

Cathedral OF THE *Immaculate Conception*

FEBRUARY 13, 2022 | 6TH 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 4 ISSUE 7

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

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



All Things Possible

Last Sunday, I shared that my favorite passage in the Bible was found in our Second Reading from St. Paul, where he explains his unworthiness to be called an apostle, especially in comparison to all of those to whom Jesus had appeared after the Resurrection. Despite that unworthiness, though, St. Paul comes to the following conclusion: "But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace to me has not been ineffective." (1 Cor 15:10) These words were an encouragement to me as I was beginning seminary formation, and they continue to be so now for me as a priest.

At the heart of this passage is the phrase: "the grace of God." God's grace, which is a sharing in His very life, makes all the difference in our lives. His grace enables us to do what we would otherwise not be able to do on our own. With that understanding, St. Paul is also able to say the following: "I can do all things in Him who strengthens me." (Philippians 4:13) This passage is a very popular one, and often quoted by Christians as a sign of our faith in the power of God's grace, despite our weakness and unworthiness. In a blog article that I recently read, I came across an explanation of this passage that really resonated with me:

This verse is so misused because many Christians interpret "all things" as "anything," not "all the things Paul has talked about." It's not a blanket endorsement that God will support anything we set out to do and empower us to do whatever impossible things we can imagine. It's an assurance that we can do whatever God calls us to do, not whatever we decide to do. (<https://zondervanacademic.com/blog/philippians-4-13>)

This is an important clarification. God's grace is always sufficient to help us in accomplishing His will. A central part of that will is to follow His commandments. What He commands is never impossible, for with God's grace, all things according to His will for us are possible.

I bring this up in particular with regards to the Church's teaching on the 6th and 9th Commandments that deal with our human sexuality. Many in society protest that what the Church asks of her children in this area is unreasonable and, in fact, impossible. Because living a life of chastity can be so challenging in a hypersexualized world, the conclusion that our culture draws is: "You are not capable of living what the Church teaches, so we should just lower our expectations, make permissible that which the Church teaches against in the area of sexual morality." I will admit, there is something true about this conclusion. You and I are not capable of this by our own strength. This is where St. Paul's words come in: "I can do all things in Him who strengthens me." It is God's will for us to live the virtue of chastity well according to our state in life, and His grace makes it possible. The Church seems to be the only voice in our culture that tells us this is indeed possible – with the caveat that we understand that His grace will be sufficient and thus effective in our living this virtue and every other virtue His will invites us to live.

And so the question with which I leave you is this: "Do you believe this?" Perhaps we would do well to consider the scene in the Gospel of the man who brought his son to Jesus to heal him. Jesus tells the father (and us) the following: "All things are possible to him who believes." (Mark 9:23) Let our response to the question about believing that God's grace can make possible what seems impossible in living chastity that same response the father had to Jesus: "I do believe, help my unbelief." (Mark 9:24)

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 14

7am - The Vogt Family
(Bill Vogt)
5:15pm - Jean Anne Staab
(Brian & Michelle Lauer)

Tuesday, February 15

7am - Sophia Bartoletti & Family
(Estate of Sophia Bartoletti)
5:15pm - John Dunham Family
(Judith Ansell)

Wednesday, February 16

7am - Mary Celine Sestak
(Angela & Robert Williams)
5:15pm - Joseph Forestier
(LouAnn Mack & Carl Corrigan)

Thursday, February 17

7am - Intention for Brandi Borres
(Chris Sommer)
5:15pm - Amabile Bartoletti
(Estate of Norma Bartoletti)

Friday, February 18

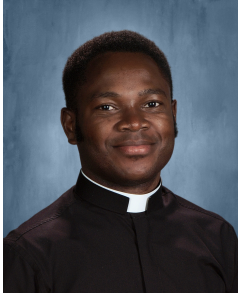
7am - Anna A. Eleyidath
(Augustine Eleyidath)
5:15pm - Otis Huber
(Family)

Saturday, February 19

8am - Vincy John
(Ann Vadukumcherry)
4pm - Joe Forestier
(Mark & Brenda Staab)

Sunday, February 20

7am - For the People
10am - Howard Barnett
(Lisa Barnett)
5pm - Erma Bartoletti
(Estate of Norma Bartoletti)



St. Valentine – Myth or Historical Person?

