

Cathedral OF THE *Immaculate Conception*

JANUARY 24, 2021 | 3RD SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME



524 EAST LAWRENCE AVENUE, SPRINGFIELD, IL 62703
CATHEDRAL PARISH OFFICE: 217-522-3342
WWW.SPICATHEDRAL.ORG

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

Cathedral Weekly

VOLUME 3 ISSUE 4

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

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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.

Sunday of the Word of God



A little over a year ago, Pope Francis issued a document in which he declared that the Third Sunday of Ordinary Time be celebrated at the Sunday of the Word of God. In this letter, the Holy Father had promised previously that he would set aside a Sunday so that the faithful could give special attention to the Scriptures. He wrote the following:

Devoting a specific Sunday of the liturgical year to the word of God can enable the Church to experience anew how the risen Lord opens up for us the treasury of his word and enables us to proclaim its unfathomable riches before the world.

I welcome this decision by the pope, as I have become more and more convinced at how powerful the Scriptures can be for us, as they speak to us in ways that encourage us and challenge us, thus pushing us forward in our journey of discipleship. I have had the practice of reading from the New Testament for 5 minutes each day, and by doing so, I have been amazed at how my love of the Word of God has grown. At the beginning of this month, I was made aware of a podcast hosted by Ascension Press titled "The Bible in a Year (with Father Mike Schmitz)." I have been listening every day and I have really enjoyed it, especially listening to the Old Testament in short chunks. Even if you signed up now, you would be getting through most of the Bible in one year. These are just two examples that work for me. There are many different ways in which to have more regular contact with the Word of God. Maybe today can be a day to make a resolution to be more intentional with regards to your relationship with the Word of God.

It is very fitting that that Sunday of the Word of God falls during this month during which we are focusing on the Sacrament of the Eucharist, the sacrament in which we receive the Word of God made flesh in Holy Communion. We speak of His Real Presence in the Eucharist, and that is one of the greatest gifts that we have as Catholics. But just because we have the Eucharist does not mean we do not need the Word of God as much; we need them both. To highlight how interconnected these two are, I share the following from Pope Benedict XVI's document on the Word of God:

The sacramentality of the word can thus be understood by analogy with the real presence of Christ under the appearances of the consecrated bread and wine. By approaching the altar and partaking in the Eucharistic banquet we truly share in the body and blood of Christ. The proclamation of God's word at the celebration entails an acknowledgment that Christ himself is present, that he speaks to us, and that he wishes to be heard. Saint Jerome speaks of the way we ought to approach both the Eucharist and the word of God: "We are reading the sacred Scriptures. For me, the Gospel is the Body of Christ; for me, the holy Scriptures are his teaching. And when he says: whoever does not eat my flesh and drink my blood (Jn 6:53), even though these words can also be understood of the [Eucharistic] Mystery, Christ's body and blood are really the word of Scripture, God's teaching. When we approach the [Eucharistic] Mystery, if a crumb falls to the ground we are troubled. Yet when we are listening to the word of God, and God's Word and Christ's flesh and blood are being poured into our ears yet we pay no heed, what great peril should we not feel?" Christ, truly present under the species of bread and wine, is analogously present in the word proclaimed in the liturgy. A deeper understanding of the sacramentality of God's word can thus lead us to a more unified understanding of the mystery of revelation, which takes place through "deeds and words intimately connected"; an appreciation of this can only benefit the spiritual life of the faithful and the Church's pastoral activity.

