

Cathedral OF THE *Immaculate Conception*

DECEMBER 24, 2023 | 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 5 ISSUE 52

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

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

THE REVEREND PAUL LESUPATI
PAROCHIAL VICAR

THE REVEREND DOMINIC RANKIN
IN RESIDENCE

THE REVEREND DOMINIC VAHLING
IN RESIDENCE

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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!



Power of the Holy Spirit

In the Gospel account of the Annunciation in St. Luke's Gospel, we hear that Mary will conceive Jesus in her womb in a wholly unique and miraculous way, by the power of the Holy Spirit. The Archangel Gabriel explains this to Mary with the following words:

The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. (Luke 1:35)

It is that same power of the Holy Spirit that shows up in a special way as we enter into the Eucharistic Prayer. The next of the seven main elements of the Eucharistic Prayer is what is called the epiclesis. Here is how the General Instruction of the Roman Missal describes this element:

The epiclesis, in which, by means of particular invocations, the Church implores the power of the Holy Spirit that the gifts offered by human hands be consecrated, that is, become Christ's Body and Blood, and that the unblemished sacrificial Victim to be consumed in Communion may be for the salvation of those who will partake of it. (GIRM, 79c)

It will be by the power of the Holy Spirit that, in a similar way, the Word will become flesh and dwell among us, as He did in the Incarnation. Of course, we know the Annunciation and following birth of Jesus at Christmas focuses on the mystery of God becoming man, taking on our human flesh to redeem us. At the Last Supper, when Jesus said: "This is my Body...this is my Blood", He made it possible for Him to be present any time the Mass is celebrated until He comes again in glory.

The primary mystery being remembered at the Mass is the Passion of Christ, but there is a very real and significant connection to the mystery of the Incarnation at every Mass as well. After all, the Jesus that is present on the altar, whom we consume in the Eucharist, is the same Christ who was conceived in Mary's womb, born in Bethlehem, who suffered, died, rose, and ascended into Heaven. It is the same Christ, and pondering this should astound us! Any attempt to fully grasp this reality will fall short, but we receive this mystery with gratitude and love.

But let me invite us to something even more profound at work here. What makes this mystery possible is the power of the Holy Spirit. And where the Holy Spirit is, there also is the Father and the Son – always, from before time began. The three persons of the Trinity are never separate, never divided, but always working together, even though we may speak specifically of what the Father, Son, or Holy Spirit does. The Catechism explains it this way:

Inseparable in what they are, the divine persons are also inseparable in what they do. But within the single divine operation each shows forth what is proper to him in the Trinity, especially in the divine missions of the Son's Incarnation and the gift of the Holy Spirit. (CCC 267)

If your head is spinning, that is understandable! The Trinity is difficult to understand, but at the same time, the Trinity is the central mystery of our faith. It's at the center of the Incarnation which we celebrate during these days, and it's at the center of the Eucharist which we celebrate each day.

In closing, I'd like to share a quote I came across a few years ago from St. Josemaria Escriva regarding the Trinity, and I think it also applies beautifully to the Incarnation and the Eucharist:

When people tell you that they don't understand the Trinity and Unity, you should reply: I don't understand it either, but I love it and venerate it. If I understood God's greatness, if God fit into this poor head of mine, my God would be very small. And yet, He does fit -- He wants to fit -- in my heart, in the immense depth of my soul, which is immortal.

Let us marvel that God has become "small" so that we could receive Him, first as a child in Bethlehem, and now under the form of bread and wine so that He can come and live in our hearts forever.

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 25

12:00am - For the People
7:00am - NO MASS
9:00am - Betty L. Rogers (Family)
5:15pm - NO MASS

Tuesday, December 26

7am - Patrick Ketchum (Chris Sommer)
5:15pm - NO MASS

Wednesday, December 27

7am - Mary Thompson (Family)
5:15pm - Katie B (D.A. Drago)

Thursday, December 28

7am - Mary Conway (Julie & Steve Shields)
5:15pm - Thomas Hatcher (Family)

Friday, December 29

7am - Sarah Ann Ablinger (Jeff & Julie Mitchell)
5:15pm - E. John & Debra M. Beltramea Family (John & Debra Beltramea)

Saturday, December 30

8am - Danny Millburg (Margaret Millburg)
4pm - John & Mary Kauffman (Tom McGee)

Sunday, December 31

7am - Special Int for the Holy Family (John Busciacco)
10am - Davis Family (Joseph Davis)
5pm - Charles Salvo (Genny Severino)



Ss. Trasilla and Emiliana

Feast Day: December 24th

One of the first papyri to enter the collection of the British Museum when it was founded in 1753 is a page from the Breviary of Margaret of York. As you can see, it is a lovingly decorated page from a breviary, and it's rather incredible that it is from the mid-1400s. BUT, here's the crazy detail: the decorations around the page are from the 1400s, but the page itself is from the late 500s! The handwriting we see here dates this page – of the homilies of Gregory the Great on the Gospels – back to the time that Gregory was still alive!

