

# *Cathedral* OF THE *Immaculate Conception*

**DECEMBER 15, 2024 | THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT**



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[WWW.SPICATHEDRAL.ORG](http://WWW.SPICATHEDRAL.ORG)

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

# Cathedral Weekly

VOLUME 6 ISSUE 50

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NINTH BISHOP OF SPRINGFIELD IN ILLINOIS

THE VERY REVEREND BRIAN C. ALFORD, V.E.  
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THE REVEREND DANIEL MCGRATH  
PAROCHIAL VICAR

THE REVEREND PIUS CHIDOZIE NWIYI  
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!

**The mission of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Springfield in Illinois is to build a fervent community of intentional and dedicated missionary disciples of the Risen Lord and steadfast stewards of God's creation who seek to become saints. Accordingly, the community of Catholic faithful in this Diocese is committed to the discipleship and stewardship way of life as commanded by Christ Our Savior and as revealed by Sacred Scripture and Tradition. (Synod Declaration 1a)**

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.



## Prepare the Way

This past Tuesday, the First Reading for Mass was drawn from Isaiah 40 which speaks poetically about the joyful anticipation of the coming of salvation. We hear the following words: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD! Make straight in the wasteland a highway for our God!" (Is. 40:3) These are the very words that John the Baptist used in Matthew 3:3 when preaching in the desert to prepare for the coming of Jesus. It is interesting to note that before quoting this Old Testament passage, John indicates how to prepare the way, using one word: "Repent!" (Mt. 3:2)

Repentance is therefore one of the most necessary things for us to do in order to truly prepare for the coming of Jesus. The season of Advent is not just about preparing to celebrate the historical event of the birth of our Savior. There is nothing terribly urgent as it relates to repentance for our celebration of that event. Advent is also about preparing us for when Jesus will come again to judge the living and the dead. The date and time of that is not known, and since it can be any moment, there is urgency for us to repent from anything that would leave us unprepared for His coming at the end of our lives. This is the more substantial reason that we are encouraged to make use of the Sacrament of Reconciliation before Christmas. To some extent this practice of going to Confession during Advent is tied to the fact that Catholics did not receive Holy Communion as frequently as we do now, so in order to receive Holy Communion on Christmas (which is highly encouraged), going to confession was necessary in order to ensure being in the state of grace. To be sure, this reasoning is still sound, but our awareness of the unknown day and hour of His Second Coming is the greater reason for our repenting by going to confession.

For the past few years, the priests of the Cathedral have offered extended times for confessions in the latter part of Advent so as to give plenty of opportunities for the faithful to "prepare the way for the Lord." We will be offering these extra hours this coming Friday, December 20 from Noon until 6:00 pm, then on Saturday, December 21 from 7:00 am until 5:00 pm. It would fill my heart with great joy if we had a constant line of people waiting to go to confession, eagerly preparing their hearts to welcome Christ. Not only will it be a gift to the priests who have the privilege of sharing God's mercy with you, it will be a gift that you will be giving yourself, one far more valuable than anything you will unwrap on Christmas Day.

I know that there are people that are reading this that might be terrified of the thought of going to confession. With that in mind, I want to issue a challenge to all of us, that when we pray our three daily Hail Mary's this week, we offer them for the following intentions:

1. The people in our parish who are most afraid of going to confession
2. The people in our parish who are most in need of going to confession
3. Ourselves, that we might have the humility and strength to go to confession

As is often the case, doing something alone can be difficult, so invite somebody to go with you to confession. It could be a family member, a friend, or a co-worker. Perhaps all that is holding them back is having somebody join them. What a gift you can offer to another by accompanying them to experience this great gift of mercy.

