

# *Cathedral* OF THE *Immaculate Conception*

DECEMBER 27, 2020 | FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY



524 EAST LAWRENCE AVENUE, SPRINGFIELD, IL 62703  
CATHEDRAL PARISH OFFICE: 217-522-3342  
[WWW.SPICATHEDRAL.ORG](http://WWW.SPICATHEDRAL.ORG)

FOUNDED IN 1839 | DEDICATED IN 1928 | BUILT ON FAITH, RENEWED IN HOPE IN 2009

# *Cathedral Weekly*

VOLUME 2 ISSUE 17

---

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

THE VERY REVEREND BRIAN C. ALFORD, V.E.  
RECTOR

THE REVEREND PETER CHINEKE  
PAROCHIAL VICAR

THE REVEREND DOMINIC RANKIN  
IN RESIDENCE

THE REVEREND DOMINIC VAHLING  
PAROCHIAL VICAR

DEACON IRVIN LAWRENCE SMITH

DEACON T. SCOTT KEEN

HALEY BENTEL  
COORDINATOR OF COMMUNICATIONS  
HBENTEL@CATHEDRAL.DIO.ORG

VICKI DHABALT COMPTON  
COORDINATOR OF FAITH FORMATION AND MISSION  
VCOMPTON@CATHEDRAL.DIO.ORG

LISA A. DUFFEY  
PARISH SECRETARY  
LDUFFEY@CATHEDRAL.DIO.ORG

MARK GIFFORD  
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC  
MGIFFORD@CATHEDRAL.DIO.ORG

BILL VOGT  
OFFICE AND PLANT MANAGER  
BVOGT@CATHEDRAL.DIO.ORG

SR. FRANCELLE VYVERMAN, O.P.  
MINISTRY TO THE SICK  
SFRANCELLE@CATHEDRAL.DIO.ORG

---

## **Sunday Masses**

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

## **Welcome to the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception!**

On behalf of our bishop, the Most Reverend Thomas John Paprocki, our parishioners, deacons, and priests, we 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.

We hope that your visit to our Cathedral is one of grace and beauty and that you feel at home in the mother church. We 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!

Diocesan Victim Assistance is available. For the Diocesan Victim Assistance Coordinator, please call 217-321-1155.

Please remember that if you or a loved one is in the hospital, a nursing home or home-bound, to contact the Parish Office or Sr. Francella at 217-522-3342 x 142.



## Lessons from Nazareth

Merry Christmas! As you are probably aware, the Merry Christmas greeting is a victim of our predominantly secular culture. We use this greeting for weeks leading up to Christmas, but as soon as we close our eyes at the end of our Christmas Day festivities, we all but forget about this greeting, packing it in the closet until next year. But in the Church, the greeting of Merry Christmas is something that continues throughout the Christmas Season,

which concludes this year on January 10 with the celebration of the Baptism of the Lord.

During the Christmas Season, we celebrate the Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. Since Jesus chose to enter into our world in the context of the family, the Church wants to draw special attention to this family as she invites us to “imitate them in practicing the virtues of family life and in the bonds of charity.” (Roman Missal, Collect for Feast of the Holy Family).

On this day, in the Office of Readings from the Liturgy of the Hours, the Church provides a reflection given by Pope St. Paul VI when he visited Nazareth, the home of the Holy Family. He describes Nazareth as “a kind of school where we may begin to discover what Christ’s life was like and even to understand his Gospel.” We might hear these words a little differently this year as many of our young people have had the home serve as a school, at least virtually, due to the COVID-19 challenges that we have faced. Hopefully those experiences have not soured us to the prospect of learning in our homes, as the home of Nazareth offers us many lessons upon which to reflect.

In his meditation on Nazareth, the Holy Father proposes three lessons, and I would like to quote the second one, which focuses on what we can learn about family life:

*May Nazareth serve as a model of what the family should be. May it show us the family’s holy and enduring character and exemplify its basic function in society: a community of love and sharing, beautiful for the problems it poses and the rewards it brings, in sum, the perfect setting for rearing children – and for this there is no substitute.*

Striking is a phrase he uses about family life: “beautiful for the problems it poses.” You do not need me to tell you that family life is often difficult. But can we see that even these problems can be beautiful? We can if we look at them as the Holy Family did, with the eyes of faith, trusting that “all things work for good for those who love God.” (Romans 8:28).

