

Cathedral OF THE *Immaculate Conception*

FEBRUARY 9, 2025 | FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME



**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 7 ISSUE 6

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
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!

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.



Looking to Christ for the Future

As he continues to reflect on how Christ brought a new understanding of hope to the early Church, Pope Benedict notes how this new religion of Christianity was not just for those who “belonged to the lower social strata, and precisely for this reason were open to the experience of new hope, as we saw in the example of Bakhita.” (SS 5) There were also many who were more cultured and well-off who began to find a new hope in Christ. Many had been following the Roman way of life, centered on a view of things being governed by various gods and the cosmic forces of nature and the universe.

The Holy Father quotes the following from St. Gregory Nazianzen, who lived in the latter part of the 4th century, in the early days of the spread of Christianity in the Roman Empire. St. Gregory wrote “that at the very moment when the Magi, guided by the star, adored Christ the new king, astrology came to an end, because the stars were now moving in the orbit determined by Christ.” (SS 5)

On this quote, the Holy Father offers the following reflection, noting its importance not just in those early days of Christianity, but now as well:

This scene, in fact, overturns the world-view of that time, which in a different way has become fashionable once again today. It is not the elemental spirits of the universe, the laws of matter, which ultimately govern the world and mankind, but a personal God governs the stars, that is, the universe; it is not the laws of matter and of evolution that have the final say, but reason, will, love—a Person. And if we know this Person and he knows us, then truly the inexorable power of material elements no longer has the last word; we are not slaves of the universe and of its laws, we are free.

The Pope’s notes that a worldview of things being governed primarily by the “elemental spirits of the universe” (Col 2:8) “has become fashionable once again today.” This takes various forms, including reading horoscopes, using tarot cards, and going to fortune-tellers. Against these practices, the Church has spoken strongly in the Catechism of the Catholic Church:

God can reveal the future to his prophets or to other saints. Still, a sound Christian attitude consists in putting oneself confidently into the hands of Providence for whatever concerns the future, and giving up all unhealthy curiosity about it. Improvidence, however, can constitute a lack of responsibility. All forms of divination are to be rejected: recourse to Satan or demons, conjuring up the dead or other practices falsely supposed to “unveil” the future. Consulting horoscopes, astrology, palm reading, interpretation of omens and lots, the phenomena of clairvoyance, and recourse to mediums all conceal a desire for power over time, history, and, in the last analysis, other human beings, as well as a wish to conciliate hidden powers. They contradict the honor, respect, and loving fear that we owe to God alone. (CCC 2115-2116)

Some might object that such warnings are unwarranted, but the Church offers them in order to guard us from things that can harm us. As one author I read on this topic concluded: “By consulting a horoscope to show ourselves our path in life, we usurp the place of God in whose hands we should place our concerns allowing Him to lead us down the path of holiness in discerning his will for us.” (Angelo Stagnaro, National Catholic Register, Blog entry of June 9, 2020) As we entrust ourselves in faith to Christ alone to lead us down that path, we have the assurance that whatever that path may be, we are sustained by hope, a “hope that does not disappoint.” (Rom 5:5)

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 10

7am - John Montgomery
(John Busciacco)
5:15pm - Don Smargiassi
(Family & Friends)

Tuesday, February 11

7am - A. Mary Jane Kerns
(Estate)
5:15pm - Rev. Msgr James O’Shea
(McGee Family)

Wednesday, February 12

7am - LuAnn Mohr
(Bev Hoffman)
5:15pm - Mike Capranica
(Capranica Family)

Thursday, February 13

7am - G. Joseph Nicoud Jr .
(Family)
5:15pm - Intention for Bianca
(DA Drago)

Friday, February 14

7am - Tom McGee
(McGee Family)
5:15pm - Walter Woodhull
(The Coffee Guys)

Saturday, February 15

8am - Donald L. Burton III
(Burton Family)
4pm - Chad Brent Thompson
(Kathlyn Gairani)

Sunday, February 16

7am - Deceased Members of CCCW
(CCCW)
10am - For the People
5pm - Raymond & Eulalia Ohl
(Angela Ohl- Marsters)



St. Paula

Feast Day: January 26th

We have been slowly making our way up to St. Paula who's feast was now two weeks ago. She was born into a wealthy and noble family in Rome, in 347 A.D. (so, one decade after the death of Constantine and in the middle of all the civil wars that followed). Jerome was born around the same time (as was St. John Chrysostom actually), and this is all just before Liberius becomes Pope (in 352, his showdown with Constantius II coming up in 355). Jerome, not only a painstaking translator of the Scriptures, wrote dozens and dozens of letters to different supporters, other clergy and theologians, Pope Damasus, friends, monks, and on all sorts of theological topics. And one of the longest letters is written to Eustochium, Paula's daughter, on the story and character of her mother.

