

Cathedral OF THE *Immaculate Conception*

DECEMBER 19, 2021 | FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT



524 EAST LAWRENCE AVENUE, SPRINGFIELD, IL 62703
CATHEDRAL PARISH OFFICE: 217-522-3342
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FOUNDED IN 1839 | DEDICATED IN 1928 | BUILT ON FAITH, RENEWED IN HOPE IN 2009

Cathedral Weekly

VOLUME 3 ISSUE 51

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
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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!



A Gift for the King

Several years ago, I was attending a meditation given by a priest shortly before Christmas. He mentioned that his favorite Christmas song was "The Little Drummer Boy." Ever since then, I've listened to the words of that song more carefully and found in them some helpful points for my own reflection surrounding the birth of Jesus. I am happy to share some of those with you as we once again prepare to celebrate this joyful feast.

In the second verse, the drummer boy recognizes that he has "no gift to bring...that's fit to give our King." When it comes to Christmas, we spend a lot of time, energy, and money on gifts to give other people. This is a respectable tradition, but do we consider giving a gift to the one whose birthday is the reason for this great day? To be sure, the drummer boy has it right, recognizing that there is nothing that we can give Him that is fit for the Messiah. We know that God has no need of anything from us, and that can be a humbling thought. Even though He does not need us, He wants us. Otherwise, He would have given up on us after the sin of our first parents. Instead, He loves us so much that He wants us to share in the gifts He desires to shower upon us.

So, then, the question still remains – what can we give to this newborn King who has no need of anything that we can bring? Look at the next verse as the drummer boy looks at what little he has and asks the question – "Shall I play for you...on my drum?" Mary, His Mother, nods, and the drummer boy begins to play his drum for Jesus. I remember reading a commentary on this song and how the author noted how foolish it was of this boy. Why would you go banging a drum in front of a new baby? I think that thought misses the deeper point. In playing the drum, the boy is offering to Jesus what he has, humble as it may be, out of a sign of reverence for Him who is the Savior of the world. Note how he plays his drum, according to the song: "I played my best for Him." The Lord has blessed each of us with gifts, humble as they may seem to us. We do not have to have extraordinary gifts in order to offer them to our God. What He wants is for us to use the gifts He has given to us as best we can as a sign of our gratitude for the giver of every gift that we have, the Lord Himself.

This Christmas, let us take some time to reflect on all of the gifts He has given to us, not worrying about what we lack or what other people have that might be more attractive than what we have. Then, let us bring them to the newborn baby and resolve to use them to the best of our ability each day and experience the same thing the drummer boy did: "Then He smiled at me."

As a final thought, I would like to invite all of you to consider coming to the church at some point during this final week of preparation before Christmas. As you may know, we have Mass every day at 7 am and 5:15 pm. We also have Eucharistic Adoration from 4 pm – 5 pm on Tuesday and Thursday. You can also just stop in for a few quiet minutes during the day. Coming to Mass or making a visit to Our Lord in the church can be a very helpful way of preparing our hearts to experience the coming of Christ with greater joy and peace.

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 20

7am - Anna Eleyidath
(Augustine Eleyidath)
5:15pm - Presca F. Simbajon
(Lolita Klicker)

Tuesday, December 21

7am - Mary Kay Butler
(Bev & Larry Hoffman)
5:15pm - Charles P. Nicoud
(Timothy Nicoud)

Wednesday, December 22

7am - Bettie Rapps
(Hank & Mary Loue Smith)
5:15pm - Margaret Graham
(Tom McGee)

Thursday, December 23

7am - Special Intention for Patrick Ketchum (Chris Sommer)
5:15pm - Kristin King & Family
(Kay & Richard King)

Friday, December 24

7am - Mary Celine Sestak
(Ruth & Sharon Kruzik)
4pm - Kyle Buckman
(Mom)
7pm - Jean Anne Staab
(Chris Wiseman)

Saturday, December 25

12am - John & Edith Bakalar
(John Busciacco)
9am - Barbara McGee
(Tom McGee)
4pm - NO MASS

Sunday, December 26

7am - Mary Ann Midden
(William Midden)
10am - Dr. & Mrs. Michael V. Sivak
(John Sivak)
5pm - For the People



St. Peter Canisius

Feast Day: December 21st

I have to laugh every time we enter Advent and we hear again and again the Gospel of the Annunciation. It is given to us on December 8th, for the feast of the Immaculate Conception, and then again on December 12th for Our Lady of Guadalupe (though this year, the 3rd Sunday of Advent took priority). Last year, it came up again on the 4th Sunday of Advent, though this year we will be meditating on the Visitation that weekend. And, on top of all those occasions, we heard it twice this year during our Novena leading up to the feast of the Immaculate Conception, and we got it again a few days afterwards, during our Advent Lessons and Carols. And, we will hear it again on December 20th, Monday of the 4th week of Advent. (We hear it the rest of the year only on the Annunciation itself, March 25th; on Our Lady of the Rosary, October 7th). Don't get me wrong, it is one of the most important moments in world history. There are few seconds that have had as much impact as did that second upon which Mary said "yes" to the Angel Gabriel, and the Word of God, the Son of the Father, became man in her womb. But, it has to be one of the most repeated Gospels in our liturgies!

