

Cathedral OF THE
Immaculate Conception

APRIL 6, 2025 | FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT



524 EAST LAWRENCE AVENUE, SPRINGFIELD, IL 62703
CATHEDRAL PARISH OFFICE: 217-522-3342
WWW.SPICATHEDRAL.ORG

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

Cathedral Weekly

VOLUME 7 ISSUE 14

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

DEACON DAVID BEACH

DEACON IRVIN LAWRENCE SMITH

VICKI DHABALT COMPTON
COORDINATOR OF FAITH FORMATION AND MISSION
VCOMPTON@CATHEDRAL.DIO.ORG

HALEY DUTTON
COORDINATOR OF COMMUNICATIONS
HDUTTON@CATHEDRAL.DIO.ORG

MARK GIFFORD
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC
MGIFFORD@CATHEDRAL.DIO.ORG

KIM GUNTER
BUSINESS MANAGER
KGUNTER@CATHEDRAL.DIO.ORG

JULIA MAYFIELD
PARISH SECRETARY
JMAYFIELD@CATHEDRAL.DIO.ORG

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.



Individualistic Hope

The next question that the Holy Father proposes on the topic of hope is this: "Is Christian Hope Individualistic?" He identifies a critique in modern times of a hope that is seen as "pure individualism." (SS 13) This criticism is directed in part to the struggle to give to the mystery of hope images and figures that can be represented by our human experience. Those attempts, however, always fall far short of "what, after all, can only be known negatively, via unknowing." (ibid.)

Now, I do not think the Holy Father is so much calling out our attempts to "know the unknown", but rather how, when it is taken too far, it can result in living with a longing for those things for which we hope, to the exclusion of our being attentive to the journey in which we are partaking in the life. He notes the criticism of an individualistic hope as threatening to become "a way of abandoning the world to its misery and taking refuge in a private form of eternal salvation." (ibid)

The next paragraph will provide the correction to the problem of purely individualistic hope by directing us to see that our hope is necessarily "social", which commits us to being attentive to our fellow pilgrims on this journey, offering assistance so that we might all reach our final destination, not just being concerned about our own salvation.

Although the Holy Father is not specifically addressing it, I want to offer a few thoughts about the temptation toward an individualistic hope that is rooted in our own creation, and not that of God. Over the years, I have heard this question of what Heaven will be like being answered in a variety of ways. For example, when one asks if they will have this or that in Heaven, one popular answer is: "If you need that to be happy in Heaven, then it will be there." Now, I know those who offer such an answer are well meaning, but this is a wholly unsatisfactory answer, for it proposes an idea of Heaven of our own making, one consisting in our personal preferences and desires. The fact of the matter is, we will have all that we need in Heaven, and there will be nothing lacking. When I am asked if this or that will be in Heaven, or if we will finally be able to do things in Heaven that we cannot do here, I have to answer in all truth: "I do not know." I then add: "But I can make this guarantee, if Heaven is not what you want it to be while still here on earth, you will most certainly not say: 'You know what will make Heaven better?'" I then quote those words which we I have shared many times already in these articles: "St. Paul says, that 'hope does not disappoint' (Rom 5:5), so when we get to Heaven, whatever we see or do not see, whatever we can do or not do, we will not be disappointed. Period."

We can also call to mind a helpful passage from the Gospels that might help. In it, Jesus is not necessarily speaking directly about Heaven, but I think we can trust that it very much applies to the question at hand. "What father among you would hand his son a snake when he asks for a fish? Or hand him a scorpion when he asks for an egg? If you then, who are wicked, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the Father in heaven give the holy Spirit to those who ask Him?" (Lk 11:11-13)

We have a Father in Heaven who knows how to give good gifts to His children, and if that applies to us while here on earth, how much more does it apply to what He desires to give us in Heaven? This is one of the reasons I love the Lord's Prayer so much, for we begin by addressing God as Father, and from that posture, we ask Him for all of the good gifts we need for each day, our "daily bread", but we also pray: "thy Kingdom come", in which we abandon our need to know or control what Heaven will be like. We can simply trust in His preparing to give us the good gifts of eternal life that will fill us with joy and peace, and when we receive those gifts, no disappointment will be present.