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, January 25

7am - Special Intention for Heather McMillen (Chris Sommer)
5:15pm - Sr. M. Pauletta Overbeck, OP (Becky & Woody Woodhull)

Tuesday, January 26

7am - Anna A. Eleyidath (Augustine Eleyidath)
5:15pm - Terry Beggs (Joan Stannard)

Wednesday, January 27

7am - Repose of the Soul of Averil Rossiter (Jane Fornoff)
5:15pm - Rev. Samuel Kothapalli (Joan Stannard)

Thursday, January 28

7am - Special Intention for Erin S. Danaher (Chris Sommer)
5:15pm - Anna Eleyidath (Augustine Eleyidath)

Friday, January 29

7am - Bonnie Donnals (Roberts Families)
5:15pm - John & Edith Bakalar (John Busciacco)

Saturday, January 30

8am - Angeline Sherman (Linda Keller)
4pm - John (Jack) McCarthy (Family)

Sunday, January 31

7am - For the People
10am - Boyd Warner (Sue Warner)
5pm - Charles & Mercedes Nesbitt (Kathy Frank)



Eucharistic Miracles

Last week, I reflected on the reality of transubstantiation, the moment when the substance of bread and wine are changed to the substance of body and blood. This happens at the Consecration, just before the priest lifts the host and chalice to show the people. Strictly speaking, a miracle occurs at every Mass when the bread and wine are changed into the body and blood of Jesus, even while the appearance of bread and wine remains. However, sometimes God also allows the appearance of bread and wine to be changed. God usually allows this type of miracle to occur to strengthen the weak faith of an individual or even a whole community.

The first recorded Eucharistic miracle took place in 750 AD when a Catholic priest was having serious doubts about Jesus' Real Presence in the Eucharist. At the time of the Consecration, the consecrated bread and wine turned into human flesh and human blood right there on the altar. This occurred in a town called Lanciano, which was named after the lance that pierced Jesus' side, allowing blood and water to pour out. Amazingly, this flesh and blood has not decomposed to this day, and visitors to Lanciano can still visit and venerate them. In 1973, the World Health Organization did a series of tests on this flesh and blood and the findings were astounding. The flesh is a piece of heart tissue from the left ventricle. The blood is type AB which is the universal recipient. Both the flesh and blood showed signs of being alive.

More recently, there have been several similar miracles around the world. Two of these miracles occurred in the Archdiocese of Buenos Aires when Pope Francis was the bishop of that diocese. In 1992, some particles of the Eucharist were placed in the tabernacle to dissolve and be properly disposed of, and they were later found to have changed into a red substance. In 1996, another Eucharistic host in Buenos Aires was placed in the tabernacle to dissolve, and later it was found to be bloody. Not all Eucharistic miracles have been scientifically investigated, but the ones that have been investigated produce similar results: the flesh is from the heart and the blood is type AB.

Blessed Carlo Acutis was just declared "Blessed" by the Church in October. He was an Italian teenager who died at the young age of fifteen from leukemia. Young Carlo was known for two things by his family and friends: his great devotion to Jesus in the Eucharist and being a total computer geek. He combined these two passions and made a website in which he catalogued all known Eucharistic miracles from church history. He had a goal of making a pilgrimage to all these sites in his lifetime, but he did not have the chance to do so because of his cancer. He started this project when he was eleven and finished when he was fifteen.

Blessed Carlo was greatly inspired by these Eucharistic miracles. Even though he had the strong faith of a saint, his faith was still nourished by this manifestation of God's power and his great love for us. This can give us a clue as to why Jesus sometimes allows Eucharistic miracles. He wants to draw even greater attention to the Eucharist in the Church and he wants us to make the Eucharist the center of our Christian lives. On his website, Carlo wrote, "The more Eucharist we receive, the more we will become like Jesus, so that on this earth we will have a foretaste of heaven" How true this is! Blessed Carlo, please pray for us, so that we can love Jesus in the Eucharist as much as you did.

The stories from this article were paraphrased from an article entitled, "The Amazing Science of Recent Eucharistic Miracles: A Message from Heaven?" by Jeannette Williams. For more information, see media.ascensionpress.com.

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 - January 9th & 10th

| | |
|--------------|-------------|
| Envelopes: | \$8,834.26 |
| Loose: | \$2,128.00 |
| Maintenance: | \$362.00 |
| Total: | \$11,324.26 |

December EFT: \$25,435.40

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!