How did it end up in England, you ask?! Well, Pope St. Gregory the Great, in 596 sent the famous expedition of St. Augustine of Canterbury to the Land of the Angels to preach the Gospel, and it may very well be that those intrepid missionaries took with them a copy of Gregory's homilies on the Gospels from just a few years before. One of these sermons was from February 10th, 592 A.D., then the Holy Father for about 2 years, ascended the steps of the Basilica of San Clemente in Rome. It had already stood for about 200 years, and that particular building would stand for 400 more, so it was a venerable and beloved place. His sermon was 7000 words long, probably about an hour of profound and challenging words on Jesus' proclamation from Matthew 22 that "many are called but few are chosen." Approaching his ending though, he chose to leave his hearers, and us, with a lesson learned from his three aunts, all consecrated to the Lord, but only two of whom persevered to the end in their calling:

"My father had three sisters, all three consecrated virgins. One was called Tarsilla, the other Gordiana, the third Æmiliana. All three, entered into religion with the same ardor and consecrated at the same time, had given themselves a very strict rule and led the common life in their own house. As they had been in this kind of life for a long time, Tarsilla and Æmiliana began to grow from day to day in the love of their Creator: only their bodies remained here below, while their souls passed each day a little more towards eternal goods. The soul of Gordiana, on the contrary, began to let the love of the inner life cool down from day to day, to return little by little to the love of this world. Tarsilla often said to her sister Æmiliana, crying a lot: "I see that our sister Gordiana does not live in harmony with us; I must admit that she lets herself go to things outside, and that her heart does not keep what she had proposed." The two sisters took care to correct Gordiana every day with tender remonstrances, to make her to return from her lightness of manners to the gravity which suited her dress. The latter no doubt took on a serious face when she was reprimanded, but as soon as the hour of the reprimand passed, the virtue of gravity that we wanted to impose on her also passed, and Gordiana returned to the same lightness of speech. She enjoyed herself in the society of the young girls of the world, and the company of those who were not worldly weighed on her.

Better than her sisters, my aunt Tarsilla had risen to the honor of the highest sanctity by her continual prayer, her application to mortify herself, her unusual abstinence, and the gravity of her venerable life. Now, one night, as she herself said, my ancestor [Pope] Felix [III], who was bishop of this Church of Rome, appeared to her in a vision and showed her the abode of eternal light, saying, "Come because I will receive you in this light. "

Soon, seized by fever, she arrived on her last day. And when, when a noble woman or man dies, many people gather to comfort their loved ones, at the time of my aunt's death, men and women flocked around her bed; my mother was there too. Tarsilla suddenly raised her eyes, and seeing Jesus coming, she began to shout to those around her, in a tone of sharp reproach: "Go! Go! Jesus is coming. "And while her gaze was drawn toward the one she saw, her holy soul left her body. Immediately was spread a perfume so wonderful that it appeared to everyone by this delicious smell that the Author of all delights had come there. ... All these events took place before the Nativity of the Lord."

Fr. Dominic Rankin ran the Rome Marathon twice, both times finishing near to one of its famous Seven Hills, the Caelian Hill, on which many of the richest and most powerful families of the city had their villas. These three sisters lived there, though after the sack of the city in 410 it was less opulent than it had been. We will return to this hill next week to meet another saint who began her life upon it.



Detail of a papyrus fragment surrounded by a border from the Breviary of Margaret of York, Cotton MS Titus C XV, f. 1r.

Stewardship of Treasure

December 9th & 10th

Envelopes:	\$7,055.00
Loose:	\$3,702.00
Maintenance:	\$435.00
Total:	\$11,192.00

November EFT

\$18,748.80

November Debt Reduction

\$1,760.00

November Second Collections

Campaign for Justice & Hope
\$3,050.00

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!

Sacraments

Baptisms

Colette Marcia Marie Thomas
Child of Ronald & Jacqueline Thomas
Baptized on December 9, 2023

Funerals

Gabriel Chiaro
Date of Death: November 30, 2023

WEEK OF DECEMBER 25

<u>MONDAY</u>	<u>TUESDAY</u>	<u>WEDNESDAY</u>	<u>THURSDAY</u>	<u>FRIDAY</u>	<u>SATURDAY</u>	<u>SUNDAY</u>
Parish Office Closed	Parish Office Closed	Men's Bible Study 6:00 AM School Library	The Quest Bible Study 10:00 AM & 1:00 PM School Library	Rosary 4:45 PM Church		
Christmas Day Masses 12:00 AM & 9:00 AM Church	Carols at Noon 12:00 PM Church NO 5:15 PM MASS	Rosary 4:45 PM Church Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM School Classroom	Adoration 4:00 PM Church			

What's Going on Around the Cathedral?

