

Cathedral OF THE *Immaculate Conception*

FEBRUARY 7, 2021 | 5TH SUNDAY IN 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 6

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.



Fear of Confession

"Be not afraid." These are words that we hear spoken by the Lord in various ways and on several occasions through the Scriptures. Fear can be paralyzing, and we can miss out of many things in life because our fear prevents us from moving forward. In response to this phenomenon, our diocese has been working on an effort to address the fears we often face in life, confronting those fears through the eyes of our Catholic faith. If you would like to explore some of the topics, check out the website: <https://benotafraid.dio.org/>

As the team was preparing content, I was asked to do a video on the topic of the fear that many people face when it comes to going to Confession. I consider myself to be uniquely equipped to answer this topic for two reasons. First of all, I have the privilege of hearing many confessions here at the Cathedral. Second, I know what it is like to be afraid to go to confession. I remember vividly the fear that I had when I returned to the sacrament after having been away from it for a long time, maybe as many as ten years, if not more! I was so terrified to go, but I pushed through the fear and went, and it truly was once of the best moments of my life. It marked a new beginning in my life with Christ and His Church and I have no doubt that it was the beginning of my discernment of my vocation to the priesthood.

In the video, I started by saying that one of the biggest fears that we have when it comes to going to confession is the fear of admitting that we actually need to go to confession. In other words, we are afraid to admit that we are sinners. We might acknowledge that we are wounded, that we are broken, that we are in need of healing, but it is easier for us to point to other people as the cause for our brokenness. And while we cannot downplay what others have done to hurt us, we as Christians are called to humbly admit the brokenness and woundedness that we introduce into our lives because of the decisions that we make. This is what sin is – our freely choosing to hurt ourselves, though our intention may not always be so explicit when we do those things, but we know it to be true as we suffer the consequences.

Jesus knew how we would struggle with sin in our lives. Wanting us to be free, to be at peace, He left the Church a great gift in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, by which the Lord heals our wounds and makes us whole again through the gift of this mercy. He waits eagerly to give us this gift, and if we could see the look on His face as we enter the confessional, and the delight He has in granting us forgiveness, all our fears would melt as we are overcome by the power of His love for us, His children. So the next time you experience that fear when you think about going to confession, the fear of admitting that you are a sinner, take a moment and close your eyes, picture Jesus looking at you with the most loving gaze you can imagine. Then, run to His arms as He waits to embrace you in the confessional. Your being there will bring Him great joy, and you will set off a great celebration in Heaven, for He Himself tells us: "there will be more joy in Heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people who have no need of repentance." (Luke 15:7)

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, February 8

7am - Anna A. Eleyidath
(Augustine Eleyidath)
5:15pm - Sophia Bartoletti
(Bartoletti Family)

Tuesday, February 9

7am - Special Intention for Sheree Graves (Sheree Graves)
5:15pm - Richard McFadden
(Linda Pierceall)

Wednesday, February 10

7am - Special Intention for Brother Anthony McCoy (Friend)
5:15pm - Pius Onyejaju Chineke
(Jim & Sandy Bloom)

Thursday, February 11

7am - John Montgomery
(John Busciacco)
5:15pm - Special Intention for Barbara Ozanic (Chris Sommer)

Friday, February 12

7am - Dannie Roe
(Rebecca & Walter Woodhull)
5:15pm - Special Intention for Bianca (D. A. Drago)

Saturday, February 13

8am - Angeline Sherman
(Warren Sherman)
4pm - For the People

Sunday, February 14

7am - Mary Ann Midden
(William Midden)
10am - Valeria Shaughnessy
(Mr. & Mrs. Michael Shaughnessy & Family)
5pm - Mary & Stanley Posnack
(Becky & Woody Woodhull)



Where is the Sacrament of Penance in Scripture?