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, April 7

7am - Betty & Gene Barish
(Family)
12:05pm - Mable Geraghty
(Family)
5:15pm - Karen Bucari
(Alan Bucari)

Tuesday, April 8

7am - James Aloysius Mayfield
(Granddaughter)
12:05pm - John Montgomery
(John Busciacco)
5:15pm - Woody Woodhull
(Karen Johnson)

Wednesday, April 9

7am - Valerie Smith
(Kenneth Smith)
12:05pm - Dominic & Flora Aiello
(Bangert Family)
5:15pm - Esther Antonacci
(Mike & Pam Burge)

Thursday, April 10

7am - Loretta Hardiek
(Westendorf Family)
12:05pm - Joseph (Jerry) Stasukinas
(Sherry Smith)
5:15pm - Int for Bianca
(DA Drago)

Friday, April 11

7am - Sara Tucker Cox
(Bev & Larry Smith)
12:05pm - Elizabeth McDevitt
(Helen Guernsey)
5:15pm - The DuBeck Family
(Angela Ohl-Marsters)

Saturday, April 12

8am - Don Smargiassi
(Family & Friends)
4pm - Anita Bates
(Nancy & Daniel Moore)

Sunday, April 13

7am - For the People
10am - Mary Jane Kerns
(Estate)
5pm - Dec Mem CCCW
(CCCW)



St. John Climacus (Part 2)

Feast Day: March 30th

I promised last week to continue our encounter with St. John Climacus, this time not taking Pope Gregory the Great as our guide but Pope Benedict XVI. He spoke better than I could on St. John's "Ladder" at his Wednesday audience of February 11th, 2009:

He became famous, as I have already said, through his work, entitled *The Climax*, in the West known as the *Ladder of Divine Ascent* (PG 88, 632-1164). Composed at the insistent request of the hegumen of the neighbouring

Monastery of Raithu in Sinai, the *Ladder* is a complete treatise of spiritual life in which John describes the monk's journey from renunciation of the world to the perfection of love. This journey according to his book covers 30 steps, each one of which is linked to the next. The journey may be summarized in three consecutive stages: the first is expressed in renunciation of the world in order to return to a state of evangelical childhood. Thus, the essential is not the renunciation but rather the connection with what Jesus said, that is, the return to true childhood in the spiritual sense, becoming like children. John comments: "A good foundation of three layers and three pillars is: innocence, fasting and temperance. Let all babes in Christ (cf. 1 Cor 3: 1) begin with these virtues, taking as their model the natural babes" (1, 20; 636). Voluntary detachment from beloved people and places permits the soul to enter into deeper communion with God. This renunciation leads to obedience which is the way to humility through humiliations which will never be absent on the part of the brethren. John comments: "Blessed is he who has mortified his will to the very end and has entrusted the care of himself to his teacher in the Lord: indeed he will be placed on the right hand of the Crucified One!" (4, 37; 704).

The second stage of the journey consists in spiritual combat against the passions. Every step of the ladder is linked to a principal passion that is defined and diagnosed, with an indication of the treatment and a proposal of the corresponding virtue. All together, these steps of the ladder undoubtedly constitute the most important treatise of spiritual strategy that we possess. The struggle against the passions, however, is steeped in the positive it does not remain as something negative thanks to the image of the "fire" of the Holy Spirit: that "all those who enter upon the good fight (cf. 1 Tm 6: 12), which is hard and narrow,... may realize that they must leap into the fire, if they really expect the celestial fire to dwell in them" (1,18; 636). The fire of the Holy Spirit is the fire of love and truth. The power of the Holy Spirit alone guarantees victory. However, according to John Climacus it is important to be aware that the passions are not evil in themselves; they become so through human freedom's wrong use of them. If they are purified, the passions reveal to man the path towards God with energy unified by ascesis and grace and, "if they have received from the Creator an order and a beginning..., the limit of virtue is boundless" (26/2, 37; 1068).

The last stage of the journey is Christian perfection that is developed in the last seven steps of the *Ladder*. These are the highest stages of spiritual life, which can be experienced by the "Hesychasts": the solitaries, those who have attained quiet and inner peace; but these stages are also accessible to the more fervent cenobites. Of the first three simplicity, humility and discernment John, in line with the Desert Fathers, considered the ability to discern, the most important. Every type of behaviour must be subject to discernment; everything, in fact, depends on one's deepest motivations, which need to be closely examined. Here one enters into the soul of the person and it is a question of reawakening in the hermit, in the Christian, spiritual sensitivity and a "feeling heart", which are gifts from God: "After God, we ought to follow our conscience as a rule and guide in everything," (26/1,5; 1013). In this way one reaches tranquillity of soul, hesychia, by means of which the soul may gaze upon the abyss of the divine mysteries.

