

# *Cathedral* WEEKLY

## SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

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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  
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524 East Lawrence Springfield, IL 62703  
Cathedral Parish Office: 217-522-3342  
Website: [www.spicathedral.org](http://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





## Choosing Jesus and Choosing Our Own Good

Has anyone ever made a request of you by beginning with the caveat “if you love me?” Prefacing a request like this seems to be a form of emotional manipulation or a form of demand. I have had it done to me before and I really do not care for that approach. In this Sunday’s Gospel we hear Jesus doing exactly what I would prefer no friend of mine do in asking me for something.

Jesus gets a pass here, not just because of who He is, but because it becomes clear why He uses this turn of phrase when you understand what the statement entails. “If you love me, you will keep my commandments.”

Honestly, how can one argue with that? Many times when people preface a request with “if you love me” it is because they are preparing to ask for something beyond a reasonable or agreeable request. Can we make an argument against what Jesus is asking? For the disciple, the only answer is no.

The answer is no because there is nothing unreasonable in the Lord’s request. There is nothing in the commandments that is contrary to our personal well-being. There is nothing in the commandments that will adversely affect us by our being faithful to what is asked. Here is our problem: many times we have a false notion of what is truly good; at times we want what is contrary to our ultimate good because sin has darkened our intellect and disordered our passions and appetites. Our ultimate good is in receiving God’s free gift of salvation. God wants that good for us and assists us with His grace to be able to receive that good. However, we have to want that good as well, and not act in ways contrary to it or in ways that will result only in obstacles to our receiving it.

This brings us to another aspect of Sunday’s Gospel: the promise of the Advocate. As Ascension and Pentecost approach, we are reminded that the Holy Spirit is the on-going gift of God’s presence with the Church, collectively and individually. It is the Spirit who seeks to cast light on our darkened intellect and passions so that we can see our choices for what they are; either a help or a detriment in deepening our relationship with God and keeping our focus on the things of heaven.

“If you love me, you will keep my commandments,” the Lord says to us. Dovetailing that we could also say “if you love yourself, you will keep His commandments,” since keeping the commandments will lead us to eternal life with the Lord in heaven. Loving God and keeping His commandments may seem to involve sacrifices but what are we really giving up? If anything is contrary to God then it is also contrary to our own good and we are not really “giving up” anything good.

May the Holy Spirit, the promised Advocate, continue to shine God’s light on our choices so that we may see the good and choose it daily. In choosing the good, we are choosing God and His promise of life with Him forever in heaven.

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

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## Sunday Reflection

### Not Orphaned!

Because the risen Lord and the Spirit of Truth are always with us, we are not abandoned. Because we are not abandoned, we must exhibit both love and obedience. Saint Peter proclaims in the Second Reading, “Always be ready to give an explanation...for the reason of your hope.” Act accordingly.

- How will my every action proclaim Christ’s presence in my life and in the life of the world?
- How can I advocate, aid another’s need this week?
- Whom will I love, how will I love as Jesus Christ loves me?

## A Reason for Our Hope

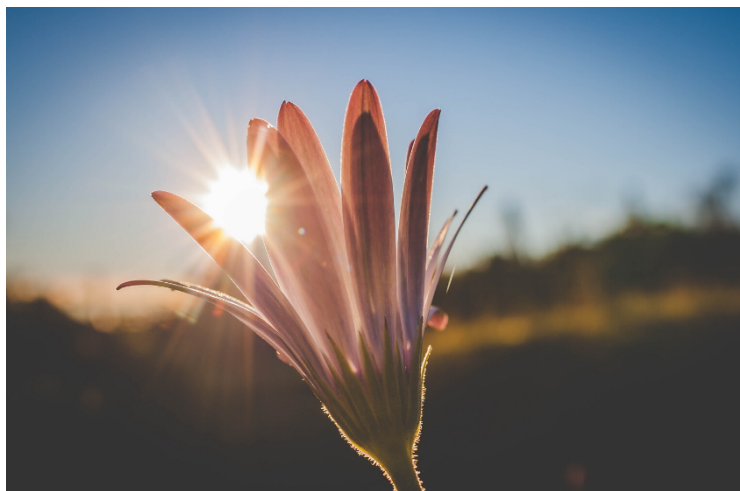
When I was little, I came home from school one day after a lively lesson on saying yes to God in our lives and declared, “If Jesus were to come today and ask me to go with him, I would say yes and go right away!” My mother was rightfully cautious and explained that if anyone claiming to be Jesus wanted to take me, I should come ask her first. As a child, I was let down that she wasn’t as excited to say yes to Jesus as I was. As an adult, I can laugh and appreciate her response. She knew I could easily be deceived and the likelihood of Jesus coming to me in person was pretty low.

