

# *Cathedral* OF THE *Immaculate Conception*

FEBRUARY 2, 2025 | FEAST OF THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD



524 EAST LAWRENCE AVENUE, SPRINGFIELD, IL 62703  
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FOUNDED IN 1839 | DEDICATED IN 1928 | BUILT ON FAITH, RENEWED IN HOPE IN 2009

# *Cathedral Weekly*

VOLUME 7 ISSUE 5

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

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

THE REVEREND DANIEL MCGRATH  
PAROCHIAL VICAR

THE REVEREND PIUS CHIDOZIE NWIYI  
PAROCHIAL VICAR

THE REVEREND DOMINIC RANKIN  
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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.



## Hope that Transforms Society

In the next paragraph of Spe Salvi, Pope Benedict looks to the early Church to see how the hope that Christ brings was more than just a theoretical, or “informative”, hope, but one that was “performative”, in that it has the ability to change our lives, both individually and as a society.

A point of reference to demonstrate this performative quality of hope can be found in St. Paul's Letter to Philemon, the shortest of his writings in the New Testament. As an aside, we only hear from this letter in the liturgy once in the three-year cycle of Sunday readings (23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time – Year C) and once in the two-year cycle of

Weekday readings (Thursday of the 32nd Week in Ordinary Time – Year II). Since it is so short, perhaps that could be a worthwhile read this week. With that said, let us consider how the Holy Father sees this passage as so important.

The pope quotes the following words from St. Paul, speaking to Philemon about returning Philemon's runaway slave Onesimus to him:

*“I appeal to you for my child ... whose father I have become in my imprisonment ... I am sending him back to you, sending my very heart ... perhaps this is why he was parted from you for a while, that you might have him back for ever, no longer as a slave but more than a slave, as a beloved brother ...” (Philem 10-16)*

In explaining St. Paul's encouragement to Philemon to now see Onesimus no longer as a slave, but “as a beloved brother”, Pope Benedict writes the following:

*Those who, as far as their civil status is concerned, stand in relation to one another as masters and slaves, inasmuch as they are members of the one Church have become brothers and sisters—this is how Christians addressed one another. By virtue of their Baptism they had been reborn, they had been given to drink of the same Spirit and they received the Body of the Lord together, alongside one another. Even if external structures remained unaltered, this changed society from within. (SS 4)*

The encounter with Christ, an encounter which gives us reason for hope, is not just about the promise of eternal life only, but it also transforms how we are called to see one another through a new lens, even as we continue our pilgrimage. We are invited to see our fellow pilgrims as brothers and sisters who strive to honor and respect one another, loving one another as is appropriate to our state in life. Distinctions in civil status may remain, but because of the new life given through baptism, those distinctions are no longer primary. Rather, what takes priority is living the bonds of fraternity with others, under our one Master, whose rule is always rooted in charity. The idea of our society living this way, which is more than just a theory, but very practical, should fill us with hope in how life and society can be better.

I find this to be a timely message for our society. Though there have always been divisions, they seem to be more pronounced now than ever before. We can get preoccupied with some aspect of how we see others, such as their political affiliation, their nationality, their race, just to name a few. Sadly, that can become the predominant lens through which we view them. But the gift of grace we have received in our baptism invites us to look through the lens of faith and to see not what divides us, but what unites us as brothers and sisters in Christ. When that is our starting point, we are far more inclined to work for the good of all, not just what will be best for ourselves. If all Christians were to live this way, we would indeed see a society transformed!

*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 3

7am - Gregory Devan  
(Celeste Crowley)  
5:15pm - Mark Beagles  
(Berni Ely)

#### Tuesday, February 4

7am - Woody Woodhull  
(Ted & Linda Lentz)  
5:15pm - Anita Bates  
(Lou Ann Mack)

#### Wednesday, February 5

7am - Archie Harmon Sr  
(Archie Harmon)  
5:15pm - Kara Leigh Smith  
(Bev & Larry Smith)

#### Thursday, February 6

7am - Fred & Rita Greenwald  
(Becky & Frank Farley)  
5:15pm - Brother Francis Skube  
(Friend)

#### Friday, February 7

7am - Russell Steil Sr.  
(Steil Family)  
5:15pm - Ron Borre & Family  
(Richard & Kay King)