The state of quiet, of inner peace, prepares the Hesychast for prayer which in John is twofold: "corporeal prayer" and "prayer of the heart". The former is proper to those who need the help of bodily movement: stretching out the hands, uttering groans, beating the breast, etc. (15, 26; 900). The latter is spontaneous, because it is an effect of the reawakening of spiritual sensitivity, a gift of God to those who devote themselves to corporeal prayer. In John this takes the name "Jesus prayer" (Iesou euche), and is constituted in the invocation of solely Jesus' name, an invocation that is continuous like breathing: "May your remembrance of Jesus become one with your breathing, and you will then know the usefulness of hesychia", inner peace (27/2, 26; 1112). At the end the prayer becomes very simple: the word "Jesus" simply becomes one with the breath.

Fr. Dominic Rankin

Stewardship of Treasure

March 29th & 30th

Envelopes:	\$12,241.00
Loose:	\$3,601.63
Maintenance:	\$20.00
Total:	\$15,862.63

January Online Contributions

\$18,512.14

January Debt Reduction

\$5.00

February Online Contributions

\$18,119.08

February Debt Reduction

\$5.00

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 APRIL 7

<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 OCIA 6:00 PM School Library	Men's Bible Study 6:00 AM School Library Rosary 4:45 PM Church Lenten Soup Supper 6:00 PM Atrium Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM Choir Room	Women's Bible Study 10:00 AM & 1:00 PM School Library Adoration 4:00 PM Church CCCW Meeting 6:00 PM School Hall Adult Faith Formation 7:00 PM Atrium	Rosary 4:45 PM Church Stations of the Cross 5:45 PM Church		

What's Going on Around the Cathedral?

VATICAN II FAITH FORMATION SERIES & JUBILEE INDULGENCE

JANUARY 30, FEBRUARY 20, MARCH 20,
APRIL 10, MAY 15, AND JUNE 19
7:00 PM
CATHEDRAL ATRIUM

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!

April 10, 7:00 pm in the Cathedral Atrium

EXTENDED CONFESSIONS

APRIL 11 - 12:30PM-6:30PM
APRIL 12 - 9:00AM-4:30PM

Extended Confessions

The Cathedral will be hosting extended confession on hours on Friday, April 11th from 12:30pm-6:30pm, and Saturday April 12th from 9:00am-4:30pm. Please consider joining us so as to prepare well for the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ on Easter Sunday.

SUNDAY ANNOUNCEMENTS



Eternal Rest-The Art of Dying Well

The art of dying well is also the art of living well. By understanding who we are and what we are made for, we can order our lives and values according to God's design for our true fulfillment. Knowing we will die someday allows us to live as prudent stewards of the time we're given, and it grants us the ability to joyfully anticipate eternal life. Eternal Rest presents the Church's teaching about death and God's response to it with wisdom and truth, gentleness and compassion, so that participants may think about and prepare for death in the light of Jesus Christ, the Author of life. RSVP by calling Vicki at 217/522-3342 or by emailing vcompton@cathedral.dio.org. Cathedral Women's Bible Study, 4 Thursdays, April 24-May 15 @ 6:00pm, \$15.

CCCW Lenten Soup Suppers

Looking for dinner options during Lent? Join the women of CCCW for Lenten Soup Suppers throughout this season of Lent! Seven homemade soups with bread & crackers will be served. All are welcome!
Wednesday April 9, beginning at 6pm in the Atrium

SDCCW Scholarship Opportunity

The SDCCW (Springfield in IL Diocesan Council of Catholic Women) is pleased to give \$2,000 for education beyond high school to four 2025 female high school graduates from the Springfield Diocese in IL who exemplify the SDCCW's mission. The mission of the SDCCW is to support and empower all Catholic women in spirituality, leadership and service. The SDCCW is affiliated with the National Council of Catholic Women (NCCW). Applications are available in the Cathedral Atrium, and must be mailed to the SDCCW Scholarship Program by May 1.

UNITED IN GENEROSITY AS ONE GLOBAL FAMILY

Amid the harsh conditions of the Sahel region's 1976 drought, millions faced hunger. That same year, Catholics worldwide gathered at the 41st International Eucharistic Congress in Philadelphia, focusing on "The Eucharist and the Hungers of the Human Family." As Lent draws to a close, let's reflect on how our prayers, fasting and almsgiving can help ensure no one goes hungry in the middle of today's global food crisis. Visit crsricebowl.org/week-5 to learn more.