CHRISTMAS MASSES

CHRISTMAS EVE

4:00 PM

7:00 PM

CHRISTMAS DAY

Midnight (12:00 AM)

9:00 AM

Christmas Masses

Join us for any of our Christmas Masses at the Cathedral.

Christmas Eve (12/24) - 4:00 PM & 7:00 PM
Christmas Day (12/25) - 12:00 AM & 9:00 AM

Carols at Noon

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 26, 2023

CATHEDRAL OF THE
IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
524 EAST LAWRENCE AVENUE
SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

Carols at Noon

Join us at the Cathedral as Mark Gifford plays an hour of Christmas Carols on the Cathedral Pipe Organ!
Tuesday, December 26th - 12:00PM @ Cathedral

SUNDAY ANNOUNCEMENTS



Religious Awards for Scouts

Scouts of all ages can earn religious patches, emblems and recognitions through the Catholic Committee on Scouting. Activities include the Rosary, the lives of saints, Mary, the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy and more. Emblems and Recognition awards are available for members of Girl Scouts USA Boy Scouts of America. See dio.org/scouts for details. Or call Kyle Holtgrave at the Catholic Pastoral Center, (217) 698-8500, ext. 154.

Pastoral Care for Cathedral's Sick & Elderly

If you, or someone you know from the Cathedral parish are homebound, hospitalized, or in a nursing care facility, please let the Cathedral Office know (217-522-3342). You may request to be put on the Cathedral Prayer Line or request a Pastoral Visit from Sr. Francella and her Cathedral volunteers.

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 & women at the Helping Hands Homeless Shelter. Those who do not cook can help in other ways. If you are interested in participating in the 19th year of this ministry to "feed the hungry", please join us for a 9:00 am breakfast meeting on Saturday, January 6th 2024 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.

FORMED Advent Resources

Explore great content on FORMED during the seasons of Advent and Christmas! FORMED is featuring two new Advent programs: Rooted: Rediscovering the Jesse Tree for adults and Drawing Closer to God: A Catholic Art Show for Kids. Visit signup.formed.org and enter our parish name or zip code, 62703 to gain access to more Advent resources! Our parish subscription to Formed was funded in part through a grant from the Harvest of Thanks, Springtime of Hope Capital Campaign.

Lectio: Mary - Thursday Evening Women's Bible Study

Start your New Year off with professor Dr. Brant Pitre as he traces the Biblical roots of Mary in this 8-part video based series from Formed. Thursday evenings @ 6:00 in the Cathedral School Library, beginning January 4. \$10 for the Study Guide. To reserve your spot, contact the parish office at 217/522-3342 or email vcompton@cathedral.dio.org. Our parish subscription to Formed was funded in part through a grant from the Harvest of Thanks, Springtime of Hope Capital Campaign.

Recent Confirmations

Congratulations to parishioners, Aurelia and Miriam, who received the Sacrament of Confirmation on November 28.



What Is Your Fiat?

Are you an anxious people-pleaser prone to overcommitting yourself? Welcome to the club! We have slogans, and for your convenience I've listed them here:

"Sounds great!"

"No worries!"

"Absolutely, I can do that, not a problem!"

These are your go-to responses for when someone requests a favor that is a huge inconvenience, but you would rather die than disappoint. It's not exactly disingenuous — it's just a little neurotic. Again, welcome to the club.

You know who doesn't belong to this club? The Blessed Mother. For many reasons, I'm sure, but the biggest one is that she's always completely up-front. Take her response to the Angel Gabriel: "Let it be done."

If there are more powerful words than these, I can't think of them now. And yet, as responses go, this certainly isn't an enthusiastic one. There was never a human creature more willing to obey God than Mary, full of grace, so it makes it all the more striking that her response to Gabriel is this reserved — and it makes it all the more certain that she means exactly what she says.

Let it be done.

Not: Yes, this is exactly that I asked for!

Not: Nope. This sounds awful. Count me out.

But precisely this: If God is asking, my answer is yes.

The Angel Gabriel visits us all, in a way, at some point or another, bearing news we did not expect. When we can say, in the face of that uncertainty, "Let it be done," we are embracing our calling as disciples. We are becoming like Mary.

"Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord." — Luke 1:38

Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

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Around the Diocese

- **Pray to Protect Human Life**, 9 Days for Life annual novena, January 16-24, 2024; the novena is for the protection of human life; each day's intention is accompanied by a short reflection and suggested actions to help build a culture of life; sign up at: www.respectlife.org/9-days-signup
- **Gospel Mass and Soul Food Luncheon SAVE THE DATE**, Sunday, Feb. 25, 10 a.m., Church of the Little Flower, Springfield; in recognition of Black History Month, all are invited to a Gospel Mass and Soul Food Luncheon, hosted by the Black Catholic Commission