

# *Cathedral* OF THE *Immaculate Conception*

AUGUST 24, 2025 | TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME



524 EAST LAWRENCE AVENUE, SPRINGFIELD, IL 62703  
CATHEDRAL PARISH OFFICE: 217-522-3342  
[WWW.SPICATHEDRAL.ORG](http://WWW.SPICATHEDRAL.ORG)

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

# Cathedral Weekly

VOLUME 7 ISSUE 34

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

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

Diocesan Victim Assistance is available. For the Diocesan Victim Assistance Coordinator, please call 217-321-1155.  
Please remember that if you or a loved one is in the hospital, a nursing home or homebound, to contact the Parish Office at 217-522-3342



## Expanding our Desires

Though I do not know exactly where I first heard it, one of the more helpful, simple lessons on prayer that I have heard goes like this: "When we pray, God always answers. Sometimes He answers, 'yes', other times He answers, 'no', and still other times He answers, 'not yet.'"

In my homily two Sundays ago, I reflected on a four-letter word that most of us hate hearing (no, it is not one of THOSE four-letter words) – that word is "wait." We do not like to wait for things, including when it comes to

prayer. We often expect our experience with prayer to be like putting a request into ChatGPT, receiving an immediate response. But there are so many times when we have prayed for something and not received any response, or any indication of a response. In a sense, God is inviting us to wait for His response, and we do not particularly like that. But the Lord knows what He is doing, He has a reason for His seeming silence and perceived delay. This is what Pope Benedict reflects on in next paragraph of *Spe salvi*, and he does so by referencing some time-honored wisdom from St. Augustine:

*Saint Augustine, in a homily on the First Letter of John, describes very beautifully the intimate relationship between prayer and hope. He defines prayer as an exercise of desire. Man was created for greatness—for God himself; he was created to be filled by God. But his heart is too small for the greatness to which it is destined. It must be stretched. "By delaying [his gift], God strengthens our desire; through desire he enlarges our soul and by expanding it he increases its capacity [for receiving him]" (SS 33)*

The Holy Father then offers the following beautiful image from the same saint about this process of enlarging our hearts to prepare for what the Lord desires to give to us:

*Suppose that God wishes to fill you with honey [a symbol of God's tenderness and goodness]; but if you are full of vinegar, where will you put the honey?" The vessel, that is your heart, must first be enlarged and then cleansed, freed from the vinegar and its taste. This requires hard work and is painful, but in this way alone do we become suited to that for which we are destined (St. Augustine, Cf. In 1 Ioannis 4, 6: PL 35, 2008f)*

The pope reflects on how this waiting that the Lord allows to experience has a way of purifying our desires as well, also helping us to see beyond just ourselves and our wants, but expands to include others as well. He writes:

*When we pray properly we undergo a process of inner purification which opens us up to God and thus to our fellow human beings as well. In prayer we must learn what we can truly ask of God—what is worthy of God. We must learn that we cannot pray against others. We must learn that we cannot ask for the superficial and comfortable things that we desire at this moment—that meagre, misplaced hope that leads us away from God. We must learn to purify our desires and our hopes. We must free ourselves from the hidden lies with which we deceive ourselves. God sees through them, and when we come before God, we too are forced to recognize them. (SS 33)*

Perhaps as you read this column, you are struggling with the "not yet" answer the Lord has given to your prayer. I am hopeful that these important lessons from the school of prayer give you hope to continue to trust in the Lord's goodness, and His desire to give "good things to those who ask Him." (Mt 7:11)

*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, August 25

7am - Judith Ansell  
(Kelly and Elena Delaney)  
5:15pm - Tom McGee  
(McGee Family)

#### Tuesday, August 26

7am - Intention For Bishop Thomas  
John Paprocki (Roger and Alison Lanter)  
5:15pm - Dale and Marian Spore  
(Janice Wray)

#### Wednesday, August 27

7am - Judith Ansell  
(Friends and Family)  
5:15pm - John and Edith Bakalar  
(John Busciacco)

#### Thursday, August 28

7am - Chester Patrick  
(Gregory and Marie Fleck)  
5:15pm - Cathy Alnory  
(Family)

#### Friday, August 29

7am - Living and Deceased Members of  
the Valdez-Johnstone Family (Rosario  
Johnstone)  
5:15pm - James A. Flatley  
(Lou Ann Mack & Carl Corrigan)

#### Saturday, August 30

8am - Barbara McGee  
(McGee Family)  
4pm - Michael Thomas  
(Bob and Shirley Morgan)

#### Sunday, August 31

7am - Ben and Ann Rydzewski  
(Niece)  
10am - Jeff Bensko  
(Mary Jane Heid)  
5pm - For The People





If you have been following the thread of the articles I've been writing, you may have noticed that last week's article was the tenth and final article in the series on the Pentecost Sequence. Though I have been intently considering topics for a new series of articles, I have come to no definite conclusion as to what exactly to write about.