This Monday, February 14, we shall celebrate what has become one of the most widely celebrated feasts in the secular world and Christendom – St. Valentine's Day. Some of us will be celebrating St. Valentine's Day as a Christian fiesta, keeping in mind the stories of sacrificial love surrounding the figure of St. Valentine. Many others worldwide will be celebrating this feast as a day of appreciation and expression of romantic love.

Whichever way, the question about the origin of this feast, its historicity, and Christian authenticity has remained a matter of debate among authors, historians, and Christian theologians, especially outside of the Catholic faith. Whoever plans to celebrate this feast may want to know if the feast of St. Valentine is genuinely Christian and if the figure of St. Valentine is a myth or a historical person. Who was he if he existed in time and space like the rest of the saints? Did he die a martyr's death out of love? What kind of love?

There are many stories and understandings of the figure of St. Valentine and his feast. After some research, I have found out that many people argue that this feast is one of those regular feasts of saints in the Catholic church – saints who truly existed in time and space. Some people who hold this opinion believe that the feast spread so widely beyond the Christian world in the late medieval times with lots of superstitious practices attached to it. One of these superstitions is the romantic love that this feast represents for many people all over the world.

Other people believe that St. Valentine's Day is a Christian myth manufactured in medieval Europe to encourage fraternal charity and generosity to the poor among Christians. Several people who hold this opinion are indifferent about whether the figure of St. Valentine is a myth or a historical person. Some observe the feast as a Christian fiesta of sacrificial love. In contrast, others treat it as a secular feast of romantic love.

Still, people like Lisa Bitel, a history professor at the University of Southern California, have an interesting view of this feast. They believe that the feast of St. Valentine commemorates one of the three Valentines that lived in Rome, Umbria, and Africa in the third century. While this opinion argues that St. Valentine's Day remembers one of these three early Christians, it denies that any of them is associated with the romantic love that the feast has come to represent for many people.

However, there is a common belief that the saint or saints associated with St. Valentine's Day died as martyrs. Their association with romantic love may be a superstition or a misunderstanding of the love associated with their martyrdom. But the popular understanding of St. Valentine's Day among Christians in many parts of the world as a commemoration of sacrificial love should be highly encouraged. This is because martyrdom is one of the highest expressions of love – that love, which is the primary vocation of every Christian. The expression of this sacrificial love should be seen in our lives and actions as Christians.

Father Peter Chineke serves as parochial vicar at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception and as co-chaplain of Sacred Heart-Griffin High School.

Stewardship of Treasure February 5th & 6th

Envelopes:	\$4,539.00
Loose:	\$2,473.00
Maintenance:	\$1,245.00
Total:	\$8,257.00

January EFT: \$20,696.25

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!



St. Josephine Bakhita

Feast Day: February 8th

In my research for our saint this week, I realized that Pope Benedict XVI had already written her story, weaving it into his encyclical on Christian hope. Seeing that I could do no better myself, and realizing how providential this discovery was in light of our current thirst for hope, I'll let our Pope Emeritus do the teaching this week:

Paragraph 2: Christianity was not only “good news”—the communication of a hitherto unknown content. In our language we would say: the Christian message was not only “informative” but “performative”. That means: the Gospel is not merely a communication of things that can be known—it is one that makes things happen and is life-changing. The dark door of time, of the future, has been thrown open. The one who has hope lives differently; the one who hopes has been granted the gift of a new life. Yet at this point a question arises: in what does this hope consist which, as hope, is “redemption”? The essence of the answer is given in the phrase from the Letter to the Ephesians quoted above: the Ephesians, before their encounter with Christ, were without hope because they were “without God in the world”. To come to know God—the true God—means to receive hope. We who have always lived with the Christian concept of God, and have grown accustomed to it, have almost ceased to notice that we possess the hope that ensues from a real encounter with this God.

Paragraph 3: The example of a saint of our time can to some degree help us understand what it means to have a real encounter with this God for the first time. I am thinking of the African Josephine Bakhita, canonized by Pope John Paul II. She was born around 1869—she herself did not know the precise date—in Darfur in Sudan. At the age of nine, she was kidnapped by slave-traders, beaten till she bled, and sold five times in the slave-markets of Sudan. Eventually she found herself working as a slave for the mother and the wife of a general, and there she was flogged every day till she bled; as a result of this she bore 144 scars throughout her life. Finally, in 1882, she was bought by an Italian merchant for the Italian consul Callisto Legnani, who returned to Italy as the Mahdists advanced.