In the Gospel we hear Jesus say to us, *“I will not leave you orphans, I will come to you...”* It is so striking to me that this gospel is being read during our current times. During a time of confusion, suffering, uncertainty, and for many isolation and loneliness, God the Father is actively caring for us and telling each of us, *you are not alone*. The language of orphans and hope finds its answer in God’s plan for humanity when Jesus says, *“I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I in you.”* Despite all the failings of human history and our own failings, we are called to truly become part of God’s family as His children through Baptism. We are called to be able to emphatically say *yes* to God as his children, no matter where it takes us.

The disciples knew this well and lived it boldly as we see in the first reading. The Holy Spirit enabled them to rise above worldly sufferings and persecutions and work miracles in Christ’s name. In many ways, their courage is tied to their hope. St. Augustine once said that, *“hope has two daughters, anger and courage; anger at the way things are, and courage to see that they do not remain the same.”* The boldness of the disciples came from the love of the Holy Spirit that Jesus promised to give us all. The same Holy Spirit received at Confirmation. To be people of hope, we are called to be people of love and courage. I’m reminded of this when I read St. Peter’s letter in the second reading. We may not see Jesus face to face as I was expecting as a child, but we do experience his voice and truth through the Church he founded. St. Peter encourages the faithful to be ready to give an explanation to those who ask for a reason for this hope. We ought to be always ready, in love and gentleness, to proclaim the gospel, even if it is difficult. It helps us ask the question: Am I living a life rooted in hope to the point that I can declare boldly like a child that God is for us and not against us?

In a real way, we have the unique opportunity to be online disciples in our world today with so many facets of society moved to digital platforms. God may not send us His Spirit to raise the dead as He did with the early Church, and we may not experience persecution, but He is calling us to raise souls from the brink of despair by our words and presence today. We are marked as members of a divine family and no longer tied to this earth. He has promised we won’t be left orphans and has sent the Advocate to give us the strength to live in the hope of this promise. What will we do with it? Will those we interact with online, even in the small hidden ways, see this witness? Will they notice something different about us? The answers to our most profound questions about our situation have already been answered in the love of Christ. This saving love is the hope we are called to embody and share with the world. Let us do it boldly, and with the hope and trust of true children of God.

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







## God Shows up in the Sunrise

I've been trying to mark each day as different during quarantine life.

Friday nights, our family gets takeout to support a local business and watches a movie together. "Clueless" and "Roman Holiday" have been big crowd pleasers.

Saturdays, we take a laptop out on the deck and work out to a Zoom bootcamp together. We laugh hysterically when our burpees look nothing like our instructor's.

And Sundays before Mass is streamed live into our living room, before I have my morning coffee and before the rest of my family wakes up, I walk the mile downhill to the edge of Lake Washington to watch the sunrise.

Of course, quarantine life hasn't been all fun and laughs. Most of the time it feels like that Bill Murray film, "Groundhog Day," and I wonder when it will end. There have been tears, confusion, and an ache of weariness in our bones.

And yet.