The theme of the work of the Holy Spirit is still, however, hovering in my mind, as I look out at the natural beauty of these hot and humid late summer days. The Spirit helps us to listen to the Word of life and beauty God spoke into creation. The natural world truly proclaims God's glory and is a place of contemplation in which we see clearly His desire that all things would have life and have it abundantly - that all things would grow to their full potential.

We see great trees with gnarled roots that seem to want to last forever, small weeds that grow out of parking lots and cracks that I would never have believed could hold a living thing for long. Even the small tree or animal cut down and killed by man or nature becomes a happy home for a multitude of organisms that keep on living and consuming and bringing order to this changing world. Only a great and beautiful mind could have been the source of this relentless life.

I conclude with a poem - one that may remind you of springtime (and hopefully cooler days!) - a poem that touches upon the scriptural and very Augustinian theme of nature praising its maker by simply existing as he wishes:

Upon the dappled walls of stacked stone  
a vine grows up and sprouts its verdant bud  
A leaf springs forth and looks to meet the sun  
that breaks aloft with yellow on the clouds  
The stone reflects what light the vine lets through  
as leaves of green and shadow rustle round  
The moist spring breeze of blue-green-yellow runs  
past leaves a-glinting in the post-rain light  
This earthen majesty about me sighs  
and clearly speaks of Him who made the sun,  
the leaves, the wall, the stone, the vine, and bud  
and sets them light with life upon the spring  
O Spring of Life, O Beauty's Source, you hear  
the golden love flown from my heart of flesh,  
that sees all things and knows their maker plain  
Full life, my God, Sweet Love in whom I trust.

*Fr. Daniel McGrath is a Parochial Vicar of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception and serves as Chaplain of Sacred Heart-Griffin High School.*

## Stewardship of Treasure

### August 9th & 10th

Envelopes:	\$5,350.00
Loose:	\$3,560.90
Maintenance:	\$60.00
Total:	\$8,970.00

### August 16th & 17th

Envelopes:	\$3,455.84
Loose:	\$3,300.00
Maintenance:	\$70.00
Total:	\$6,825.84

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 Weddings

Nathaniel Fierstos & Kelly Kiel  
Married on August 9, 2025

Harper Johnson & Maria Nestler  
Married on August 12, 2025

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS



## WEEK OF AUGUST 25

<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  Alpha 6:00 PM Atrium	Adoration 4:00 PM Church	Men's Bible Study 6:00 AM School Library  Rosary 4:45 PM Church	Women's Bible Study 10:00 AM, 1:00 PM, & 6:00 PM School Library  Adoration 4:00 PM Church  CCCW Meeting 6:00 PM School Hall  K of C Meeting 6:00 PM School Classroom	Rosary 4:45 PM Church		

## What's Going on Around the Cathedral?

**VATICAN II FAITH  
FORMATION SERIES &  
JUBILEE INDULGENCE**

AUGUST 21, SEPTEMBER 18, OCTOBER 23  
NOVEMBER 20, AND DECEMBER 11  
7:00 PM  
CATHEDRAL ATRIUM

### Documents of Vatican II, Continued

Mark your calendars for Sept 18 and Oct 23 as Fathers Brian Alford and Daniel McGrath discuss the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World. On Nov 20 and Dec 11, they will cover the remaining documents of the Second Vatican Council. In the Cathedral Atrium @ 7:00pm

### Cathedral Summer Fest - More Details!

Join us for our first Cathedral Summer Fest! Come celebrate with great food, fun games, and lots of fellowship on Saturday, September 6, after the 4PM Mass, in the Cathedral Parking Lot. Food and drinks will be available for purchase. Menu will include hot dogs, hamburgers, ribeye sandwiches, chips, and desserts. Sandwich meal prices are as follows (includes a sandwich, chips, and a drink): Hot dog meal - \$3; Hamburger meal - \$4; Ribeye meal - \$5.