Stewardship of Treasure - January 16th & 17th

| | |
|--------------|------------|
| Envelopes: | \$4,968.01 |
| Loose: | \$671.00 |
| Maintenance: | \$85.00 |
| Total: | \$5,724.01 |

December EFT: \$25,435.40



St. Thomas Aquinas: Content with Christ

Feast Day: January 28th

He was rich, but had chosen simplicity. Preferring to be an unknown Dominican rather than the position of abbot proposed, and promised, to him. He was thought a dumb ox of a man, but had woven divine revelation and human wisdom together in a marvelous mountain of scholarship that would illumine the Church into eternity. He was now well known, and well-worn, but his eyes had always flickered with a joy, a love, a childlike gleam of gentleness and Godly goodness. His poetry and

hymnody were unmatched, his logic impeccable, his memory astonishing. He wrote hymns and prayers that matched those of greatest popes and saints in history, only falling short of the psalms which were the hymns and prayers composed by God Himself. He would dictate multiple books at the same time, quoting scripture verbatim for one, then the next, as the poor previous scribe tried to catch up.

But today he did not consider his humble robe - it had long been all he ever wore - it was simply the garb that he wore below his vestments as he prepared for Mass. This morning his mind was not wresting truth from the swaths of human scholarship, debate, or philosophy - rather his mind was calm, with a deep, pious, loving, tranquility that came from years of placing his heart again and again before God. He did not draw scripture from his memory, but from the missal before him on the altar, trusting that the Church had chosen the passage with which God wished to speak to Him today.

His eyes glanced along the lines offering the host and chalice for sacrifice, and then into the long-prayed Canon of the Mass. Prayed, in various forms, with touches throughout the centuries from saints and scholars, but always leading up to the great words of Jesus: "hoc est enim Corpus Meum...", "this is My Body..." had said those words countless times, thousands of priests had repeated them after Christ bestowed His greatest gift upon His Church. And today, as like every day those many years, the great saintly, scholarly, simple, man, saw the host, and adored His God, and genuflected before His King, and loved Him.

His eyes were renewed in their joy. His simplicity was filled with divinity. His scholarship once again returned to its source. And His substantial body simply lifted off the floor, entirely caught up in Divine Love. His words were answered by Christ's, "you have written well of me Thomas" - oh, what a joy to hear His Lord speak His name! - "what would you have from me?" He paused, not to think through His response, but because the yearning He had plumbed throughout his whole life now flashed into four simple words back to God. "Nothing, except You Lord." Not wisdom, not friends, not peace, not words, not family, not gifts, or life, or fitness, or praise, or victory for the Gospel... no, all those things could come or go, the only truly necessary thing was the gift that he already held in His hands.

Nothing, except You Lord.

The robe, the words, the friends, the works ... all, he ever said after, we're straw. Of course, he still offered his energy for the Church, but He was ever after a man utterly, and simply, content to be filled with God.

We are too, every time we receive the Eucharist. Do we surrender all our worries and words and works and weariness to Christ, as He receives us? Let us take his words to do so: O God, who to us in this wonderful Sacrament, bequeathed a memorial of Your Passion: grant, we beseech, that we, in worshipping the Holy Mysteries of Your Body and Blood, may within ourselves continually perceive the fruit of Your redemption. You who live and reign forever and ever. Amen

Fr. Dominic has prayed before the crucifix that spoke to Thomas, celebrated Mass upon his tomb, and spent an afternoon in the cell in the abbey where he died. But I am closer to him at every Mass when the whole host of heaven surrounds the sacrifice of Christ than I ever was visiting those sites. And, I am closer to His heart when I come before the Blessed Sacrament, when my mind and heart and body are caught up in Our Lord, Who so completely remained in him.



St. Thomas of Aquino (Paolo de Majo, 1703-1784, from private collection in Caserta). Public domain.

SUNDAY ANNOUNCEMENTS



Around the Cathedral

Sacraments

Please pray for the repose of the souls of Rosemary Dougherty and Bob Cunningham, as both were called to eternal rest.