Second Collection - CRS Rice Bowl

During Lent, we're invited to deepen our relationship and unite our hearts more fully with God and with one another. We can do this in an intentional way through the Catholic tradition of prayer, fasting and almsgiving. CRS Rice Bowl-Catholic Relief Services' Lenten faith-in-action program- invites us to encounter God and our global family by practicing these Lenten pillars. This year, CRS Rice Bowl celebrates its 50th anniversary. This is the time for us to recommit to our global family as we learn about communities in Nigeria, Guatemala and Bangladesh. At this very moment, millions of our most vulnerable sisters and brothers are facing life-threatening levels of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition. At the root of this crisis is a perfect storm of poverty, climate change, conflict and inequality. There is no one solution to breaking the cycle of hunger-but we can do our part through CRS Rice Bowl by answering Jesus' invitation us to share bread for life with our sisters and brothers during Lent-so all may live with dignity. Seventy-five percent of alms collected through CRS Rice Bowl supports CRS programs around the world. Twenty-five percent stays here in our diocese to help fight hunger and poverty.

Nearly 13,000 faith communities in 180 dioceses across the U.S. are committed to practicing the traditional Lenten pillars of spirituality to help our global family with CRS Rice Bowl. Please consider committing to supporting our sisters and brothers around the world while forming families and faith communities to be missionary disciples.

Spring Spruce Up

The Cathedral Council of Catholic Women (CCCW) will coordinate a Spring Spruce Up of the interior of our beautiful church to prepare for Holy Week and Easter. We will wash pews & kneelers after 12:05 pm Mass on Monday, April 7. Polishing the pews with lemon oil will take place following 5:15 pm Mass on Monday, April 14. All supplies will be provided. This is a perfect opportunity to earn service hours or for a family service experience. We invite anyone interested in spending a few hours to make our Church Home Shine to join us!

Feed the Hungry

A good Lenten practice is to pick up a few extra items when you go to the grocery store and donate them to Holy Family Food Pantry. The pantry is currently in great need of peanut butter, jelly, and crackers. Drop off your donations in the blue bin in the atrium. Thank you for your generosity!



Sharing the Good News of Jesus: Practical Steps

In a recent blog on the National Eucharistic Congress website, Patti Stenson of Newman Ministry shared some practical tips for sharing the kerygma. Kerygma? What's that? Simply put, kerygma is the Gospel. After Christ ascended into heaven, the apostles began to preach a message that was basic and to the point; Repent of your sins, accept baptism, and live in the new life Jesus Christ is offering you through His Church. But how can we effectively share this message in our daily lives? As Christ did – with patience, mercy and love of neighbor, all while remaining firm in the truth and calling others to more. This is the essence of sharing the kerygma effectively.

The first practical step is one we have already begun; Start With Prayer. Several weeks ago we all submitted the names of those we wish to bring closer to the Lord and committed to praying for them daily. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide your conversations with this person and open their hearts to the message of the Gospel. Have you mentioned to that person that you are praying for him/her? Perhaps you could share a simple prayer together to invite God into your conversations. Your prayers for that person model a life of faith and trust in God.

In subsequent weeks we'll share more tips for sharing the Good News.

Around the Diocese

- **Springfield Deanery Council of Catholic Women Meeting**, Saturday, May 3rd, 10 am at St. Joseph Church, in the Parish Center, 1345 N. 6th Street, Spfld. Sr. Mary Ellen Backes OSU will speak about the Water For Women program. Lunch will be served with a \$5 suggested donation. A business meeting and tour of the Ronald McDonald House in Spfld are also on the agenda. If you have any pop tabs saved, please bring them with you. All women are invited to attend! RSVP by April 27th to Diane Mounce, St. Joe's Pastoral Council Secretary, 217-971-2350, voice and text.
- **Summer Immersion Experience with Dominican Sisters in Chicago**, Single Catholic women ages 18 - 45 are invited to participate in the Dominican Sisters' Service Immersion Experience in Chicago. This unique opportunity allows participants to engage deeply with the mission and ministry of the Dominican Sisters while serving the local community and discerning their own path in faith and service. The event is scheduled for June 21-25, 2025. Participants will have opportunities for prayer, reflection, hands-on service, and conversation about vocation and Gospel justice. Participants will walk alongside the Dominican Sisters, gaining firsthand insight into their charism of prayer, preaching, community life, and service. Complete the interest form at springfieldop.org/summer. Facilitated by several congregations of U.S.-based Dominican Sisters. For more information call Sister Denise Glazik, OP, at 217-787-0481.
- **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.