In this month of February, we will be turning our attention to many people's least favorite sacrament: the Sacrament of Penance. This sacrament is also known as Reconciliation or Confession. Each title for this sacrament emphasizes a different aspect of the sacrament itself. However, in the official books, the sacrament is called "Penance." I describe Penance as many people's least favorite because of the hesitation and anxiety that can accompany the confession of one's sins to Jesus through the priest. Sin is a dark and shameful thing, but it is good to bring it to the light so that Jesus can heal it. While challenging at times, this sacrament is a part of Jesus' plan for his Church which we can see in the Scriptures.

We believe that Jesus began the Sacrament of Penance on the evening of Easter Sunday. Here is the passage found in John 20:19-23.

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked, where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you." When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained."

Isn't it amazing that the sacrament of Penance is a gift that Jesus gave to his Church on Easter Sunday? This was not an accident. Jesus solemnly declares to his disciples that when they forgive sins, they are truly forgiven. This was the first encounter that Jesus had with his disciples after his Resurrection. While I'm sure they were bewildered at seeing Jesus alive (they had already heard from Mary Magdalene that Jesus was alive, and Peter and John had seen the empty tomb), there must have been some shame and fear in their hearts too. The last time they saw Jesus alive was when he was arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane, and while he hung dying on the cross, only John was by his side. In Jesus' moment of need, his friends had given in to fear and abandoned him. However, Jesus brought forgiveness on Easter Sunday, not only for his closest friends, but for the entire Church!

There are a few other references to Penance in the Bible, though not as explicit as the first reference. In the letter of James, he wrote, "Confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed" (James 5:16). Jesus also gave authority to the Apostles when he said, "Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven (Matthew 18:18). Confessing our sins is a normal part of the Christian life. Our Christian tradition understands this to mean that we confess our sins to an ordained priest. While we are always fighting against temptation and sin, God has mercifully given us a way to be reconciled to him even when we sin after baptism.

The Gospel passage from John 20 quoted above is the gospel reading proclaimed at Mass on Divine Mercy Sunday, one week after Easter Sunday. The sacrament of Penance is one of the main ways that Jesus' mercy is communicated to his Church, and it is part of Jesus' plan for our salvation.

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 30th & 31st

Envelopes:	\$4,871.00
Loose:	\$2,921.00
<u>Maintenance:</u>	<u>\$200.00</u>
Total:	\$7,992.00
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!



St. Jerome Emiliani: Captured by Charity

Feast Day: February 8th

In fourteen-hundred-ninety-two – you all know the phrase – Columbus sailed the Ocean Blue. As that news made its way around Europe, surely it must have created waves in the city of Venice. For centuries, the Italian power had held mastery of the sea. Its galleys, sailors, captains, and system of ports had given it a powerful trade network crisscrossing the Mediterranean and beyond, but never into the unknown of the Atlantic Ocean. Now, someone had, and the Venetian lion was not unfurled atop the Niño, Pinto, and Santa María.

I spent far too much time trying to find which flag did ... maybe it was Portuguese, with its shields and castles? But Columbus was financed by Spain! Maybe the Spanish lion and castle? But Spain was not yet united, so that flag was probably years in the future. So maybe it was the royal, white flag of Ferdinand and Isabella, with its green cross? That flew at least when he landed upon San Salvador. ... perhaps this digression reveals the chaos of those days ... but, regardless, it was not the flag of Venice! And so, an eleven year old boy in that great maritime city, Gerolamo Emiliani, must have felt both exhilaration, and dread at the news of the new world, as would have everyone in the city, who depended for their security, and sustenance, upon their command of the sea, well, now, the seas.

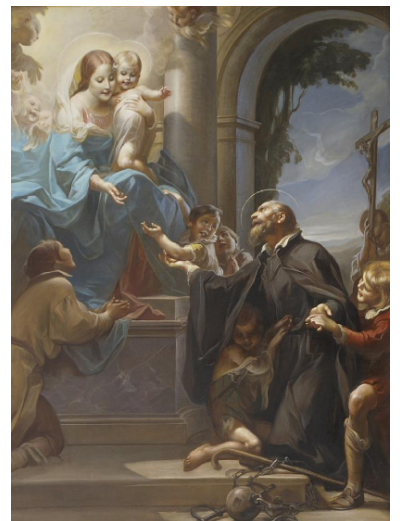
And that was not the only crisis sailing over the horizon.