#### Saturday, February 8

8am - James Freeman  
(Freeman Family)  
4pm - Karen Bucari  
(Alan Bucari)

#### Sunday, February 9

7am - Mary Ann Midden  
(Bill Midden)  
10am - Woody Woodhull  
(Fr. Tolton Council 16126)  
5pm - For the People





## St. Paula

**Feast Day: January 26th**

17 years after mobs tore apart the city of Rome, Christian fighting Christian, the sides divided by why they were backing as successor to Pope Liberius, Pope Damasus I, legitimately the successor of St. Peter, had to choose a path forward for unity in the Church (and in the rapidly fraying empire). Jesus' mission for every Holy Father was the same:

*"Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers." - Luke 22:31-32.*

The world will always battle against the Kingdom of God. Just as it was up to Peter to stand firm upon Christ for the sake of all the apostles, it was up to Damasus to do so in the 3rd century. The whole reason that blood was spilled in 366 was over the question of whether unity or truth ought to prevail. Ought we just to go with Arianism if it unites the fragments of the empire?: the bishops and their flocks, the pagans and their idols, the incoming barbarians some of whom are already Arian... Would you deny Christ - deny His divinity, deny His sonship - if it saves the world? That was the question that faced Peter, and now Damasus, and every Holy Pope. In 383, we know he had decided for Christ. That year, Damasus penned an epigraph to be chiseled above the tomb of the early martyrs St. Stephen and St. Tarcisus. We still have the stone with his poem pristinely carved into it:

*"You who read, whoever you are, recognize the equal merit of the two to whom Damasus the bishop has dedicated this inscription after their rewards. The Jewish people stoned Stephen when he was instructing them on a better course, he who carried off the trophy from the enemy: the faithful deacon first laid hold of martyrdom. When a raving gang was pressing holy Tarsicius to reveal to the uninitiated the sacraments of Christ that he was carrying, he wished rather to release his spirit, struck down, than to betray the heavenly limbs to mad dogs."*

*- Damasus of Rome, Epigrammata 15 (ICVR IV, 11078)*

Stephen, the first of the martyrs, killed as he claimed to see the heavens opened and Christ at the right hand of God. Tarcisus, carrying the Blessed Sacrament to Christians in prison, refusing to hand over the sacrament to the mob who beat him, holding fast to Christ's Body to the end. Body, Blood, Soul, Divinity. God and man. These martyrs died defending that truth, now Pope Damasus would uphold them (other saints too) as witnesses to the whole Church of Who Christ truly is.

One year before, he had begun the first prong of his effort to unify the Church, and it would also have nothing to do with the violence where his pontificate began. In 382, Damasus convoked a synod in Rome, calling bishops and their delegates from around the empire. Among the documents issued from that synod was a list of all the books of the Bible, a "canon" of scripture. For centuries the Church had preached and prayed with these Books, Gospels, and Letters, but some individual bishops and churches advocated for other documents to also be included, other books from the Old Testament, other gospels, letters attributed to the apostles, various teachings from the early church ... (many of them now float around as "lost Gospels" and "forgotten books of the bible"). At that synod, these bishops recommended Pope Damasus the list of books that are contained to this day in every Catholic Bible, 46 books in the Old Testament (from the Septuagint which Christ quoted in the Gospels), and the 27 books of the new. This same list would only be infallibly defined by the Council of Trent over a thousand years later, it only being necessary then because the entirety of the Christian Church, East and West, would be in agreement on these books from now until the Protestant Reformation.

But, there was a giant problem. As the Church had wrestled with defining the faith over the prior decades, again and again debates erupted over language - Greek or Latin for the creeds, Hebrew and Greek for the scriptures - who was to say what meant what, how was clarity to be won, and truth defended, if everyone was talking about the faith using different language and citing quotations from scriptures found in different codices and scripts? Providentially, amazingly, here we had a Pope - certainly no saint yet - yet with the farsightedness to tackle an enormous problem facing the Church. And we also had a brilliant scholar in attendance at that synod with all the skills needed for the enterprise. He was a Roman by birth, but had spent the prior 20 years learning Greek, Hebrew, Syriac, and Latin to tremendous depth and had also studied (and in many cases rubbed elbows with) the greatest theologians of the Church - Origen, Augustine, Ambrose, Evagrius, Gregory Nazianzus, Basil, and Gregory of Nyssa. These were the men who knew every thread of every heresy and the Lord had placed throughout His Church for the battle fought at that very time. Jerome was the man to make the scriptures accessible to that entire Church of the future.