This week, I want to go beyond this passage just a bit with a saint we celebrate this week: St. Peter Canisius. A Jesuit scholar up in Germany after the Protestant Reformation, this holy priest was a force to be reckoned with in bringing people back to the fullness of the faith and truly swaying whole countries back to Catholicism (Poland, Lithuania, Bohemia, Austria, Hungary, parts of Germany ... all these countries could have swayed towards various protestant sects if not for the preaching and publications of St. Peter Canisius). But, though he was known by the end of his life for his gentleness in evangelizing, his boldness in smuggling tracts from the council of Trent to bishops who could not be there, and the popularity of his catechism (which went thorough 200 editions, in 12 languages, within his lifetime). He was first, and best, known for a tender love for the poor and humble, and above all for our poor and humble Blessed Mother.

I tried valiantly to track down some of his sermons on her, for they are said to be tremendous, but did not have much luck as my midnight cutoff was approaching ... but, I realized something better! When our saint first got to Vienna (center of Germany, a crossroads of Europe, and disintegrating around the fragmentation of faith which follows from sola scriptura), he started preaching fervently in the main cathedral. And no one came. What was the saint to do? He had to become a living homily. He cared for the poor, he nursed the sick, he tended the dying. Here was a pre-cursor to Mother Theresa – along with so many other saints – wearing a very different guise, working in a very different century, and entering a very different slum, but incarnating the very same radical Gospel. As is the case whenever Christ's love pours forth from the heart of His follower, people take notice. The tender love that Peter had found in his Blessed Mother, now captivated the crowds in Vienna.

But how might he sum this all up? How might he send this ember of Christ's love down the centuries? How can he possible package into words what he had discovered in the poor and humble mother, who loved the poor and humble multitudes? He pondered the question as he meditated again on his rosary, and as he repeated "Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus" it came to him: he would add a few words to each recitation of the angelic salutation. He wanted to keep it short, what about: "Holy Mary, mother of God, Pray for us sinners now, and at the hour of our death." These last words of our Hail Mary didn't come from Gabriel, nor from Elizabeth, they came from St. Peter Canisius during dark days as the Church splintered and the poor suffered. But with those several extra words, he entrusted all that suffering, and his own self, into the hands of the greatest of mothers, and he's reminded us to do the same all these years since!

Fr. Dominic Rankin has prayed the rosary daily since he was a little child. It started with just a decade before bed, and then the whole rosary (14 minutes feels like a long time when you're little!) with the family sometime in the evening. But, those hundreds of thousands of Hail Mary's add up over time, and it makes a lot of saints smile as we join our little greetings of our Queen to all the times they did the same!

ASK FATHER



Since we make the sign of the cross while reciting the "In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit", should we do it also when praying the Glory Be?

Similarly, is it necessary to make the sign of the cross after receiving Holy Communion?
- A Mother at the Cathedral

Part I

I love this kind of question because it asks us to delve into the behind-the-scenes of our most common prayers, and invites us to take a closer look at the words and actions that we use in our liturgies and devotions. We know that Christians in the 200s were already being signed with the cross by their priests at baptisms, exorcisms, and confirmations and would sign themselves with that symbol as they began their day in prayer, as well as when confronting any temptation. Tertullian goes so far as to say that: *"Christians wear out our foreheads with the sign of the cross"* [cfr. Tertullian, De Corona, 30] and St. Hippolytus a decade later boldly described the power of this gesture:

If you are tempted, seal your foreheads reverently. For this is the Sign of the Passion, displayed and made manifest against the devil, provided that you do it with faith, not to be seen by men, but by presenting it with skill like a shield. Because the Adversary, when he sees the strength of the heart and the inner man which is animated by the Word – the interior image of the Word, formed on [his] exterior – he is made to flee by the Spirit which is in you. ... By sealing the forehead and eyes with the hand, we turn aside the one who is seeking to destroy us. [Hippolytus, Apostolic Tradition, 42.1-4, 215 AD]

At that early age, it seems that the sign was simply made upon the forehead. This gesture remains in the sacrament of confirmation when the bishop smears the chrism in the form of a cross on the forehead of the confirmandi, as well as making up part of the triple-signing that the priest is to do before he proclaims the Gospel. This second example is something that many lay people also do as well in preparation to hear the Gospel, praying "Lord be in my mind, upon my lips, and within my heart" while marking each with a cross (something we know was happening by the 900s).