It is useful, and offers us a bit of perspective and wisdom, to every so often glance back in history and realize that things are not as bad today as they have been in the past. Not only were their days controlling the seas dwindling fast, Venice was soon engulfed in what might as well be remembered as the World War of the 1500s. Technically the “War of the League of Cambrai” or the “War of the Holy League”, this decade of battling across Italy, though primarily between France, the Papal States, and Venice, ended up with every other power in Europe at the time – Spain, the Holy Roman Empire, England, Milan, Florence, Ferrara, and Switzerland – jumping into the fray, making various alliances (and switching alliances), and destroying a lot of cities, and lives, in the process. But, to make it all worse, there is the Pope (perhaps first Alexander VI, but then, of course, Julius II) in the middle of everything, scheming, battling, and back-stabbing like the best of them. And, our young Gerolamo, loses his father, runs off to the army at 15, eventually rises to become a captain of a fortress in the mountains of Treviso, but disaster continues to follow him: the fortress is captured, and he is imprisoned and shackled.

In the midst of the ugliness, pain, and horrors of his day; in the face of his own helplessness, failure, and grief, he finally prays – everybody wasn’t pious in the 1500s either – and finds himself miraculously able to escape. He gives his chains, literally, to Our Blessed Mother, returns to Venice in 1518, becomes a priest despite the horrific leadership and politicking in the Church, and as the horrors of the black plague envelop Europe (it only gets worse!), he becomes a saint. He nurses the sick and dying, builds hospitals, cares for the orphans, gives a new life to the prostitutes, and founds a congregation to join his charitable labors. He poured his life out for the plague victims, and succumbed to it himself in 1537.

The chains, chaos, and corruption of our own day need not control us. Can we surrender to God our dreams, and chains? Can we repent of our sins, finding freedom in Confession? Can we give our lives to charity? Can we face the storms, and yet remain calm? Saints can. So can we.

Fr. Dominic Rankin has not defended fortresses from rampaging Papal armies, and prays that he will never have to. He has tried to care for plague victims, with little success given current hospital protocols, and has contracted said disease, with nothing like the terrible consequences faced by most in our own day, or certainly by Fr. Jerome Emiliani. But, if in all those ways he cannot follow in Jerome’s footsteps, he can, at least, surrender his chains to Mary, and his life to Love. Pray for him. He prays for you.



San Girolamo Emiliani presenta gli orfani alla Madonna
[St. Jerome Emiliani presents the orphans to the Madonna], Traverso Mattia, 1943. All rights reserved.

SUNDAY ANNOUNCEMENTS



Around the Cathedral

Cathedral Bible Study

The Bible study group invites parishioners to a new spring/summer study focusing on the biblical foundations of the Eucharist. Meetings will be on first and third Wednesdays of the month with the exception of the opening meeting, which will be held on Tuesday, February 16th. Meetings will be held in the parish library from 6:15-7:45pm and participants are encouraged to purchase their own workbook which they may order through the parish. For more information contact Larry Travis at Ltravisjr@gmail.com.

Always in Our Prayers

In an effort to remember and continue to pray for our Cathedral parishioners even when they are no longer able to attend Mass, we invite our parishioners, or their families, to contact the Cathedral Parish office with the name of an individual who is confined to their home or a resident of a group living facility. Their information will be listed in the Cathedral Weekly. We will not share the address of an individual who is confined to their home, but will list the name of any facility that an individual lives in. Please contact the church office 217-522-3342 with the name of an individual to be added to the list as well as when a name is to be removed from the list.