*Fr. Dominic Rankin was once again setting the stage this week. St. Paula is coming!*

## Stewardship of Treasure

### January 25th & 26th

Envelopes:	\$5,233.00
Loose:	\$5,010.00
Maintenance:	\$105.00
Total:	\$10,348.00

### December Online Contributions

\$54,689.98

### December Debt Reduction

\$690.20

### December Second Collections

Immaculate Conception  
\$3,802.00

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

Owen John McCarty  
Child of Chad & Adrianna McCarty  
Baptized on January 19, 2025

### Deaths

David E. Knox  
Date of Death: January 15, 2025

## WEEK OF FEBRUARY 3

<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  Adoration 4:00 PM Church  OCIA 6:00 PM School Library	Men's Bible Study 6:00 AM School Library  Rosary 4:45 PM Church  Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM Choir Room	Women's Bible Study 10:00 AM, 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM School Library  Adoration 4:00 PM Church	Rosary 4:45 PM Church  First Friday Concert 7:00 PM Church		

## What's Going on Around the Cathedral?



### February First Friday Concert Series

Join us on Friday, February 7, 2025 at 7pm in the Cathedral for a First Friday Concert! February's concert will feature The Mother Road Bones, Trombone Quartet. The First Friday Concert Series is sponsored by the Staab Family, directed by Mark Gifford, and is free and open to the public. All are welcome!



### Vatican II Faith Formation Series & Jubilee Indulgence

In the Decree on the Granting of the Indulgence During the Ordinary Year Jubilee Year 2025, one of the ways for the faithful to obtain the Jubilee Indulgence is to "participate in popular missions, spiritual exercises, or formation activities on the documents of the Second Vatican Council and the Catechism of the Catholic Church, held in a church or other suitable place, according to the mind of the Holy Father." With that in mind, the Cathedral will be hosting monthly faith formation sessions during which we will delve into the four major Constitutions from the Second Vatican Council. Please join us as we reflect on these important documents, that they might serve to renew our hope during this Jubilee Year, all while being able to also gain an indulgence!

**February 20, 7:00 pm in the Cathedral Atrium**

## Sharing Our Gratitude

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

I am so thankful for the dedication, instruction and time spent with my husband Darrell, enabling him to receive the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Communion after 18 years of attending Mass with me. We also had our marriage blessed which meant so much to us! A true blessing and gift from God! I am also thankful for the opportunities I have found to serve others through the Cathedral.



## **CCCW/Knights of Columbus 2025-2026 Scholarships**

The Cathedral Council of Catholic Women (CCCW) and the Fr. Augustine Tolton Council 16126, Knights of Columbus are pleased to announce that the application period for the 2025-2026 academic year scholarships will be open starting February 10, 2025. Scholarships will be used to offset recipient costs of tuition at a Catholic high school and will be awarded to registered active Cathedral parish families. Scholarships will be competitive, so not every applicant may receive a scholarship. Hard copies of the application form will be available for pickup in the parish office during work hours, and an on-line version of the application will be available on the parish website ([spicathedral.org](http://spicathedral.org)). The final deadline for submission of applications is 11:59 PM on Monday, March 31, 2025. Applicants should begin collecting documentation regarding service hours (at least 20 service hours, of which a minimum of 15 hours should be dedicated to Cathedral parish events and organizations) to include with the application. Additional requirements include an essay (topic will be discussed in the application) and an independent evaluation (form to be provided by CCCW/K of C) of the applicant from one teacher. Thank you for your interest, and good luck!