Beautifully, we have an Old Testament foreshadowing of this gesture in the book of Ezekiel: *"And the Lord said to him, 'Go through the city, through Jerusalem, and put a mark [tau] upon the foreheads of the men who sigh and groan over all the abominations that are committed in it.'*" [Ezekiel 9:4]. That mark, literally said to be the letter tau, comes through Egyptian and Phoenician marks shaped like an "X", which get stretched over the centuries to end up being shaped in modern Hebrew like so: ט As the shape continued to morph as alphabets came and went, it became the basis for the Greek tau (T) and thus, in our day, in the Latin as well as Cyrillic "T". Thus, Christians have long realized that what the Lord spoke of to Ezekiel He fulfilled in the cross of His Son, and in the following Christian generations marking themselves with that shape of the cross.

It seems that marking one's entire body with the sign of the cross – forehead to chest, and across the shoulders – is something that arose in the 400s to emphasize the two natures of Christ, human and divine, in one Divine Person (pushing back against the Monophysite heresy, which argued Jesus had only one nature [mono = one; physite = nature]. Three fingers were held together in reference to the Trinity, and the two remaining fingers were pressed against the palm to refer to Jesus as both human and divine. 800 years later, the gesture was still going strong, with Pope Innocent III saying: *"The sign of the cross is made with three fingers, because the signing is done together with the invocation of the Trinity. ... This is how it is done: from above to below, and from the right to the left, because Christ descended from the heavens to the earth, and from the Jews (right) He passed to the Gentiles (left)."* Funnily enough, it seems that we have gotten into the habit of going from left to right because when the priest turned to face the people and blessed them, going from his right, to his left, they mirrored the motion, going from their left, to their right. No problem, says Innocent III: *"Others, however, make the sign of the cross from the left to the right, because from misery (left) we must cross over to glory (right), just as Christ crossed over from death to life, and from Hades to Paradise."*

Ok, so we've covered a lot of ground, but not yet answered the above questions: what about during the Glory Be, and after receiving Holy Communion? We've sadly run out of room to include the second half of the answer to this question in this week's bulletin, but check back next weekend for Part II of this Ask Father!

Father Dominic Rankin took on this week's "Ask Father" column. Check back next week for Part II of his answer to this week's question.

Stewardship of Treasure December 11th & 12th

Envelopes:	\$3,777.00
Loose:	\$4,887.00
Maintenance:	\$78.00
Total:	\$8,742.00

November EFT: \$21,066.25

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!

Sacraments

Baptisms

Edith Josephine Sadaj

Baptized on 12/12/2021

Child of Joseph & Rebecca Sadaj

SUNDAY ANNOUNCEMENTS



Around the Cathedral

Christmas Masses at the Cathedral

Please join us at any of our Christmas Masses at the Cathedral to celebrate the birth of Christ:

Christmas Eve (Friday, December 24)
4:00pm & 7:00pm

Midnight Mass (Saturday, December 25)
12:00am

Christmas Day (Saturday, December 25)
9:00am

Please note, we will have daily 7:00am Mass on Christmas Eve, but there will be no 5:15pm Mass on Christmas Eve, and no Saturday Vigil at 4:00pm on Christmas Day. We will resume our normal Mass and confession schedule on Sunday, December 26 (Masses: 7:00am, 10:00am, 5:00pm; Confessions: 4:00pm-4:45pm).

The Word Among Us

Over the past four months copies of The Word Among Us have been available to assist you in develop or nurture the practice of reading and reflecting on the day's Mass readings. We were able to receive these at a special discounted rate. The Advent book marks the last month that these books will be available. If you enjoyed them, please consider subscribing - it's a perfect Christmas gift from you to you or for someone you love. Don't forget we have more upcoming sessions of Encountering Christ in the Word where we read and contemplate and discuss what God might be saying to us in Scripture. You are welcome to join us on December 21 at 7:00 in the Cathedral atrium.

Seminarian Tree

You've heard of an Angel Tree, but we would like to introduce you to a Seminarian Tree. In the Atrium you will find a tree with seminarian cards on it. We invite you take a card and commit to praying for that seminarian all year. If you have the time, you can mail him a birthday card or Christmas card letting the seminarian know he is in your prayers. You may even be lucky enough to meet your seminarian at the Cathedral and can tell him in person. Thank you for your prayerful support of our future priests!