Alton to Springfield: From River Bluff to the Capitol

Join PJ Oubre from our diocesan archives office as he continues to explore the lives of the four men buried in the crypt of the Cathedral, specifically the lives and funerals of Msgr. Timothy Hickey and Bishop James Griffin.

Wednesday, February 10 @ 7:00pm, Cathedral Atrium

Faith Community Nursing Program

Are you looking for a way to serve your parish while using your skills as a registered nurse? Faith Community Nurses draw a closer link between the church and healthcare communities by acting as health educators and counselors to a parish. Carle is offering an online Spring training course. Contact the parish office if you are interested in using your healing gifts to serve the Cathedral community. Call Carle at 217-365-5495 for more information.

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

Meet Janice Wray

Janice Wray is a retired tax accountant who has been a Springfield area resident for the past 40 years. A life-long Presbyterian, Janice has often attended mass at the Cathedral with her husband, Rick. Janice developed a deep appreciation of the Eucharist as not being a mere symbol, but rather the true presence of Christ himself. She strongly desired to be able to participate in that source and summit of Christian life. Always appreciative of Catholic history and sacred tradition, her thoughts of conversion to the Catholic faith were further influenced by her pilgrimage to the Holy Land, led by Fr. House, as well as a trip with her husband to the Vatican and Rome's many cathedrals and holy sites. Janice felt the strong call of the Holy Spirit to "return home" to Christ's true Church. After a significant period of prayer and reflection, Janice elected to make that journey home.



SUNDAY ANNOUNCEMENTS



Around the Diocese

We Want to Share Your Great Photos!

Got a great photo? Whether it's of school life, parish life, or home life, the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois is wanting to promote Catholic life in action. Through Catholic Times, social media, videos, or marketing materials, the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois wants to share your great photo to spread the joy diocesan-wide. Submit your photo or photos by going to www.dio.org/submitphoto.

Mirror the March

Despite cold temperatures, more than 150 students and other lay Catholics from across the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois hit the streets of downtown Springfield to march for life on January 29th, raising their voices for the voiceless and protesting unjust laws that attack the dignity of human life. Passing the Statehouse, Illinois Supreme Court building, and Governor's Mansion, Bishop Thomas John Paprocki led the group in peacefully praying the rosary for an end to abortion and a greater respect for human life.

To read the full press release, please visit www.dio.org/communications/press-releases.html

Hey, Father! LIVE!

Understanding Catholic teachings can be tough. Hey, Father! LIVE! will help. Join Father Daren Zehnle and Father Jeremy Paulin as they answer your questions about Catholicism LIVE on Feb. 10 at noon. Watch LIVE or on replay by going to facebook.com/diospringfield or youtube.com/diospringfield or dio.org/live. Send your question early or during the broadcast to heyfather@dio.org or text it to 217-203-5100.

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Attention 8th Grade & Transfer Student Parents!

Are you considering SHG for your student? Enrolling your student at SHG and want to gather more information? Curious about what SHG is all about? If you fall into any of these groups, then this Zoom is for you! Join us on Monday, February 8 OR Wednesday, February 10 from 7-7:30 p.m. You will have the opportunity to meet SHG Principal, Mrs. Kara Rapacz, watch our new welcome video, hear from SHG parents and students, learn about financial assistance opportunities, and have your questions answered by our Guidance staff. As a BONUS for attending, there will be a drawing for a full uniform set from Luers! Use the following zoom link: <https://bit.ly/parentzoommtg>. Questions? Call or email Jen Bettis, Director of Advancement, at 217-787-9732 or bettis@shg.org

40 Days for Life

Calling all prayer warriors! There are two opportunities in our diocese to participate in a 40 Days for Life Prayer Vigil. Your presence on the sidewalk matters. The "no show" rate goes up to 75% when people are praying outside of an abortion facility. Now more than ever your prayers are needed. Sign-ups are now open! Join us in prayer on the sidewalk this coming Lent to end abortion. Contact us at 217-523-2700 or springfieldrtl@gmail.com with questions on how to sign up!