the Soul of Michael Joseph Foley, Jr. (Betty & Glen Rogers)



The Well of Mercy

Ten years ago this past December, we celebrated the rededication of the Cathedral Church. At that time, I was the diocesan Master of Ceremonies so I was tasked with overseeing the actual dedication ritual. This was the first dedication of a church for me and the fact that it was the Cathedral made it even more special and also more nerve-racking. There are different prayers and ritual actions that compose the rite and that make for a beautiful celebration. The central prayer is the actual prayer of dedication. In studying the text of the prayer, I remember being struck by one specific line in the prayer: *here may the waters of Baptism overwhelm the shame of sin.*

This Third Sunday of Lent presents us with the story of the Woman at the Well as recorded in St. John's Gospel. The story is rich in details that should be noticed. The disciples have gone into the town to buy food. Jesus remains, alone, at a well to rest. It is an odd place to rest being that it is noon and the hottest time of the day, but none of this is by accident, just as Jesus's encountering the Samaritan woman is not a matter of chance.

The woman comes to the well. No one goes to fetch water at noon; water is fetched either early in the morning or in the evening so as to avoid the sun and the heat. Yet, here this woman approached the well and encountered the Lord who was waiting for her. In the course of the conversation we come to understand that the woman is in a relationship that is contrary to God's law. While some people today might be inclined to brush off the woman's circumstance, 2000 years ago the woman would have been faced with shame and being ostracized from the community; thus, why the woman is going to the well at noon when no one is around.

Jesus meets the woman where she is. He engages her in a way that brings her sin into the light without condemning her or seeking to shame her. While He asks her for a drink of water, He is actually thirsting for her faith and an openness to His grace and mercy. He wants the same from us.

As we continue through this holy season of Lent, may we heed the Lord's call to return to the grace of our baptism, to leave the old life of sin behind, as well as the shame and guilt that it brings. I want to invite you to take advantage of the sacrament of Reconciliation offered here at the Cathedral or in any parish. I am especially inviting you if you find that you are carrying the burden of sin, shame, and guilt, and don't seem to know how to lay them down. Reconciliation is the well of mercy where the Lord Jesus is waiting for all of us. Come and meet the Lord, allow Him to wash you clean and to remind you that you are loved, that you belong to Him, and that no sin can ever change that fact.

We are not the sum of our weaknesses and failures, we are the sum of the Father's love for us and our real capacity to become the image of His Son Jesus. -Pope St. John Paul II

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

Sunday Reflection

Drinking in Christ

Let us not grumble like the people in the desert. For we stand in the grace of God who pours divine love into our hearts and being. Let us stay in conversation with Jesus just as the Samaritan woman did at the well through our prayer and lenten reading.

- What grumbling, what complaining will I stop doing?
- How will I make time each day to pray and converse with God?
- How will I be a sign of healing and support to the elect thirsting for Easter Baptism?

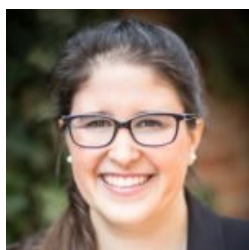
The Charism of Mercy

Today's Gospel of the woman at the well is one of my favorites. Jesus knew everything about her, everything that she had done – and loved her. The woman, who may have had a shameful past, went to the well at noon when no others would be there, and Jesus, man and a Jew, spoke to her about God's love; the water of eternal life. How she must have felt when Jesus turned his loving attention on her!

The charism of mercy empowers a Christian to be a channel of God's love through hands-on, practical deeds of compassion that relieve the distress of those who suffer and help them experience God's love. Disciples with this charism are drawn to people who may be ignored or rejected by society. They identify with the pain of those who are suffering or oppressed and seek to comfort them with the love of Jesus through their actions. Though they feel the pain of others deeply, they do not find working with the needy depressing or draining but rather compelling and fulfilling. They feel privileged to be allowed to minister to the poor and readily see and delight in the greatness of heart and soul that those who suffer often possess.

Possible expressions of this charism include social worker, missionary, prison minister, social justice activist, food pantry or shelter volunteer, pastoral worker or medical professional. If the Holy Spirit has granted you this special gift, you will not be content organizing or merely supporting assistance efforts, you will be drawn to hands-on service for relieving the suffering of others. If this describes you, the world is desperately in need of you and your gift.

Vicki Compton is the Coordinator of Faith Formation and Mission at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Springfield, Illinois.



How Novenas Keep Me on Track With My Lenten Promise

I've always struggled with daily prayer — I don't have the self-discipline to commit to something every day. So, as a way to get better at prayer and to deepen my relationship with God, I made daily prayer my Lenten promise for several years. It did not go well. I'd get off on the right foot but quickly start missing days, and by the end of Lent, feel like a failure. I kept trying year after year, but I kept falling short.

I needed a strategy to make good on my Lenten promise. And I found it in novenas.