Noble in family, she was nobler still in holiness; rich formerly in this world's goods, she is now more distinguished by the poverty that she has embraced for Christ. Of the stock of the Gracchi and descended from the Scipios, the heir and representative of that Paulus whose name she bore, the true and legitimate daughter of that Martia Papyria who was mother to Africanus, she yet preferred Bethlehem to Rome, and left her palace glittering with gold to dwell in a mud cabin. – Jerome, Letter to Eustochium, Letter 108.1., 404 A.D.

The great scholar cites passage after passage of scripture describing the disciple of Christ, how Paula embodied them all. When her husband died in 379, her deepening Christian faith led her to give away all the wealth she had to care for the poor.

How can I describe the great consideration she showed to all and her far reaching kindness even to those whom she had never seen? What poor man, as he lay dying, was not wrapped in blankets given by her? What bedridden person was not supported with money from her purse? She would seek out such with the greatest diligence throughout the city, and would think it a misfortune were any hungry or sick person to be supported by another's food. – Jerome, Letter 108.5.

So it was that this generous, Christian woman, as Pope Damasus tapped Jerome to begin the extraordinary effort of collecting all the different necessary scriptural texts, comparing, translating, composing, and revising, here was a woman with the means, and heart, to support the work. She left her home, and much of her family, and begins the arduous journey to the Holy Land: sailing south she passed between Sicily and Italy, then through the Adriatic towards Greece, then Rhodes and Lycia and Cyprus - places where Paul preached – Antioch, Phoenicia, Sidon, Zarephath, Tyre – she was tracing Christian history back to its source. Caesarea, Lydda, Joppa, Jerusalem – showing immense reverence for these sacred sites, with Jerome adding citations from all throughout the Old and New Testament to show how she was literally making her way through the entire Bible – and then to Bethlehem. The passage is a tour-de-force of Jerome's knowledge of the Bible, but also of Paula's, as she was reflecting on all these different stories as she stopped and prayed in each place.

Finally, in Bethlehem, she took up her dwelling behind the cave of the nativity, helping to establish monasteries there for men and women and then joining in the work of translating, proofreading, and offering spiritual insight, and practical encouragement, to the more scholarly, forbidding, even irascible, Jerome. She did not just support him, she was an assistant in the work. Her own splendid education made her an invaluable linguistic resource, but her humility, love for the scriptures, passion for Christ, and just the way her heart was moved by the characters, places, truths, and revelations given in the Bible ... all of these would have been missed by Jerome working on his own. He did not forget it!

"You, Paula and Eustochium, who made me undertake this labor... You are my readers, my critics, and my correctors." – Jerome, Preface to the Pentateuch

"Paula, who was ever intent on learning the Scriptures, left no difficult passage unexplored." – Jerome, Preface to the Books of Samuel and Kings

"She was my companion in study, correcting me when I erred and encouraging me when I grew weary." — Jerome, Letter 108.31

If she had not made the difficult choice for Christ amid the grief of losing her husband, to go all in for the Church, to help a crazy scholar on an immense mission, it is hard to see how Jerome would have finished his project. And if he had not, Europe would have been fragmented, disconnected, un-rooted in God's revelation as it plunged into the difficult centuries to come. But with a unified bible, Christians scattered throughout all that would become Christendom, would pray the same prayers, hear the same passages, learn the same stories and songs and sacraments and truths of the faith. Theology, philosophy, scholarship which would grow into the scientific revolution was made possible. Even our constitution, and all the freedoms we have, those depended on a common belief in human dignity, freedom, responsibility, and rights. And that depended on a common scripture. And that depended on an extraordinary woman.

Fr. Dominic Rankin knows well the bustle and blessings of Rome. It is hard to imagine leaving all that for the entirely unknown, but God has bigger plans for our lives than just for us!

Stewardship of Treasure

February 1st & 2nd

Envelopes:	\$6,075.00
Loose:	\$3,025.25
Maintenance:	\$1,126.00
Total:	\$10,226.25

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!

