

Cathedral OF THE *Immaculate Conception*

DECEMBER 18, 2022 | 4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT



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

Cathedral Weekly

VOLUME 4 ISSUE 51

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

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

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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!



Emmanuel, God is with Us

"Behold, the virgin shall be with child and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,' which means 'God is with us.' " (Matthew 1:23) We hear these words in the Gospel account today of St. Joseph being visited in his sleep by the angel. The child in Mary's womb is the one about whom Isaiah prophesied, the one whom the people of Israel had longed for for centuries. Now, He is finally coming!

But even before His birth in Bethlehem in Christmas, Emmanuel, God-with-us, the long-awaited Messiah was with Mary and Joseph in an intimate way. For Mary, the conception of Jesus in her womb meant that God was with her in a way as He grew in her very womb. Because of his proximity to Mary, Joseph would have also had a unique experience of God already being with him. Though not visible yet, He was truly present, just as any child is in the womb of their mothers. From the first moment of conception, human life is there, a fact I have no doubt Mary and Joseph appreciated.

Perhaps I have shared this image with you in a homily or some other way in the past couple of years, but in these final days of Advent, I like to picture Mary and Joseph as they journey together toward Bethlehem. The journey by foot from Nazareth to Bethlehem likely took a few days. I can picture them settling in for the night after a long day's journey. Since they are not at home, Joseph is likely very attentive to their surroundings, possibly even keeping watch while his pregnant wife sleeps. Just imagine Joseph, watching Mary as she slept, seeing her, but also knowing that Emmanuel was there with them, hidden in her womb. You could say that Joseph was probably one of the first in the history of the Church to pray in adoration in the presence of Jesus Christ – body, blood, soul, and divinity, in form slightly different from the Eucharist, of course, but in the same reality of His being truly and really present. What peace there must have been in his heart as he looked lovingly on his wife with his physical eyes, and as he looked lovingly on His Savior with his eyes of faith.

In this final week of Advent, I invite you to pray with this image of Joseph gazing upon Mary, and adoring Jesus even though He cannot yet see Him face to face. And what better place to do this than in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, when exposed for Eucharistic Adoration, or when He rests in the tabernacle. We look upon Him, not yet being able to see Him face to face, but believing that He is truly present. Only when we get to Heaven will we have the privilege of seeing Him in His glory, but until that time, seeing Him as He remains hidden behind the form of bread and wine (but truly present) in the Eucharist, and then receiving Him in Holy Communion, that is enough for us. For He is Emmanuel, God with us! Let us rejoice in this beautiful gift, and may His presence among as we approach Christmas grant us that same peace that Mary and Joseph knew as they prepared for His birth.

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 19

7am - Brother Francis Skube
(Jerry Jeter)
5:15pm - Frank Coffey
(Family)

Tuesday, December 20

7am - Sophia Bartoletti
(Estate)
5:15pm - Kristin King & Family
(Richard & Kay King)

Wednesday, December 21

7am - John Ansell
(The Cour Family)
5:15pm - Charles P. Nicoud
(Tim Nicoud)

Thursday, December 22

7am - James Conkrite
(Litina Carnes)
5:15pm - Margaret Graham
(Tom McGee)

Friday, December 23

7am - Deceased Members of the
CCCW (CCCW)
5:15pm - Shirley Logan
(Lisa Logan & Lori Logan Motyka)

Saturday, December 24

8am - Patrick Ketchum
(Chris Sommer)
4pm - Eulalia & Raymond Ohl
(Angela Ohl-Marsters)
7pm - For the People

Sunday, December 25

12am - John Montgomery
(John Busciacco)
7am - Pamela Harmon
(Jane Stone)
10am - Barbara McGee
(Tom McGee)

Why are the Mass readings the same in every Catholic Church every day?

The readings that we as Catholics use at Mass are not chosen by the priest or members of our parishes. Instead, the Roman Catholic Church around the world has a standard set of scripture readings which the Church has compiled in a set of lectionaries, or books of readings. There are two different sets of “cycles,” as they are called. The first cycle is read on Sundays and is repeated every three years. A different set of readings is read on weekdays and is repeated every two years. This means that after attending Sunday Mass for only three years, a Catholic will have heard large portions of the Gospels, Old Testament texts, and New Testament texts.