## **Gospel Mass and Soul Food Dinner**

In recognition of Black History Month, all are invited to a Gospel Mass followed by a Soul Food dinner, hosted by the Black Catholic Commission Diocese of Springfield in Illinois. Mass will be held at 4:00 pm on February 22 at St. Aloysius Church in Springfield. Meal cost is \$15, RSVP and Payment is due by February 16. Contact: Gale Lynn Borders, [glborde@aol.com](mailto:glborde@aol.com), 217-341-5029

## **St. John's Breadline Souper Bowl Fundraiser**

Mark your calendar for The Souper Bowl soup fundraiser benefiting Catholic Charities St. John's Breadline. They'll be serving up fresh, made-from-scratch soups on Friday, Feb. 7 at the Catholic Pastoral Center circle driveway, 1615 W. Washington Street, Springfield, from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m., or until sold out. The soup options include; chicken noodle, taco, and chili. The suggested donation is \$10 for 32 oz. of soup. All proceeds benefit the St. John's Breadline. If you unable to attend the soup fundraiser, but would like to make a donation to the St. John's Breadline, scan go to: [cc.dio.org](http://cc.dio.org).

## **Answering Google's Questions About The Catholic Faith**

Father Chris House answers Google's questions on Catholicism! Is the Catholic Church the one true church? Do Catholic priests still perform exorcisms? Why are Catholics obsessed with Mary? Who do Catholics believe can go to heaven? Why does a priest wear a collar? Why does the Catholic Church baptize infants? Do Catholics believe in cremation? Why do Catholics believe in Purgatory? Do Catholics believe in the rapture? Why do Catholics not eat meat on Fridays? Why do Catholics confess their sins to a priest? Why are Catholics against birth control? How did Catholics respond to the protestant reformation? Why does the Catholic Church have a Pope? Is the Catholic religion strict? How do Catholics get to heaven? Why are Catholics called Catholic? Why do Catholics exhume bodies? Why do Catholics call priests "father?" Is the Catholic Church dying or growing? Go to [youtube.com/diospringfield](http://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.



## Meet Our New Parish Secretary, Julia!

Hi, everyone! My name is Julia Mayfield, and I am the new parish secretary for the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. I am blessed to have been offered this position and feel honored to serve this parish family. The Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception holds a special place in my heart, as it has been instrumental in deepening my relationship with the Lord and fostering friendships with fellow Catholics. With all that I have received from this parish, I am thankful for the opportunity to pour back into it in this way.

Some things about me... I was born and raised in Springfield, Illinois (if you know a Catholic Mayfield from the area, there is a very good chance I am related!). I attended St. Aloysius school through fourth grade and completed the rest of my primary and secondary education at Rochester Schools. Following high school, I spent two years at Lincoln Land Community College and then transferred to the University of Illinois Springfield to complete a BA in Psychology. After a job lay off last year, I spent time discerning where God truly was calling me to be within the workforce, which I had not considered too much in previous job searches. I am grateful that I sought His counsel, and through a series of winding events, was ultimately led here!

Please reach out if there is anything I can assist you with. I look forward to meeting and serving each of you!

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## Around the Diocese

- **Attention families! FREE Video Series** – Strengthen and grow in your faith for your families with five short videos produced by the Knights of Columbus called the “Mission of The Family.” The videos can be found on the Knights of Columbus website for free: “The Mission of The Family” videos: [kofc.org/en/campaigns/into-the-breach.html](https://kofc.org/en/campaigns/into-the-breach.html). The five videos are less than 14 minutes in length.
- **State lawmakers are expected to vote on physician assisted suicide legislation.** Illinois residents deserve excellent pain management, not assisted suicide. Illinois has excellent, modern, palliative care programs to alleviate suffering - no one's pain should be unmanageable in our state. Hospice care is paid for by Medicare, Medicaid, and private insurance. We deserve the best in pain management and quality care, not suicide drugs. Tell your state legislators to VoteNO on SB 3499 - assisted suicide. Visit [www.ilcatholic.org](http://www.ilcatholic.org) for additional information and resources.
- **Majestic Germany Pilgrimage with Fr. R. Dean Probst**, August 18-28-2025. Visiting Frankfurt, Cologne, Hanover, Potsdam, Berlin, Nuremberg, Rothenberg, Munich, Oberammergau, Lindau, Lake Titisee, The Black Forest, Heidelberg and Mainz. Cost \$4599 per person from St. Louis, Mo. Call/text Fr. Dean 217-494-6326 or email [rdprobst@gmail.com](mailto:rdprobst@gmail.com).