WEEK OF FEBRUARY 10

<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	Adoration 4:00 PM Church	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		Family of Faith 6:15 PM Atrium

What's Going on Around the Cathedral?



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?

Having lost my husband from this earth some 20 months ago, I am not certain in what spiritual state I would be were it not for all the love I have experienced from our God and our wonderful church family. Our Holy masses, sacraments, adoration times, Bible studies, and C.C.C.W. activities are the greatest joys in my life: I am so blessed!

SUNDAY ANNOUNCEMENTS



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 is open, effective February 10, 2025. Scholarships will be awarded and used to offset recipient costs of tuition at a Catholic High School and will be awarded to students who are members of registered active Cathedral parish families. The scholarships are competitive, so not every applicant may receive a scholarship. The application includes three parts: a one-page (250-300 words) essay on the topic listed (topic depends on grade level); documentation of a minimum of 20 service hours (of which a minimum of 15 hours must be in service to the Cathedral parish or parish organizations); and a Teacher Evaluation that will be submitted separately from the rest of the application. Applications will be available as follows: (1) Hard copies will be available at the parish office during parish business hours; (2) A PDF of the application form will be available at the Scholarship Application link on the parish website (spicathedral.org); or (3) The application may be completed completely online at the Scholarship Application link on the parish website. Both essays and documentation of service hours may be uploaded at the link. The final deadline for submission of all applications is 11:59 PM on Monday, March 31, 2025, either online or by hard copy. Hard copies should be placed in a sealed envelope and addressed to CCCW/Knights of Columbus Scholarship Committee and returned to the parish office in the rectory. 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, 217-341-5029

Holy Family Food Pantry Needs

Catholic Charities is so grateful for the increased donations of food during the holidays. The pantry has seen an increase in the number of families being served and is in need of hygiene items. Items such as toothpaste, shampoo, soap, toothbrushes, deodorant will be gratefully accepted. Thank you for your generosity!

Cathedral Meal Train

Just as the Bishop and our priests of the parish provide us with spiritual nourishment at Mass, we strive to provide them with physical nourishment, in order to give them the strength they need to continue to serve our parish family. Volunteers can utilize our Meal Train website to sign up for the dates that work best for them throughout the year. If you are interested in volunteering in this ministry, please visit www.spicathedral.org/cathedral-meal-train/.



NATIONAL
**Eucharistic
Revival**

Pray to St. Monica

St. Monica exemplifies the power of persistent prayer. It took 15 years of committed intercession for Augustine to journey his way back to the Church. When Monica once complained that Augustine would not listen to her admonitions, St. Ambrose encouraged her to "speak less to Augustine about God, and more to God about Augustine." Prayer works. So remember to honor your prayer commitment every day.

Save the Date!

Join Two Hearts Pregnancy Resource Center and Springfield Right to Life for our Annual Fundraising Breakfast featuring keynote speakers Jim and Annette McDermott!

When: March 29, 2025, 8:30 AM

Where: Erin's Pavilion, Southwind Park, Springfield
Attend this free event and help raise funds to support life-affirming work in our community. Table Hosts are needed! Reserve your table today—call 217-523-2700, email us at springfieldrtl@gmail.com or visit springfieldrtl.org for details.

The Catch

I love today's Gospel passage, and not just because I love a good fish fry.

I love it because I am Peter. Over and over again, I am Peter, standing here exhausted because I relied on my own abilities, and it got me nowhere. I'm ready to call it quits. I'm ready to say it's too hard. And here comes Jesus, asking me to lower my net. To keep trying.

And I try to talk sense into him. "It's not going to work, God," I insist. "I've been trying."

"You've been trying," Jesus agrees. "But you haven't asked for my help yet."

What does it mean to lower your net? It sounds so simple and so easy, but it takes a great deal of humility and trust. I think I'm the expert on my own life, the captain of my own ship. Peter probably thought so, too — he was the fisherman, after all. Why would a fisherman listen to a carpenter on matters of fishing?

Lowering your net means giving God control and letting yourself be changed by what He chooses to show you.

It means to listen to God's instructions, even when you don't understand them, even when you find them frustrating. It means to keep trying the hard thing that you know is the right thing, even when it hasn't born much fruit. It means to keep loving the person who is making life hard on you, even when all you want to do is give into feelings of bitterness and distrust.

If we would only lower our nets, the catch would astound us.

Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

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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. The five videos are less than 14 minutes in length.
- **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.