At the Second Vatican Council, one of the desires of the gathered bishops was to make scripture more accessible to Catholics around the world. A primary way to accomplish this was by greatly expanding the variety of readings at Mass and reworking the lectionary. In fact, it is widely recognized that the Catholic lectionary is a work of great genius, and several other Christian denominations also use the Catholic lectionary, such as some Lutherans. (There are exceptions to this, such as some books that are not considered canonical). The readings during seasons like Advent and Lent help us to open our hearts more widely to the spirit of the season that the liturgy is trying to convey to us.

There are some exceptions to the rule that every church has the same readings around the world. When a saint's feast day is celebrated on a weekday, it is optional to use readings specific to that saint. Generally, priests choose to use the daily readings to maintain the coherence of the scriptural text over several days. However, it is permitted to use the optional readings at the preacher's discretion. Another exception to the rule of universal readings will be found in Eastern Catholic Churches. This could be the topic for another article, but the Catholic Church is not a homogenous entity, but rather a unity of many Churches. We are members of the Latin Catholic Church, but there is also the Eastern branch of the Church, made up of around 23 other Catholic Churches. They are also Catholic but not part of the Latin tradition. Many of these churches would have their own lectionary cycles because they are part of a different liturgical tradition than the Latin Church. These are different than and not to be confused with Orthodox Churches.

There are few Eastern Catholic Churches in our part of the world. In fact, I am only aware of one Eastern Catholic parish in our diocese, and it may be closed by now. However, in Eastern Europe and Asia there are many Eastern Catholic Churches. If you are travelling abroad or even elsewhere in the country, you are free to attend an Eastern Catholic Divine Liturgy (Mass). The readings may be different, and the liturgical tradition will be different, but it is still the same Mass. Just make sure that you see the word “Catholic” somewhere in the name of the parish! We are blessed to be part of a Universal Church – a Church which has expanded not only across the world, but also across time for two thousand years. Our Faith is truly a gift from God, and it is a blessing to have the Mass available to us wherever we go around the world!

*Fr. Dominic Vahling serves as a teacher and chaplain at
Sacred Heart-Griffin High School in Springfield.*

Stewardship of Treasure December 10th & 11th

Collection numbers were unavailable at the time of publication. Please check back next weekend for these collection numbers.

November EFT

\$21,733.80

November Second Collections

Breadline Sunday

\$5,137.00

Calvary Cemetery

\$1,087.00

Campaign for Justice & Hope

\$3,353.00

November Debt Reduction

\$691.00

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!



Saint Anastasia, of Sirmium

Feast Day: December 25th | Titles: Virgin, Martyr, Deliverer from Potions ["Pharmakolytria" (consider "pharmacy", "pharmaceuticals")] | Patronage: Martyrs, Weavers, Widows, Those Suffering from Poison | Attributes: Palm Branch, Martyrs-Cross, Medicine Pot

There are about a dozen saints and blesseds whose feast day is on December 25th, most because they died on that day, whether from natural causes or because they were martyred. The woman who we get to know today was one of those given the martyrs crown, and though after Vatican II she has not retained a Mass of her own on December 25th (the various Masses of Christmas are the only ones a priest can celebrate on the 25th) she is still mentioned in the Roman Canon for which reason we consider her life today.

She comes at the end of the list of saintly women named during the prayer called the "Nobis Quoque". This Latin phrase refers to the prayer that the priest says after praying for the deceased, he strikes his breast saying "To us, also, your servants, who, though sinners, hope in your abundant mercies, graciously grant some share and fellowship with your holy Apostles and Martyrs:", going on to list John the Baptist and many other martyrs venerated early on in Rome. Here's the amazing thing, if you look through that list, you find characters from all over the early Christian world, men and women, some of them martyrs, some of them apostles, some miracle-workers, some great teachers of the faith. Even just looking at the women, you have two from Africa (Felicity and Perpetua), two from Sicily (Agatha and Lucy), two from Rome (Agnes and Cecilia), and Anastasia, whose father may have been Roman, but who lived and died in Sirmium, now in Serbia.

I offer instead of my own biography, excerpts from an Akathist given in veneration of St. Anastasia. An Akathist is a chanted hymn-homilies with interspersed litanies, to a particular biblical character or saint. They originated in the Byzantine side of the Roman Empire in the 500s, and so seem a fitting way to recall our saint from Sirmium.

Kontakion 1: To the chosen saint of Christ, the all-blessed Great Martyr Anastasia, we bring praiseworthy singing, as she who has much boldness to the Lord, deliver from all troubles, sorrows and illnesses, the faithful who cry out freely with love: Alleluia.