Second Collection (12/25) - Catholic Children's Home Collection

Since 1879, the Catholic Children's Home has served as a 'beacon of hope' for thousands of children in need of a safe harbor and a place to call home. Through the Spanish Flu pandemic in 1918 to the Coronavirus in 2020, the Catholic Children's Home has been there to give the love and compassion these children desperately need. Today, the Catholic Children's Home continues this mission by meeting the emotional, social, academic and basic needs of all the children sent for residential care or special education services, including an innovative program designed to serve the needs of children faced with the tremendous challenges of Autism. The children served by the Catholic Children's Home have been chronically abused, designated "unmanageable" by their schools, or simply have had no place to call home. They are some of the most vulnerable in our society. The holidays are a particularly difficult time of year for these youth. In the spirit of Christ's special affection for all children, I ask that you continue to support the work of the Catholic Children's Home and generously contribute to the special collection held at Christmas. May God touch your hearts with his grace and mercy during these Advent and Christmas days. Psalm 127:3 "Children are a gift from the Lord; they are a reward from him." With every best wish and gratitude, I am Sincerely yours in Christ,
Bishop Thomas John Paprocki

Helping Hands Volunteer Meeting

Volunteer to be part of a team that provides a meal on the 4th & 5th Saturdays of each month to men at the Helping Hands Homeless Shelter. Those who do not cook can help in other ways. If you are interested in participating in this ministry to "feed the hungry", please join us for a 9:00 am breakfast meeting on Saturday, January 8, 2022 in the Cathedral School Hall. Teams are formed and menus are developed for the entire year at this planning breakfast. RSVP required by January 4th by calling or texting 217-494-4241.

Carols at Noon

Join us at the Cathedral as Mark Gifford plays an hour of Christmas Carols on the Cathedral Pipe Organ! Monday, December 27th - 12:00PM @ Cathedral

SUNDAY ANNOUNCEMENTS



Around the Diocese

"Night of Pause" - A Celebration of the Winter Solstice

Come and go - as you wish - to the Church of the Little Flower for the night of "Silence and Light" on Tuesday, December 21 from 5pm-10pm. 800 Stevenson Drive, Springfield, IL

Dominican Family Teach-In

On Saturday, January 29, 2022, from 9 to 2, Sacred Heart-Griffin High School is hosting "Dominican Family Teach-In", a day of spiritual reflection for future and current Sacred Heart-Griffin Parents to learn how to live the Four Pillars of the Dominican Order charism. Learn how to pray, study, live, and serve like a Dominican! Led by Springfield Dominican Sisters and Dominican Associates, \$20 registration donation includes lunch. Email carlson@shg.org to register today!

Jesus: The Way, the Truth, and the Life - Bible Study at Christ the King Parish

Jesus is our Savior, our Redeemer, our Lord, and our God. While many of us already know a lot about him, how well can we say we really know him? Filmed on location in the Holy Land, this study is a new and fresh look at Jesus—who he is, what he is really like, what he taught, what he did for our salvation, and what all of this means for us as Catholics today. 10 Sessions, 30-Minute Videos from ascensionpress.com \$31.00--This Study Set includes: The Full-Color Jesus student workbook, the Jesus Timeline Chart, the Jesus Book and online access for one year. Begins January 18, 2022 in the Parish Hall, from 9:30-11. Please contact Mary Kay Hinkle at 217-899-2599 or mbhinkle75@comcast.net. Due to shipping concerns, deadline to join the study is December 31, 2021.

Join the Gospel Choir

The Diocesan Black Catholic Commission is planning to have a Gospel Mass February 27, 2022, St. Aloysius Church, Springfield. Those interested in singing in the Gospel Choir for this Mass should contact Donna Moore at dmoore@dio.org, or 217-321-1161.

Go On An ADVENTure

This Advent, join us as we go on an ADVENTure! Where are we going? Get on board to find out. Head to dio.org/adventure to sign up and secure your ticket. Reflections, articles, stories, and activities to prepare you for Christ. Are you ready?

Calling All Young Artists

Missionary Childhood Association (MCA) has an annual Christmas Art Contest competition for students from K-8th grade. Artwork for national winners will be on display in the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C. Throughout Advent and Christmas. General information and entry form can be found in the atrium.

Scholarships Available at Quincy University

Quincy University recently celebrated 160 years of providing an exceptional educational experience that prepares students for lives of purpose and service to others, guided and shaped by Franciscans encouraging Catholic students to consider QU among their college options and ultimately enroll. **The Bishop's Scholarship** is a \$10,000 scholarship awarded to one student on the recommendation of the Bishop of Springfield. To be eligible for consideration, a candidate must belong to a parish in the Diocese of Springfield, apply to Quincy University and receive admission by December 15, 2021, and choose to enroll and submit a statement describing their involvement in their local parish, the Diocese, or the Catholic Church by January 15, 2022. **The Diocesan Scholarship** is a \$500 scholarship awarded to any student who is a member of a parish in the Diocese of Springfield. To receive this scholarship, candidates must belong to a parish in the Diocese of Springfield, apply to Quincy University and receive admission by March 15, 2022, and choose to enroll and submit a letter from a parish official confirming membership by April 15, 2022. For more information on these scholarships and other financial aid information at Quincy University, please visit www.quincy.edu/apply