It's dark on that walk down the hill. I watch lights turn on within houses as I walk past. I can smell coffee brewing and bacon caramelizing on the stove. The birds start singing on my way and I'll see a family of raccoons scampering across the street further down the road. They notice me with their beady red eyes and disappear into the shrubbery. The sky starts to turn a shade of steel and I know it's time to speed up my gate.

I don't want to miss it.

I want to see the sunrise because like the Psalmist, I pray in the morning that God will hear my voice, I plead with him and I wait. (Ps 5:3-5) I want to feel that it is going to be different.

I want to see the sunrise because I want to remember that God is still in charge. The sun is still rising every morning. He's taking care of the big things, like governments and viruses, and he's taking care of the smaller things, like the health and safety of my little family and the unrest in my heart.

I want to see the sunrise because I want to see how God is going to show up, not just in the sunrise but in this mess of a pandemic. I feel as if I am almost daring him to show up. I know he's here but I want something big.

The sky is still steely blue when I arrive at the lake. My heart calms as I watch the sky transform from azure blue to indigo purple.

A man with a fishing pole walks down the dock and baits his hook. We are the only two people out here on the lake before 6 a.m.. I find a small comfort that I am sharing this with him, even a stranger. I am not alone.

The sun begins to peek over the Cascade Mountain range and the sky pinks up. Orange reveals itself to meet pink and the sky resembles rainbow sherbet.

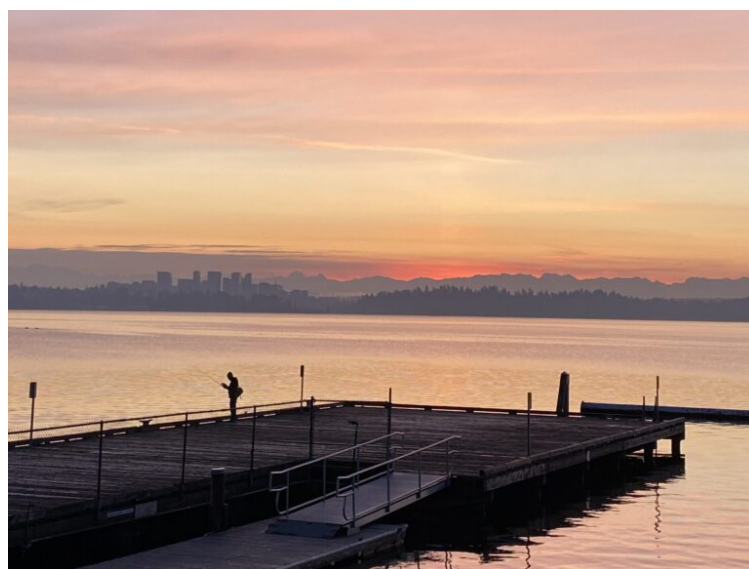
"This is lovely," I pray, "But I want something even bigger. God, fix all of this."

I know the answer even before I turn to walk back up the hill to home as I hear the words from Ecclesiastes ring in my heart:

The sun rises and the sun sets;  
Then it presses on to the place where it rises.  
What has been, that will be;  
what has been done, that will be done.  
Nothing is new under the sun!  
Even the thing of which we say, "See, this is new!" has  
already existed in the ages that preceded us.  
(Ecc 1:5,9-10)

There is a strange comfort in that. I think it's called Hope.

*Shemaiah Gonzalez is a freelance writer who holds a B.A. in English Literature and M.A. in Intercultural Ministry. She thrives on moments where storytelling, art, and faith collide. A Los Angeles native, she now lives in Seattle with her husband and their two sons. For more of her writings, visit [www.shemaiahgonzalez.com](http://www.shemaiahgonzalez.com)*



## Stewardship Activity

### Stewardship of Prayer

*Prayer of St. Francis de Sales*

O love eternal, my soul needs and chooses you eternally!  
 Ah, come Holy Spirit, and inflame our hearts with your love!  
 To love – or to die! To die – and to love!  
 To die to all other love in order to live in Jesus' love,  
 so that we may not die eternally.  
 But that we may live in your eternal love,  
 O Savior of our souls, we eternally sing,  
 Live, Jesus! Jesus, I love! Live, Jesus, whom I love!  
 Jesus, I love, Jesus who lives and reigns forever and ever.  
 Amen.