As we conclude our month of reflections related to the Sacrament of Confirmation, we thank God for the Gifts of the Holy Spirit which are increased in the reception of this sacrament. All of these gifts can be at the service of our families in imitating the Holy Family and seeing even the challenges as blessings. Once again, Merry Christmas!

*Father Alford is the Rector of the Cathedral and serves in the diocesan curia as the Vicar for Clergy, Consecrated Life, and Vocations.*

## Mass Intentions

### Monday, December 28

7am - John & Edith Bakalar  
(John Busciacco)  
5:15pm - Richiusa & Leo Families  
(Family)

### Tuesday, December 29

7am - Anna A. Eleyidath  
(Augustine Eleyidath)  
5:15pm - Carl Venvertloh  
(Mr. & Mrs. Rico Johnson)

### Wednesday, December 30

7am - Fred Rovey  
(Tom Steil & Sharon Oldfield)  
5:15pm - Dr. Eugene Stonikas  
(William & Debra Stonikas)

### Thursday, December 31

7am - John Kaufman  
(Mike McGee)  
5:15pm - Nancy Shea  
(Jim & Barb Stelte)

### Friday, January 1

9am - Barbara McGee  
(Tom McGee)

### Saturday, January 2

8am - Lawrence Jaros  
(Katie Konsky & Family)  
4pm - For the People

### Sunday, January 3

7am - Mary Ann Midden  
(William Midden)  
10am - Joseph Wichmann  
(Casey Wichmann)  
5pm - Mary Rita DesMarteau  
(Criscione Family)





## Can Sacraments Be Repeated?

As practicing Catholics, we (hopefully!) receive two of the sacraments regularly: Penance and the Holy Eucharist. There are some sacraments that we receive only once in life. As we continue to reflect on the sacrament of Confirmation during December, I thought it would be helpful to see what our Catechism says about sacraments that can be received only once.

Paragraph 1304 of the Catechism of the Catholic Church reads, “Like Baptism which it completes, Confirmation is given only once, for it too imprints on the soul an indelible spiritual mark, the ‘character,’

which is the sign that Jesus Christ has marked a Christian with the seal of his Spirit by clothing him with power from on high so that he may be his witness.”

Baptism and Confirmation change a Christian forever and can only be received once. Regarding these sacraments, you might here a theologian or a priest mention the “character” of each sacrament. As the Catechism said, the character is a spiritual mark imprinted on the soul. It is hard to image a spiritual mark – spiritual things, like our souls, are invisible, so they cannot be marked in a physical way. Speaking about a mark is simply a way to help us understand the reality of what takes place when a sacrament is celebrated. I have also heard sacramental character likened to a tattoo or a seal, such as when a king would seal a letter with his insignia. The character of a sacrament claims us for Christ and permanently marks us out (invisibly) as Christians!

The character, or invisible mark, of Baptism is a way in which the divine life is channeled to our souls from God. Any time we commit a mortal sin, we lose this grace of divine life and are separated from the love of God. This can only be restored through repentance, ordinarily expressed in the sacrament of Penance. However, throughout all of this, the character of Baptism is never erased. The same is true for Confirmation. Even if a Confirmed Catholic commits a serious sin or is not in the practice of the faith, they are still a true Catholic, even though the grace of God may not be alive in their heart.

The Catholic Church does not believe in “re-baptizing” Christians. Baptism can only truly be received one time. In cases where it is doubtful whether Baptism was received or not, somebody may be conditionally baptized just to be sure that he or she has received this gift from God. However, even if somebody were to be “re-baptized” or “re-confirmed” in another church or religious group, we believe that nothing is taking place. It is simply a simulation of a sacrament that had already been received.

As I’m writing this, I realize that this is a pretty technical piece of Church teaching, but this teaching has been a great source of comfort for many people over the years. Imagine somebody who was baptized and confirmed in childhood, but for the next 50 years of their life, did not practice the faith. Oftentimes nearing the end of life is a reason to turn to God and return to the faith they practiced long ago. For a person in this situation, all that is needed is the reception of the sacrament of Penance, and they are once again a Catholic in good standing, alive with God’s grace! The sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation are truly a stable and enduring gift of God’s love, offering us the chance to return to the faith no matter how many twists and turns we take in our spiritual life.

*Father Dominic Vahling is a newly ordained priest. He serves as parochial vicar at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception and as co-chaplain of Sacred Heart-Griffin High School.*

## Stewardship of Treasure

Collection numbers for the weekend of December 19th and 20th were unavailable at the time of publication. Please check back next weekend for these collection numbers.