*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 16

7am - John & Edith Bakalar  
(John Busciacco)  
5:15pm - Puring Garde  
(Family)

#### Tuesday, December 17

7am - Woody Woodhull  
(Fr. Tolton Council 16126)  
5:15pm - Brother Francis Skube  
(Friends)

#### Wednesday, December 18

7am - Barbara Conkrte  
(Litina Carnes)  
5:15pm - Doris Drago  
(D.A. Drago)

#### Thursday, December 19

7am - Jim Shaner  
(Carol Gustafson)  
5:15pm - Kirstin King & Family  
(Richard & Kay King)

#### Friday, December 20

7am - Mary Jane Kerns  
(Estate)  
5:15pm - Frank Coffey  
(Family)

#### Saturday, December 21

8am - Margaret Graham  
(McGee Family)  
4pm - Danny Millburg  
(Margaret Millburg)

#### Sunday, December 22

7am - Mary Anne Midden  
(Bill Midden)  
10am - For the People  
5pm - Armondo Chiaradonna  
(Geny Chiaradonna)



## St. Maria Crocifissa di Rosa

Feast Day: December 15th

The year was 1848, and revolution was threatening all over Europe. You probably know of the Irish Potato Famine which was then in its third or fourth year – with a million dead, and two million having fled the country – but various bad harvest led to famines across the continent leaving countless multitudes destitute and starving. This came alongside of a cataclysmic shift in industry from subsistence farming to mechanized factory production. This, mixed with ideas of independence, and national pride, led groups in (ununified) Italy to rise up and demand national unity (which was unsuccessful as the neighboring countries of France and Austria quickly put a stop to anything that could sway their power in the region.) But then a related rebellion began in France with impoverished factory workers rising up against their rich owners, only to be brutally suppressed by soldiers, but not before bitter disunity was born between them and farmers still happily farming out in the countryside. That news made its way to Berlin where different cohorts began their own riots, there arguing for German unification. That country still hopeless split between different princes, the Prussian King actually refused to accept the crown offered him by the pressured German princes, and so the whole thing was eventually put down and all the little principedoms intact for now. Then this tale repeated itself in Poland, with the upper-class in Krakow revolting against their Austrian government, whereas the peasants there refused to join them because Austria was their only way out of basically being serfs under those landowners... and then the peasants revolted against the landowners killing thousands of them. And then it repeated with different particulars in Austria, with 100,000 dead in the aftermath... It was an age when everyone was fighting everyone to increase their slice of the pie.

Just for context, 1848 was also when Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels wrote their famous pamphlet "The Communist Manifesto." I think you know why.

Communism, of course, would in the end only multiply beyond comprehension the violence and deaths seen from the economic and cultural turmoil of those "hungry forties." But when the world is crazy, God always provides saints to renew the message of the Gospel, and such was St. Maria Crocifissa di Rosa.

She was born in an affluent family, one of nine children, and given a wonderful education by sisters in Brescia, Italy up until she was 17. That being the year her mother died, she returned to her home and began to run her family's household and manage one of her father's textile mills. Already she was moved by the struggles of the girls who worked there and began caring for them both materially and spiritually, eventually expanding her efforts to house and help other young women, and then the mute or deaf. In 1836, she learned nursing to aid those afflicted by a cholera epidemic, and afterwards turned her newly found nursing skills to the care of the elderly. Notice what the Lord is doing here: As economic unrest, alongside of hunger and disease, begin to build around Europe, here in Italy is a young woman with the education, experience, and empathy to directly confront it. Instead of violence and anger, here is someone addressing suffering with love and compassion and prayer and Christlike love.

And so we get back to 1848. War is ramping up all around her, and her compassion rises to meet it. She argues with those who operated the hospitals to allow her, and her group of followers, to help in the hospitals and makeshift shelters for the wounded and dying. Then her best friend dies, and shortly after also the priest that had helped her all these years to discern and protect her unique vocation. And then on one famous day in 1848, enemy soldiers hammered on the door of that hospital They would break the door down and tear everyone to shreds if need be.