### Stewardship of Treasure - May 10th

Envelopes:	\$3,610.00
Easter Envelopes:	\$90.00
Maintenance:	\$295.00
Total:	\$3,995.00

April EFT: \$25,664.80

Did you know you can still 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!

## Witnesses for Jesus

This journey of faith is not always easy. Sometimes the greatest wounds are those we suffer when family members and friends wander away from God and leave us behind. The faith they had when they were younger is now strained, or they see the daily walking with Jesus to be too difficult. For them, Jesus becomes what Peter wrote about when he described Jesus as the stone that causes people to stumble and the rock that makes them fall. Our journey is hard enough, but watching a loved one stumble and fall is heart-breaking.

What are we to do in such a situation? Most importantly, we pray. We must realize that God is more powerful than us, and even if we can't make them see the truth, He can. Then we witness to the transformative power of Jesus by our own lives. We need to serve him in word and deed. We should let a joy of being a disciple enlighten our faces. Allow Jesus to work through us so that others may be drawn to him. Lastly, we must never lose hope. Many have walked long journeys alone only to find God far down the road. What will it take to bring someone to Christ? It might be an action, a word, or an emotion. We never know how certain people will be touched. That loved one is a gift from God in your life. Place them back in God's hands, and let Him pick them up if they have stumbled and fallen.



*Tracy Earl Welliver is currently the Director of Parish Community and Engagement for LPI where he manages the company's coaching and consulting efforts. He has spoken on and coached dioceses, parishes, and individuals on stewardship, engagement, strengths, and discipleship all over North America, Australia, and New Zealand.*

## Second Collections

Without Mass, we miss second collections. Second collections support local, national, and international efforts that are critical to the universal Church.

Below are a list of second collections that we have recently missed or will miss in the upcoming month:

The Catholic Relief Services (March 22)  
Seminarist's Collection (April 12) - 100% of this collection stays local  
Catholic Home Missions Appeal (April 26)  
Catholic Communications Campaign (May 17) - 50% of this collection stays local  
Retired Diocesan Priests (May 31) - 100% of this collection stays local

Please prayerfully consider supporting these second collections this year. Since there will be no in-church collection taking place, please make your donation online at [www.parishgiving.dio.org/secondcollections](http://www.parishgiving.dio.org/secondcollections), or directly on the Cathedral's website at <https://spicathedral.org/give-online/>. You can also mail your donation to the parish office. Thank you for your support!



## Other Announcements

### Holy Mass Livestreams

Did you know you can join us at daily Mass from home? Mass is livestreamed every morning at 7:00am on the Cathedral Facebook page. All Masses are also added to the Cathedral website and can be found at [www.spicathedral.org/holy-mass-livestreams/](http://www.spicathedral.org/holy-mass-livestreams/).

You can also join Bishop Paprocki on Sundays at 10:00am for Sunday Mass. These livestreams can be found at [www.dio.org/live](http://www.dio.org/live).

### Spiritual Resources

The Cathedral website has many great resources for you to utilize during these uncertain times. Visit [www.spicathedral.org/](http://www.spicathedral.org/) to view them.

### Cathedral First Friday Concerts

At this time, the April, May, and June First Friday Concerts have been cancelled. We hope to resume our First Friday Concerts in August. In the meantime, you can enjoy familiar hymns, psalms, and tunes daily from our very own Mark Gifford. Comfort Music from the Cathedral can be found online on the Sacred Sounds Sacred Spaces Facebook page and on YouTube at Sacred Sounds Sacred Spaces.