Ikos 1: You have become like an angel with a pure mind, having had your mind upon Him, Who is the Creator of all visible and invisible creation, eternal from the beginning and the One desired by all the righteous; we, praising your wise teaching from the holy martyr Chrysogonus, cry out with love: *Rejoice, you who loved the faith of Christ; Rejoice, you who followed the piety of your mother Fausta. Rejoice, you who preserved the purity of your virginity; Rejoice, you who were always guarded invisibly by the angels. Rejoice, for you have drawn near to God by your purity; Rejoice, all-blessed Great Martyr Anastasia, holy visitor and intercessor for our souls in prison.*

Kontakion 2: Saint Anastasia, beholding the many Christians suffering in dungeons for the name and teachings of Jesus Christ, began to serve them with zeal, but was helped by God to comfort and heal them, singing with reverence: Alleluia.

Ikos 2: O godly-wise Anastasia, you reasoned that this whole world is passing vanity and corruption, and for this, you despised precious clothing and possessions, and secretly clothed beggars, entering the dungeons to serve as a confessor of Christ; we follow her in our minds, and we appeal to her with love: *Rejoice, imitator of Christ; Rejoice, visitor of prisoners in the dungeon; Rejoice, consoler of the confessors of Christ; Rejoice, you who have spent your gold and silver on them; Rejoice, by them who have acquired the Kingdom of Heaven; Rejoice, you who washed the hands and feet of the saints and cleaned their hair. Rejoice, you who healed their ills and honestly buried their bodies; Rejoice, all-blessed Great Martyr Anastasia, holy visitor and intercessor for our souls in prison.*

Kontakion 3: Strengthened by power from above, holy martyr, you blessedly served the saints, and shamed the hater of every virtue the devil, enduring enslavement from your impious husband; we, praising your goodness, Anastasia, sing along with you: Alleluia.

Ikos 3: Have great love in the Lord for all who suffer for the Name of Christ in dungeons; we, marveling at her courage, crying to her: *Rejoice, chosen bride of Christ; Rejoice, diligent keeper of the commandments of Christ; Rejoice, for you have fulfilled this not in words alone, but in deeds; Rejoice, you who were ready to lay down your life for your friends; Rejoice, for you have received much bitterness for Christ; Rejoice, for you have become like a strong diamond through your patience. Rejoice, all-blessed Great Martyr Anastasia, holy visitor and intercessor for our souls in prison.*

Fr. Dominic Rankin notes that this hymn continues to Kontakion 13 (!), and the whole thing would then be repeated three times (!!). We would need a longer bulletin to print it all, and probably a longer attention span if I were to sing it for my homily... Perhaps the lesson Anastasia teaches us this week is of generosity, not only to our fellow Christians, and not only in risking of our earthly life for Christ, but also, simply, to Our Lord in the time we dedicate to prayer, and to the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

SUNDAY ANNOUNCEMENTS



Around the Cathedral

Advent at the Cathedral

As we journey through this Advent Season, we invite you to do so with the mind of the Church, not the mind of the culture, which barrages us with all things Christmas. We will be offering some recommended resources throughout the Advent Season that will help you to maintain that proper perspective through the rich devotional life that the Church proposes for us. Please visit our website at www.spicathedral.org/advent/ for more information.

Another Recommendation:

Is it possible to practice our Catholic faith with our families outside of Sunday Mass? Discover a way to celebrate the liturgical season of Advent with your family with these seven traditions from Kendra Tierney, author of Catholic All Year.



Blood Pressure Checks – December 17th and 18th

Our parish nurses will be available for blood pressure checks before and after masses this weekend. Please stop by!

Men's Bible Study

"Iron is sharpened by iron; one person sharpens another." (Proverbs 27) Exploring God's Word together allows men to learn from one another, be challenged, and encourage each other as we live out our faith in everyday life. We meet on Wednesdays at 6:00 a.m. No experience or pre-reading is required. Coffee is available. All men are welcome. Join us in the Cathedral School Library (enter through the atrium doors off 5th street parking lot). Contact: Deacon Rob, (217) 836-7900 or rsgambelluri@dio.org.

Carols at Noon

Join us for Carols at Noon, at the Cathedral, featuring Mark Gifford on the organ.
Monday, December 26, 2022 - 12:00 PM

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 (Saturday, December 24)
4:00pm & 7:00pm

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

Christmas Day (Sunday, December 25)
7:00am & 10:00am

Please note, there will be 8:00am Mass on Christmas Eve, but no 5:00pm Mass on Christmas Day. There will only be the 7:00am Mass on Monday, December 26, but no confessions or 5:15pm Mass. We will resume our normal Mass and confession schedule on Tuesday, December 26 (Masses: 7:00am, 5:15pm; Confessions: 4:15pm-5:00pm).