A novena, as the name implies, is a nine-day prayer dedicated to a specific cause and usually to a particular saint or Our Lady. I had done a few novenas before, including a diocesan novena offered for couples struggling with infertility, miscarriage, and infant loss leading up to the feast day for Our Lady of Guadalupe.

I'm still not perfect at daily prayer, but last year during Lent I was more focused than I had been in the past. Here's why: Novenas gave me something to say each day.

The hardest part of writing is facing a blank page. The hardest part of praying (sometimes) is figuring out what to say. I often fell into reciting memorized prayers out of obligation and laziness. I needed something to guide me forward so that my Lenten promise didn't turn into me going through the motions and not actually growing closer to God.

Novenas often feature repeated phrases with a variation of the prayer intention each day and also room to make more personal intentions. This prayer structure gave me a thematic text that I could contemplate each day and space to think about who or what I was personally praying for. The nine days kept me on track and starting a new novena after I'd finished one gave me the variety I needed to stay inspired during the whole season of Lent.

Novenas helped me focus on others during Lent. Another prayer trap I'd fall into was staying confined to my personal bubble and selfishly praying for what I wanted. Because novenas revolve around a specific intention, they pushed me to think about people I knew who were struggling and could use my prayers.

I started with a novena for a fellow parishioner whose spouse was battling cancer. Then I prayed for a relative who was struggling with infertility. Novenas also include larger, more societal intentions as well, the perfect example being a novena I found for accountability, transparency, and healing in the sexual abuse crisis.

Being more focused on others encouraged me to keep praying. I wanted to finish each novena for the person or cause it was dedicated to, but once I started, I found I always had someone or something additional to pray for.

Novenas taught me more about saints. In the Catholic tradition, there are at least 10,000 saints — that's a lot! The last time I studied the saints was during my Confirmation prep. So when I was looking for novenas, I researched the patron saints of various causes and the saints themselves.

I prayed to Saint Peregrine, the 13th-century Italian patron saint of cancer patients, who was miraculously cured of a cancerous growth in his foot (and whose novena was also dedicated to other, more metaphorical cancers in society).

I prayed to Saint Gianna Beretta Molla, the 20th-century Italian patron saint of mothers, physicians, and unborn children who had been a pediatrician in her earthly life. This was extra special because a good friend of mine has a daughter named Gianna and because the person for whom I was praying had some things in common with Saint Gianna.

The novena for the abuse crisis introduced me to several saints, including Saint Charles Lwanga, the 19th-century Ugandan patron saint of youth and Catholic action, and Saint Dymphna, the seventh-century Irish patron saint of the nervous, emotionally disturbed, mentally ill, and those who suffer neurological disorders.

My experience using novenas during Lent made prayer more accessible and gave me a new tool I could use in my prayer life during the rest of the year as well. Whether joining a community novena or following one on my own, novenas give me the words that, with faith and intention, help open my heart to God.

Megan Stolz is a writer, editor, and owner of Megan Stolz Editorial. In her free time, she enjoys reading, traveling, singing alto in a community choir, and tweeting. She lives in the Washington, DC, metro area with her husband, kids, and cat.



As you continue on your Lenten journey, please remember that the Cathedral offers several opportunities to enrich your spiritual life through prayer. Adoration is held on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4:00pm to 5:00pm, and Stations of the Cross is held on Fridays during Lent immediately following the 5:15pm Mass. Daily Mass is offered Monday through Friday at 7:00am, 12:05pm, and 5:15pm and Saturdays at 8:00am.



Remember and Be Transformed

“Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed them to those who were reclining, and also as much of the fish as they wanted.” —John 6:11

Did you know that our word “Lent” comes from the Old-English word for “springtime?” This gives us a wonderful insight into what the days between Ash Wednesday and Holy Thursday are all about: a season when faith and the virtues of the Christian life grow and flower within our hearts and souls. But, as Ash Wednesday approaches each year, one of the first questions we Catholics ask is, “What should I give up for Lent?” And it’s a fair question because, as we know, penance is a *part* of Lent.

So, how do you or your family and friends answer this question? Do you give up social media? Television? Chocolate, or another favorite food? Soft drinks, coffee, or alcohol? While it’s true that taking a break from any of those can be good for us, we also have to ask ourselves if these sacrifices are really helping us to grow in our lives as Christians. Lent isn’t only about doing penance. We have to think of other opportunities for “good works” during the Lenten Season.

The traditional works of prayer, almsgiving, and fasting help us focus our attention on what is most important in life. If we can think of our Lenten penance as a “good work” to be taken on and shift our focus away from what we “give up,” we will find that our Lenten prayer and devotions will be richer and more fruitful. As Henri Nouwen has reminded us: “Lent is a time of returning to God... a time of refocusing, of re-entering the place of truth, of reclaiming our true identity.”