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.

RCIA Introductions

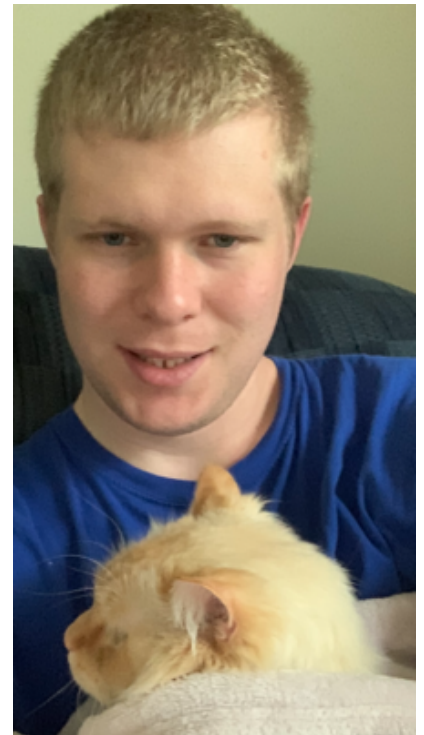
Over the next couple of weekends, we will be introducing those who are currently going through RCIA here at the Cathedral. Please keep them in your prayers, as they embark on the journey of Christian Initiation, and that they may welcome into their hearts the love of God made visible in Christ Jesus, with joy, peace and hope.

Meet Nick Bryant

Nick is 26 years old, born in Carbondale but raised in Rochester. Nick's fiancé, Gisela, who is legally blind, is the reason he is interested in the Church. They met 7 years ago on a ski trip and he's been in love ever since.

When Nick was younger he went to Church but because of his disabilities, didn't really understand what was happening. No one took the time to help and he felt unwelcome so he stopped attending church. When Gisela first took him to a Catholic Church he found it strange but interesting.

When he and Gisela decided to get married, they knew they wanted to be married in the Church and called the Cathedral. Nick was anxious, but when he entered the Cathedral, he was no longer scared and nervous. He experienced a sensation of love and even a taste of heaven. RCIA has been interesting. The priests and all the members of the RCIA team have made him feel safe and welcome and really comfortable. Nick is looking forward to Confession and to receiving Communion. He hopes that he and Gisela will be heaven together some day. (Nick is pictured with his comfort cat who helps him deal with anxiety and panic attacks.)



SUNDAY ANNOUNCEMENTS



Around the Diocese

Second Collection: Church in Latin America January 23rd and 24th

This weekend, we take up the Collection for the Church in Latin America! Many people in Latin America and the Caribbean do not have access to Church programs and ministries because of a rising secular culture, difficult rural terrain, and a shortage of ministers. Your generosity makes it possible for our brothers and sisters in Latin America and the Caribbean to share in the life of the Church and grow closer to Christ. Please be generous to the special collection! To learn more, please visit www.usccb.org/latin-america.

You can make a donation through our diocese in one of the following ways:

Online: Make a one-time donation on the Cathedral's website at <https://spicathedral.org/give-online/>, and specify that your donation is for the Church in Latin America Collection.

Envelopes: Include a separate check in your regular envelope and specify that the second check is for the Church in Latin America Collection.

Mail: Send your donation to the Parish Office (524 E. Lawrence Ave, Springfield, IL 62703).

9 Days for Life

Join thousands of Catholics nationwide in the annual Respect Life novena, 9 Days for Life, Thursday, January 21 – Friday, January 29. Get daily intentions, brief reflections, and more. Sign up at 9daysforlife.com!

Respect Life Rally

Springfield Right to Life's annual Respect Life Rally will be held at 2pm on Sunday, January 24th at Calvary Church at 1730 West Jefferson in the parking lot. Stay in your vehicle and tune in on your radio to hear our pro-life speakers inspire our community to "let the walls fall" as they did in Jericho!