What would you do? What would a saint do? Sister Paula di Rosa – she would get her name a few years later when her band of followers were officially instituted as the Handmaids of Charity – but perhaps her action this day set the stage for her being named after the crucifix. Because Saint Paula di Rosa calmly opened the door, and stood before the raging mob holding a giant crucifix, flanked by two of her other sisters holding candles. She had once said "I suffer from seeing suffering", and so again she had plunged right into the hurt of her world, even if that meant staring down soldiers holding fast to the cross.

But stare she did. And the mob turned around. And she just kept loving the suffering until illness came for her as well. She died on December 15th, 1855.

*Fr. Dominic Rankin is taking away two truths from St. Maria Crocifissa di Rosa: First, that God can work in each of us, in precisely the way He has raised us up. He gives us our families, our story, our experiences, and our hearts to fit His plan for us perfectly. And secondly, that His plan also fits with the hunger and hurt of our particular time in history as well. We do not face cholera and hunger and mob-rule as did she, but our world has its own hurts, and we are the ones God has given to it to be saints.*

## Stewardship of Treasure

### November 30th & December 1st

Envelopes:	\$5,456.00
Loose:	\$2,632.35
Maintenance:	\$1,045.00
Total:	\$9,133.35

### October Online Contributions

\$51,103.80

### October Debt Reduction

\$1,526.00

### October Second Collections

World Mission Sunday  
\$2,929.00

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!

## WEEK OF DECEMBER 16

<u>MONDAY</u>	<u>TUESDAY</u>	<u>WEDNESDAY</u>	<u>THURSDAY</u>	<u>FRIDAY</u>	<u>SATURDAY</u>	<u>SUNDAY</u>
Rosary 4:45 PM Church	Grief Share 1:00 PM School Library	Men's Bible Study 6:00 AM School Library	Adoration 4:00 PM Church	Advent Extended Confessions 12:00 PM Church	Rorate Caeli Mass 6:00 AM Church	
St. Monica Ministry 7:00 PM School Library	Adoration 4:00 PM Church	Rosary 4:45 PM Church	CCCW Meeting 6:00 PM School Hall	Rosary 4:45 PM Church	Advent Extended Confessions 7:00 AM Church	
		Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM School Classroom	K of C Meeting 6:00 PM School Classroom			

### What's Going on Around the Cathedral?

#### EXTENDED CONFESSIONS

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 20**  
12:00PM – 6:00PM

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21**  
7:00AM – 5:00PM

#### Extended Confessions

The Cathedral will be hosting extended confession hours this Advent. Please consider joining us to prepare well for the celebration of the birth of Christ at Christmas.

**Friday, December 20th – 12:00PM – 6:00PM**

**Saturday, December 21st - 7:00AM – 5:00PM**

#### RORATE CAELI MASS

**CATHEDRAL CHURCH**  
**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21**  
**6:00AM**

#### Rorate Caeli Mass

Join us for Cathedral's Rorate Caeli candlelit Mass in honor of Our Lady during Advent. The Rorate Mass is lit only by candlelight. In the dimly lit setting, priests and faithful prepare to honor the light of the world who is soon to be born and offer praise to God for the gift of Our Lady. As the Mass proceeds and sunrise approaches, the church becomes progressively brighter, illuminated by the sun as our Faith is illuminated by Christ. All are welcome to join us for this special Mass!

**Saturday, December 21st – 6:00AM**

#### Sharing Our Gratitude

Throughout the month of November, we invited our parishioners to share what they are grateful for from their experience at the Cathedral over the past year. We will be sharing some of the comments over the next several weeks so that others can hear about the ways in which God has blessed our fellow parishioners. Give thanks to the Lord, who is good, whose love endures forever!

#### What are you thankful for at the Cathedral?

Honestly, everything! The priests, the office staff (all extremely dedicated to the Cathedral), the schedule/availability of the Sacraments. All of these have provided me a home where I can continue growing closer to Christ! The Cathedral is something I will be eternally grateful for! Thank you all!!