But, there’s more at stake because, as we reflect on all of this, we have to remember that Lent isn’t an end in itself. *The purpose of the season of Lent is to help us prepare for Easter when we will renew our baptismal commitment.*

In the first centuries after Jesus, those individuals who wanted to become Christians spent months and even years preparing for Baptism, which almost always took place in a special ceremony on the night before Easter. That night was anticipated by a time of prayer and fasting so that the soon-to-be Christians would be as ready as they could be to receive the gifts of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist. This is the origin of Lent. (Our contemporary process of the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* (RCIA) is built around this model of initiation.) Those Christians who were already baptized would also pray and fast as they prepared to renew their own commitment to Christ by renewing their baptismal promises on Easter Sunday.

If we keep the themes of Baptism and discipleship in mind as we consider the value of fasting and sacrifice, we quickly realize that fasting isn’t about just giving up something we enjoy. After all,

there isn’t any real spiritual value in giving up chocolate or soft drinks. The point of fasting is that we give up something that we enjoy to help us pay better attention to our deeper hungers and desires.

Each one of us lives with needs—physical needs and the need for love, security, and community—that we often bury or try to hide by filling our lives with “stuff” and relationships that can never really make us happy or give us peace. And so, Lenten fasting means that we set aside those things with which we self-medicate so that we can be free to recognize what our real hungers and desires are—including our desire for God. Only God can truly satisfy the deepest desires and needs of our hearts.

These ideas of baptismal renewal and our deepest hungers are at the heart of our readings on this 3rd Sunday of Lent. As we hear the story of the woman at the well, we are being invited to remember our own Baptism and to think about how our lives have been—and are being—transformed by the Living Water of Jesus. Our prayer, fasting, and works of charity and mercy should be helping us become more aware of how the grace of Baptism is at work within us.

In the end, every Easter Sunday we are given an opportunity to renew the promises of our Baptism. This means rededicating ourselves to live as Christians in the world, and to continuing the mission of Jesus, especially for the poor and those in need. The 40 days of Lent are a time for us to get back to the basics of who we are as followers of Jesus.

A Benedictine monk for nearly 11 years, Br. Silas Henderson, SDS, is an author, retreat leader, and catechist, and former managing editor of Deacon Digest Magazine and Abbey Press Publications. You can find more of Br. Henderson’s blogs at www.fromseason2season.blogspot.com.



Stewardship Activity

Stewardship of Prayer:

CRS Rice Bowl Prayer of the Week:

Heavenly Father, we pray for all families who struggle to provide for their children, that they are able to offer a healthy lifestyle for those they care for. We pray also for our communities, that we promote good health and well-being for all members of our human family. In your name we pray. Amen.

Stewardship of Service:

The ministry of a Lector calls those with strong faith and good communication skills to proclaim the Word of God. This responsibility is not to be accepted carelessly; as a proclaimer of the Word, a lector doesn't just read the scriptures aloud, but becomes the vessel for the dialogue between God and His people. Prayerful preparation is essential. If you are interested in becoming a Lector at the Cathedral, please call the Parish Office at 217-522-3342.

Stewardship of Gifts

Stewardship of Treasure - March 7th & 8th

Envelopes:	\$6,164.50
Loose:	\$2,742.17
Maintenance:	\$70.00
<u>Total:</u>	<u>\$8,976.67</u>
February EFT	\$21,768.00

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

Next week's second collection will be for *Catholic Relief Services*. Funds from this collection provide food to the hungry, support displaced refugees, and bring Christ's love and mercy to all people here and abroad. Next week, please give generously to the CRS and help Jesus in disguise. Learn more about the collection at www.usccb.org/catholic-relief.



Cathedral Parishioner Catholic School Tuition Scholarship

The Cathedral Parish believes in the value of Catholic education and is committed to assisting parishioners who choose a Catholic education for their children by providing tuition assistance. Parishioners will receive a \$500 tuition scholarship for each child enrolled in a Springfield Catholic Grade School (Grades K-8), and a \$750 tuition scholarship for each child enrolled at Sacred Heart-Griffin High School.

The scholarship is eligible to any parishioner household who is registered and active in the Cathedral parish. An active parishioner is defined as someone who regularly attends Mass on Sundays, supports the parish financially, and is active in the life of the parish. While all three of these qualifications are important, Sunday Mass participation is of the greatest importance. Faith formation begins with participation at Sunday Mass. To be eligible as a parishioner household, the family must be registered and active parishioners for a minimum of six months before the application is made for the scholarship.

The scholarship will be paid directly to the school that the student attends, and funds will be attributed toward the 2019-2020 school year. A digital copy of this application can be found online at www.spicathedral.org, while paper copies are available at the Parish Office.

Applications are DUE by March 15th, 2020. You will be notified when the scholarship is being sent to the receiving school. If you have any questions, please contact the Cathedral Parish Office at 217-522-3342.