Online Giving: If you would like to extend a special gift to the Cathedral, please visit our website. Our parish is grateful for your continued support. Thank you!



## The Holy Innocents: True Christian Triumph

**Feast Day: December 28th**

Parents with newborns know the sacrifice of waking up in the middle of the night to care for their children, but St. Joseph, shortly after the birth of his Son, had a very different abrupt awakening.

*"An angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, 'Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there till I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.'" [Matthew 2:13]*

He obeys the word from God, but before we learn of their sojourn in Egypt, or their return to Nazareth, Matthew tells us of the terrible onslaught that came upon Bethlehem with Herod's anger and jealousy.

*"Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the Wise Men, was in a furious rage, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time which he had ascertained from the Wise Men." [Matthew 2:16]*

Some scholars claim that this event is apocryphal (not historical) because it is not mentioned by historical records of the time, but if we realize both that Herod became horrifically violent and uncontrolled especially in his final years of his reign, and that there were probably only 10 or 15 little boys in Bethlehem given the size of that village at the time of Christ, it seems that an event of this sort would not be remembered by the larger world.

The question for us then is why do we celebrate this feast just three days after Christmas? Obviously, these martyrs are connected in time with the infant Jesus. They perished within two years of his own birth, and because Herod could not stand the idea of his power being usurped (by a baby?!) Yet most saints are exemplars for us of some virtue, disposition, set of accomplishments they did following God's will, yet these little boys did not know Christ, nor that their deaths were suffered in lieu of Him. Their families probably did not know the rationale behind Herod's brutality, nor did Herod really hate Christ personally, he just did not want somebody else claiming royal authority (because his was so tenuous).

Matthew assists our reflection by quoting Jeremiah 31:15: "Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah: 'A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they were no more.'" [Matthew 2:17-18]

If we knew the Old Testament inside and out we would know that Jeremiah continues: "Keep your voice from weeping, and your eyes from tears; for your work shall be rewarded, says the LORD, and they shall come back from the land of the enemy. There is hope for your future, says the LORD, and your children shall come back to their own country." [Jeremiah 31:16-17]

This scriptural insight offers us a way to see this day aright. Rachel, the wife of Jacob all the way back in Genesis 29, of course was the mother of Joseph and Benjamin, but Jeremiah transposed her weeping forward to the Israelites killed during the wars and exiles of his day, and Matthew, knowing her to have been buried in Bethlehem, can see the final fulfilment of that prophecy in the children murdered in Christ's place.

Those Holy Innocents stand now for us as an icon of every child of God killed for jealousy, anger, misunderstanding, or hatred, or lost tragically in any other way but they also force the Christian to recall that – Christ having taken on the ramifications of sin, all the way to death – all those deaths can still be victories in the end. The eternal life that Our Lord wants to give us is far more precious than the physical life we cherish, and though the worst of worldly evils is the callous loss of human life, it can also be the moment that Christ's redemption is accomplished, and His promise kept: "your children shall come back to their own country."

*Fr. Dominic Rankin has only done a handful of funerals as a priest, but knows that they are both one of the hardest things a priest gets to do, and also the most grace-filled. Miraculously, amid grief and loss, Christ's victory is continued. The shadow of the cross does fall over the crèche, but so does the light of Easter.*



*The Triumph of the Innocents, William Holman Hunt, 1883, Tate Collection.  
Creative Commons License.*

# SUNDAY ANNOUNCEMENTS



## Around the Cathedral

### K of C Poster Contest Winners

Cathedral's Knights of Columbus Fr. Tolton Council is proud to announce its local winners of the 2020 Keep Christ in Christmas poster contest. Congratulations to Julia Anselment (age 5-7 ncategory), Claire Anselment (age 8-10 category) and Grace Anselment (age 11-14 category). Each of these entries will move on to District level judging to be held in January. We wish them luck at the next level, but most importantly we appreciate them and the rest of the artists for the time and effort they put in to help make us all more aware of the true meaning of Christmas. All of their entries remain on display in the Atrium and we thank everyone for their contributions!

### Volunteers Needed: Helping Hands

For 14 years, a team of faithful Cathedral volunteers has provided a home cooked meal each month to the men at the Helping Hands Homeless Shelter. As the Shelter has increased its capacity to accommodate 71 men, we are in need of additional volunteers. Those who do not cook can help in other ways.