Here, after the terrifying “masters” who had owned her up to that point, Bakhita came to know a totally different kind of “master”—in Venetian dialect, which she was now learning, she used the name “paron” for the living God, the God of Jesus Christ. Up to that time she had known only masters who despised and maltreated her, or at best considered her a useful slave. Now, however, she heard that there is a “paron” above all masters, the Lord of all lords, and that this Lord is good, goodness in person. She came to know that this Lord even knew her, that he had created her—that he actually loved her. She too was loved, and by none other than the supreme “Paron”, before whom all other masters are themselves no more than lowly servants. She was known and loved and she was awaited. What is more, this master had himself accepted the destiny of being flogged and now he was waiting for her “at the Father’s right hand”.

Now she had “hope”—no longer simply the modest hope of finding masters who would be less cruel, but the great hope: “I am definitively loved and whatever happens to me—I am awaited by this Love. And so my life is good.” Through the knowledge of this hope she was “redeemed”, no longer a slave, but a free child of God. She understood what Paul meant when he reminded the Ephesians that previously they were without hope and without God in the world—without hope because without God. Hence, when she was about to be taken back to Sudan, Bakhita refused; she did not wish to be separated again from her “Paron”. On 9 January 1890, she was baptized and confirmed and received her first Holy Communion from the hands of the Patriarch of Venice.

On 8 December 1896, in Verona, she took her vows in the Congregation of the Canossian Sisters and from that time onwards, besides her work in the sacristy and in the porter’s lodge at the convent, she made several journeys round Italy in order to promote the missions: the liberation that she had received through her encounter with the God of Jesus Christ, she felt she had to extend, it had to be handed on to others, to the greatest possible number of people. The hope born in her which had “redeemed” her she could not keep to herself; this hope had to reach many, to reach everybody.

Fr. Dominic Rankin first heard the story of St. Josephine Bakhita in a set of readers in the 2nd or 3rd grade filled with saint-stories and meant to teach reading-comprehension. This week, inspired by her example, he will practice hope by carrying sufferings with Jesus.

SUNDAY ANNOUNCEMENTS



Around the Cathedral

Cathedral Parishioner Catholic School Tuition Scholarship Form

The Cathedral Parish believes in the value of Catholic education and is committed to assisting parishioners who choose a Catholic education for their children by providing tuition assistance. Parishioners will receive a \$500 tuition scholarship for each child enrolled in a Springfield Catholic Grade School (Grades K-8), and a \$750 tuition scholarship for each child enrolled at Sacred Heart-Griffin High School. The Scholarship is eligible to any parishioner household who is registered and active in the Cathedral parish. For more information or to apply, please visit our website (<https://spicathedral.org/cathedral-parishioner-catholic-school-tuition-scholarship-form/>). Applications are DUE by March 15th, 2022. If you have any questions, please contact the Cathedral Parish Office at 217-522-3342.

First Friday Concert at the Cathedral

Join us on Friday, February 18, 2022 at 7pm in the Cathedral for a First Friday Concert! February's concert will feature Leon Lewis-Nocol, Jazz Piano. The First Friday Concert Series is sponsored by the Staab Family, and is free and open to the public. All are welcome!

Introducing Our Parish Nurses

Meet Angela Bentley

Angela Bentley RN is a proud graduate of St. John's School of Nursing, Class of 1985. She recently completed the Faith Community Nursing Program in Spring of 2021. Angela has more than 30 years of nursing experience – mainly in cardiothoracic/vascular critical care including heart transplant and flight nursing and is currently teaching nursing at Millikin University. She and her husband Jim were married at the Cathedral in 1998. Her stepson Matt and his wife Rachel live in New York City and are expecting their first baby. Her other sons, graduates of SHG, are now in college; Steven studying electrical engineering and Robert studying forestry/wildlife conservation. Angela became a Faith Community Nurse because she believes that faith and prayer contribute to health and healing. By sharing our talents and holistically caring for one another, together we can positively impact the health of our faith community.

Collecting Old Palms

The Cathedral will be collecting old palms to be used for Ash Wednesday. There is a collection basket in the atrium for you to drop off any old palms.

Meals Needed

During the period of Inquiry of RCIA, we make our seekers feel especially welcome and comfortable by serving a simple meal to start each evening. If you are interested in providing a meal for 8 people on any Tuesday between now until the end of February, please contact Vicki at vcompton@cathedral.dio.org or 217-522-3342. Meals have included soup and bread, pasta and salad, pizza delivery, sloppy joes and chips.