# SUNDAY ANNOUNCEMENTS



## Journey through Advent with the Hallow app!

Download the Hallow app from the Apple App Store or the Android Google Play Store, tap the Community Tab, and tap Friends. Then, choose Join a Church, Find a Church, and then search for our parish by name and city.

### Holy Family Food Pantry Donations Needed

Each year, the Springfield Catholic Charities Holy Family Food Pantry serves hundreds of families in need through their Thanksgiving and Christmas food baskets. In preparation for the holidays, we are in need of donated food items and volunteers to create these much appreciated Thanksgiving and Christmas blessings. Wish list items for our food pantry include: cereal, boxed macaroni and cheese, baked beans, muffin mix, dessert mix, pasta, pudding mix, pancake mix, sugar, peanut butter, soup, breakfast bars, canned yams, potatoes, canned fruit, egg noodles, Jell-O mix, hot cocoa mix, syrup, brown sugar, jelly, crackers. Other useful/practical items include personal hygiene items, cleaning supplies, or paper supplies. More information is available at 217.523.4551. Donations can be dropped off in the Atrium or at 120 S 11th St. in Springfield Illinois. Thank you for making a difference in our community!

### Second Collection - Catholic Children's Home (CCH)

The Catholic Children's Home celebrated their 145 anniversary this year. Although times have changed, their mission to serve as a 'beacon of hope' for children in need has not. The Catholic Children's Home (CCH) has been a safe harbor and a place to call home for thousands of children over the years. CCH continues their mission by meeting the emotional, social, academic and basic material needs of all the children sent for residential care or special education services. This includes an innovative program designed to serve the needs of children with severe autistic challenges. The children served by CCH have been chronically abused, designated "unmanageable" by their schools or simply have no place to call home. They are some of the most vulnerable in our society. Please keep these children in your prayers throughout this holy season of Advent and Christmas. With your help, the Catholic Children's Home can continue to serve the special needs of these children in the name of Jesus Christ, as it has since 1879. May God fill your hearts with love, grace and a spirit of giving during these blessed days of Advent and Christmas.

### Keeping in Balance for Women

Come along on a journey throughout Scripture as we discover the relevance of Old and New Testament wisdom to our daily challenges. In this study, we'll explore biblical ideas for managing life's pace and pressure while living with calm and steadiness. Your lifestyle of health and holiness awaits. To register and order your workbook call 217/522-3342 or email [vcompton@cathedral.dio.org](mailto:vcompton@cathedral.dio.org). Thursdays @ 1:00 at the Cathedral, starting Jan 2, 22 weeks, \$45

### Cathedral Meal Train Container Pickup

Thank you to everyone who has signed up to bring in meals for the Bishop and Cathedral Clergy! Don't forget to pick up the containers you have brought your meals in from the Parish Office. Please call the Parish Office at 217-522-3342 to make pick up arrangements.

### Pray with Hallow!

We're excited to announce that Hallow, the #1 Catholic prayer platform in the world, is partnering with the Cathedral to journey through the Advent season through shared prayer within our local community. Our parish has received a unique promo code, granting all parishioners access to the full version of Hallow for 120 days for just \$1. This can be redeemed at [hallow.com/parish](http://hallow.com/parish). This includes the Advent Pray25 Challenge, themed "For God so loved the world." Over the course of four weeks, we will dive deeper into the heart of Christ, unified as a community as we prepare our hearts to welcome Jesus this Christmas. This is a great offer for a great app! The discount code is CATHEDRALICILADVENT24

### Lectio: Eucharist: Discovering the Mass in the Bible, for Women

Acclaimed author and teacher Dr. Brant Pitre digs down to the biblical roots of the Eucharist, through its foreshadowing in the miraculous events of the Old Testament, the Gospels, and Apostolic teaching. "The Lamb of God," "The Bread of Life," "The Body and the Blood of Christ"... these are phrases we know from the Mass. But do we understand what they mean in the greater and deeper context of Scripture and Church teaching? We'll discover firsthand how Christ's Body and Blood are an integral and wondrous part of God's plan for our salvation. To register and order your workbook call 217/522-3342 or email [vcompton@cathedral.dio.org](mailto:vcompton@cathedral.dio.org). Thursdays @ 6:00pm at the Cathedral, starting on Jan 2, 10 weeks, \$20