If you are interested in participating in the 15th year of this ministry to "feed the hungry", please call 217-494-4241 for additional information by December 31st.

### Carols at Noon

If you missed Carols at Noon on 12/26 at 12pm, you can still enjoy this wonderful concert hosted by our very own Mark Gifford from the comfort of your home! Check both the Sacred Sounds, Sacred Spaces and Cathedral Facebook pages for a recording of this concert.

### Cathedral Nativity Festival

To celebrate the Christmas season, Cathedral will be hosting a Virtual Nativity Festival. It's easy to participate. Simply take a photo of your favorite nativity set and send it to us with a paragraph explaining why it is so special to you and your family. Between Christmas and Epiphany we'll send a daily Flocknote email to all our parishioners featuring one special nativity. Send your submission to Vicki at [vcompton@cathedral.dio.org](mailto:vcompton@cathedral.dio.org). Thanks for your participation!

### No Neighbor Left Behind

As COVID-19 cases rise in our community, Fr. Augustine Tolton Council #16126 would like to remind parishioners "No Neighbor Left Behind". If you or someone you know needs assistance in picking up groceries, prescriptions, or getting errands run, please reach out to Grand Knight Nick Gray at [info.kofc16126@gmail.com](mailto:info.kofc16126@gmail.com) or contact any member of the Cathedral staff. We have a group of Knights who are willing to assist those in our community at a higher risk for COVID-19.

### Mask Mandate in Effect

As you may be aware, the Mayor of Springfield has issued a Mask Mandate for all public spaces in the City of Springfield, which includes religious houses of worship. The mandate requires that masks be worn at all times when in a public space. The mayor has indicated that those individuals who are in violation of this mandate will be assessed a \$50 fine for each violation, and the institution (that is, this church) will be assessed a \$250 fine for the first offense, with subsequent offenses incurring a \$500 fine. The mandate went into effect on November 18. Please be advised that the dispensation from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass remains in effect. Thank you for your cooperation in observing this mandate here at the Cathedral.

# SUNDAY ANNOUNCEMENTS



## Around the Diocese

### March for Life 2021

Due to Covid-19, the March for Life pilgrimage will look a little different this year. Tony Cervený (Director of Youth and Sports Ministry) and Sister M. Veritas Wilks, FSGM (Director of Youth and Women's Ministry) from the Office of Ministry and Evangelization will be heading to Washington, D.C. for the March for Life. Teens accompanied by parents/guardians and other family members are invited to join us. We will be there to greet you, feed you, organize prayer and programming, and provide a place for the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois to gather. Sister M. Karolyn, FSGM (Vocations Director for the Sisters of St. Francis of the Martyr St. George, in Alton, IL) will be there to speak and lead us in games, prayer, and music. Bishop Paprocki will be there to greet us, and to celebrate Mass with us. Please visit [www.dio.org/youthministry/mfl](http://www.dio.org/youthministry/mfl) to learn more and register!

### Be Not Afraid to PRAY BIG!

We currently have 16 seminarians, which is great! But wouldn't 40 be better?? YES!!! We invite you to pray a Hail Mary EVERY DAY at 4:40 for our diocese to have 40 seminarians. 4:40 for 40 Seminarians!

### Knights of Columbus Membership Promotional Offer

To honor of Fr. McGivney's dream of growing the Knights of Columbus, the Illinois State Council is offering free online membership for new membership applications submitted now until the end of the year. Visit [www.kofc.org/joinus](http://www.kofc.org/joinus) and enter the code MCGIVNEY2020 today!

### Adult Faith Formation at Christ the King Parish

#### How Catholics Pray - January 13

The Church's prayer life continues to grow and be enriched by the lives of her Lord's example and the experiences of the saints. Join Fr. Michael as he explores some of the wealth of our prayer traditions and learn something also! All adult faith formation sessions are held in Roesch Hall in the parish center on Wednesdays with two opportunities to attend at 11AM or 7PM, unless otherwise noted. The sessions are free and all are welcome. COVID-19 protocols will be followed.

### Sunday Reflection - This Child

Every parent knows a child is a blessing who is filled with innocence and wonder and grace.

Grandparents know this, too, perhaps in renewed and deeper ways. It is their hope that every child will grow strong, be wise, and be favored.

- How will I care for a child today even if not related to me?
- How can I help children be holy?
- How will I be holy because of the blessedness of children?