Come Watch The Chosen on Cathedral's Big Screen

The Chosen – Episode One

Enter into the story of the ordinary people who surrounded Jesus. Sinners who spent time with the one Man who understood them and would eventually die for them. These are the stories of rebuke and hope, of sin and forgiveness. You'll meet the people who loved Him, served Him, and followed Him, seeing the Savior through their eyes as you consider who He is and why He came. And the questions meant to help you move forward in your faith are challenging enough to do just that.

Sunday, February 20, 2:00-3:15, Cathedral Atrium



Blood Pressure Clinic

Our parish nurses will be in the atrium after Mass next weekend, February 19th and 20th for blood pressure screenings. Please stop by!

February is Heart Month!

Throughout the month of February, the Faith Community Nurses will have heart smart informational poster displays each weekend. There will also be a heart smart poster and activities just for the kids too! Please stop by! If you have any questions regarding heart health, please don't hesitate to contact Adrienne or Angela (your Faith Community Nurses).

SUNDAY ANNOUNCEMENTS



Around the Diocese

Retreat for Inner Healing

During this retreat, we will look at what in our souls and stories prevent us from experiencing the full peace, freedom, joy, and happiness that Jesus offers us. We may have been Catholic Christians our entire lives, but not experience the abundant life that Jesus promises us. We may regularly find ourselves filled with unwanted negative emotions. This retreat will facilitate an encounter with God's transformative and healing love. The retreat will take place at Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Decatur. It is not an overnight retreat, but it will span the weekend, specifically March 11th, 12th, 13th. Registration is free. To register or to ask questions email communications@ololchurch.com or call 217-877-4404

Dynamic Catholic Speaker at St. Agnes

John Edwards, host of the popular Just a Guy in the Pew podcast, is coming to Springfield on February 25-26 to lead a parish mission at St. Agnes. For more information or questions, please contact cbecker@stagnescatholicparish.org or 217-792-1330.

Springfield Deanery Meeting and Soup Lunch

Please join the women of the Springfield Diocesan and National Council of Catholic Women on Mon., Feb. 21, from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM at Church of the Little Flower Parish Center, 900 Stevenson Dr., Sprfld. Have fun getting to know ladies from other parishes, enjoy praying together, hearing about other parishes and learning more about the Springfield Diocesan and National Council of Catholic Women. Per current guidelines, face masks are required. Please R.S.V.P. to Janet Zimmerman, Springfield Deanery President: janetzim14@yahoo.com or 217-494-4743.

Springfield Right to Life "Sweethearts Dinner"

Two Hearts, Springfield's first annual fundraising event will be held on Friday, February 25, 2022, at Erin's Pavilion, 4965 S 2nd St, Springfield, IL 62703. The event will be a nice evening out, with a catered "surf and turf" dinner. The evening will feature speakers who will discuss Two Hearts' resources offered to pregnant women in the community and its education program. You can learn more about Two Hearts Springfield at: twoheartsspringfield.org. If you'd like to attend, please sign up at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/two-hearts-springfield-tickets-260401005417>

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.

Butler Funeral Home Peace of Mind Seminar

The Butler Family of Organizations extends an invitation to all who are interested in learning more about planning for their final wishes to help their families celebrate their lives to join us for a lunch and learn program. The details are as follows:

Peace of Mind Seminar
Thursday, February 17th
11:30 am - 1:30 pm
Prairie View Reception Center (PVRC)
8865 State Route 4, Chatham, IL 62629

Complimentary lunch from Café Moxo will be provided. This event is free: no cost or obligation. Please call 217-544-4646 to reserve your space no later than Monday, February 14th.

Catholic War Veterans

The Catholic War Veterans and Auxiliary of the USA would like to take this opportunity to introduce you to our organization and invite you to join us. We are a Veterans Service Organization whose primary mission is to advocate for, and provide support for, all veterans, their families, and the veterans' community through advocacy for veteran services, charitable activities and assistance, and socialization and fellowship. For more information or to apply to become a member, please visit www.cww.org.

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 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/appl

You're Invited!

In preparation for the Year of the Eucharist, come experience the Vatican International Exhibit of The Eucharistic Miracles of the World. No cost- all are invited! Saturday, March 19, 4pm- 7pm and Sunday, March 20, 8 am- 930 am, 11 am- 3 pm (Mass at 10 am) at Holy Family Parish in Athens. For more information, visit www.therealpresence.org