Save the Date - February 18-19, 2023

"Live the Mass" is a weekend reflective retreat which leads us to a deeper experience of the Mass and all its power, beauty, and wonder. This adult retreat will be held at the Villa Maria overlooking Lake Springfield. For more information, contact Deacon Rob at (217) 836-7900 or rsgambelluri@dio.org.



Parish Directory Update

The parish directories were damaged during shipping, so we are currently waiting for new ones to be printed and shipped. We apologize for any inconvenience, but will be sure to notify you when the replacements arrive.

SUNDAY ANNOUNCEMENTS



Around the Diocese

Children's Christmas Choir

All children are invited to participate in the children's choir that sings at the 7:00pm Christmas Eve Mass. Choir practice will be on Sunday, December 18 @ 6:15pm in the choir room (school third floor). Contact Mark Gifford with any questions mgifford@cathedral.dio.org Thanks in advance to our children for this gift of song!

Second Collection - Catholic Children's Home

For the past 143 years, the Catholic Children's Home (CCH) has served as a beacon of hope for thousands of children in need of safe harbor and a place to call home. The CCH continues this mission by meeting the emotional, social, academic and basic material needs of all the children sent for residential care or special education services. In the spirit of Christ's incredible love for all children, we ask that you continue to support the work of the Catholic Children's Home and generously contribute to the special Christmas collection. "Let all that you do be done in love." (1 Corinthians 16:14) May God fill your hearts with love, grace and a spirit of giving during these blessed days of Advent and Christmas.

SEEK Conference in St. Louis Jan. 2-6

"SEEK23: You Are Called" invites souls seeking holiness to St. Louis Jan. 2 – 6. FOCUS (The Fellowship of Catholic University Students) is inviting all people in the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois to leave old things behind and answer a new call to greatness, holiness, joy, and mission by experiencing "SEEK23: You Are Called." This five-day event takes place at the America's Center Convention Complex in St. Louis. Through fellowship, prayer, world-class speakers, and entertainment, participants will be inspired to "Fear not; rise, He is calling you" (Mk 10:49). Registration is open at seek.focus.org. Catholics in the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois also receive a discount as a neighboring diocese of the Archdiocese of St. Louis (you will receive it when you type in your zip code).

Catholic Charities Christmas Appeal

Catholic Charities has been working very hard all year to serve those in need in our local communities. It is time for the annual Christmas Appeal fundraiser that helps fund the many programs throughout the 28-county Diocese. We encourage you to make a donation so you can help make a difference.

Night of Pause

The Church of the Little Flower invites you to take a moment during this hectic season to pause and reflect on Jesus on the longest night of the year. Take time to breathe and remember the gift of God's everlasting Peace and Joy freely given through Christ's birth and salvation. Join us for a quick visit or a few moments on December 21st from 5-9 pm in the church.

Free Episode of "The Chair" Highlights the Rich Story of our Diocese from Yesterday to Today

The story of the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois is featured in an episode of The Chair, a television series celebrating the best of Catholicism in the United States. From the physical beauty of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Springfield to the history of our diocese from our founding to the present, you'll learn things about our region you never knew before and see Bishop Thomas John Paprocki in his role of bishop. This intimate portrait of our diocese is an opportunity to see our history and the journey of Bishop Paprocki from his youth to our shepherd of today. To watch the FREE episode and others, go to thechair.com/watchnow. Note, you'll have to create a FREE account to watch.

NEW!

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Did you know it is easy, secure, and fast to donate gifts of stock to your parish, school, or a diocesan ministry?

A stock gift helps you save on capital gains and income tax. Share your joy and maximize your giving with a non-cash asset!

Ready to donate? Go to bit.ly/ParishStock or scan the QR code below



Thank you!



ARE YOU 70 1/2 OR OLDER?

If you are 70.5 or older, you can support your parish, school or diocesan ministry of your choice directly from your individual retirement account and potentially reduce your taxable income.

If you are 72 or older and must fulfill a required minimum distribution, your donation is a compassionate way to fulfill this requirement.

Go to bit.ly/ParishQCD to use the NEW, free, and secure tool to donate from your IRA today!

Make an impactful gift of joy!

Questions? Contact the parish offices today to learn more!