### CCCW and K of C Scholarship Reminder

This is a reminder to all SHG students and parents wishing to applying for one of the scholarships from the CCCW and Knights of Columbus Council #16126. All students who wish to apply must have a total of 20 hours in service to the parish. Students can only accumulate these hours by completing the following services to benefit either the parish liturgically or the groups that sponsor the scholarship:

- Altar Serving at any Mass at the Cathedral
- Ushering, Greeting, Livestreaming and Mass at the Cathedral
- Helping Sister M. Clementia F.S.G.M. with the Sacraments
- Helping with any CCCW or Knights of Columbus Council #16126 event

Students may log hours accumulated from May to the time the applications are due. Application will be going out in January. Any questions please contact the Scholarship Chair Maureen Horstman at [maureenhorstman@hotmail.com](mailto:maureenhorstman@hotmail.com) or CCCW President Angelic Thompson at email [roxyada77@hotmail.com](mailto:roxyada77@hotmail.com)

### Helping Hands Volunteer Meeting

You are invited to be part of a team that provides a meal on the 4th & 5th Saturdays of each month to individuals at the Helping Hands Homeless Shelter. 2025 marks the 20th year that members and friends of Cathedral have provided meals for the homeless! 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 4 2025 in the Cathedral School Hall. Teams are formed and menus are developed for the entire year at this planning breakfast. RSVP required by January 1st by calling or texting 217-494-4241

## Asking the Question

I have found in my life that if I am certain of the answer to a big and complicated question — right away, no doubts or hesitations — there is a high likelihood that the answer is actually the wrong one.

Because most of the time the truth is buried beneath a thicket of pride, prejudice, and ignorance. To find our answers, we have to be ready to put the gardening gloves on and pick through the thorns. We have to pray. We have to reflect. We have to question ourselves and others. We have to examine our feelings. And then we have to pray some more.

See, I would be willing to bet that the tax collectors and soldiers knew. Deep in their hearts, they knew.

They knew when they approached John the Baptist and asked him, “Teacher, what should we do?” that his reply was not going to be: “Keep doing exactly what you’re doing.”

They had heard this guy preach. They knew what he was about: repentance. They might not have known exactly what John the Baptist was going to tell them to do, but they knew whatever it was, it was going to be a challenge. It was going to turn their lives upside down.

I give them credit for asking the question. That’s a hard thing to do, and I don’t do it enough. Too often, I’m afraid to ask the question.

How do I love this person? How do I live out my baptismal call in this particular situation? How do I draw water from the fountain of salvation — and how do I do it with joy, as we are commanded by the Psalms?

Christmas is ten days away. Are we asking the question?

Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

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## Around the Diocese

- **Adoration at Sacred Heart Convent Chapel**, Thursday, December 19, at 6:30pm for this evening of prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. Adoration is followed by a social in Aquinas Center. 1237 W. Monroe Street, Springfield, IL 62704. For questions call 217-787-0481.
- **25 Not Impossible Christmas Trivia Questions** - Dive Deep presents 25 not impossible Catholic Trivia questions about Christmas! Go to [youtube.com/diospringfield](https://youtube.com/diospringfield) or search “Dive Deep” on all the major podcast platforms to listen and subscribe. Dive Deep is the podcast of the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois.
- **Fr. Tolton Religious Award** - Our local Diocesan Catholic Committee on Scouting has created a new patch award for Venerable Fr. Augustine Tolton! The award requirements are patterned after similar programs from the National Catholic Committee on Scouting and Scouts of any national program may earn the award. Details are online at [dio.org/scouts/](https://dio.org/scouts/).