Attendees can RSVP and prepay for sandwich meals online using the following link:  
<https://dio.ccbchurch.com/goto/forms/343/responses/new>

Sandwich meals and individual items (sandwiches, chips, drinks) will be also available for purchase, **cash only**, during the event. Refunds for online payments will not be issued; funds from those not able to attend will be donated to the Cathedral. Please contact the Parish Office (217-522-3342 or [info@cathedral.dio.org](mailto:info@cathedral.dio.org)) with any questions. We look forward to having you join us!



## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

## PARISH SECRETARY

### The Cathedral is Hiring a Parish Secretary

The Cathedral is looking to hire a Parish Secretary. The Parish Secretary serves as the face, voice, and presence of the parish to the parishioners, the public, new parishioners and any other person with whom they come in contact. Their main responsibility is to promote the mission of the parish and foster a welcoming atmosphere through all methods of communication and media. This position also supports the Rector, members of the parish staff, as well as various committees and boards. Please visit [www.spicathedral.org/employment](http://www.spicathedral.org/employment) for more information. Interested candidates should provide a cover letter and resume to Fr. Brian Alford, [balford@dio.org](mailto:balford@dio.org) and Business Manager Kim Gunter, [kgunter@cathedral.dio.org](mailto:kgunter@cathedral.dio.org).

# SUNDAY ANNOUNCEMENTS



## One Mile Talk with Fr. Daniel McGrath

He has been a priest for one year and just loves it! A One Mile Talk with Fr. Daniel McGrath! Watch here:

<https://youtu.be/HTScOvGxUvE>

## Married 50 Years or More? Let Us Celebrate You!

Bishop Thomas John Paprocki invites all couples who have been married 50 years or more to a special Anniversary Mass on Sunday, September 21 at 2 p.m. at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Springfield. This celebration honors your beautiful witness to the vocation of marriage. A light reception will follow Mass. RSVP by September 9 at [www.dio.org/events](http://www.dio.org/events), or contact Gracie Ortiz at [gortiz@dio.org](mailto:gortiz@dio.org) or (217) 698-8500. Let us honor your milestone of faith and love!

## Knights of Columbus Upcoming Events

Putting Christ at the center of our lives through Charity, Unity and Fraternity, below are some upcoming activities of our Knights of Columbus council...

- **August 28** Council Meeting - Please join us for our regular meeting at 7 PM on the 1st floor of the school. Guests are welcome to check out who we are and what we are up to. Council meetings are once a month on the 4th Thursday unless otherwise announced.
- **August 31** Fifth Sunday Rosary - All members of the parish are welcome to join the Fr. Tolton Council after the 10 AM Mass to pray a rosary. Free rosaries for new members!
- **September 13-14** Intellectual Disabilities Drive at Hy Vee - The council is collecting money to help agencies that work with people who have intellectual disabilities. No donation is too small! Need service hours? There are lots of shifts that need help. Contact Larry or Brian below.
- **September 20** Scholarship Dinner - Help support scholarship efforts of the K of C and CCCW and enjoy a nice steak dinner and a whisky tasting. Tickets can be purchased through our Council website.
- **October 18** - Men's Leadership Summit - all men, not just Knights, are invited to a day-long conference at St. Boniface in Edwardsville. Deadline to register is October 1. Details are on our council website.

Visit our website at <http://www.kofc16126.org/> for all the details. New members are always welcome. Join online at <http://kofc.org/join> and use council number 16126. Questions? Contact Grand Knight Larry Travis, [LTRAVISJR@gmail.com](mailto:LTRAVISJR@gmail.com), or Program Director Brian Huber, [bhubie@comcast.net](mailto:bhubie@comcast.net).

## Ignatius Book Fair

Cathedral will again be hosting a Catholic book fair providing easy access to the best in literature aligned with Catholic virtues. The Ignatius Book Fair will offer an incredible selection of Catholic and secular works that inspire and educate. Discover books that foster creativity, imagination, and wonder — books that can edify, shape character, and deepen faith.

September 11, 10:00-1:00 and 6:00-7:00. September 12 10:00-2:00. Sept 13 and 14 after all Masses. In the Cathedral school cafeteria.

## Catholic Faith and Science

Join us for this video series, where Fr. Robert J. Spitzer, S.J., Ph.D. walks us through the scientific evidence for God, philosophical proofs for God's existence, the historicity of Jesus' miracles and Resurrection, why an all-loving God would allow suffering, medical evidence for our transphysical soul, and more. This course will be facilitated by Fr. Brian Alford and is open to teens and adults.

Meeting twice monthly on Sundays, 6:15-7:30pm in the Cathedral atrium beginning September 28. The course is free, but a participant workbook will be sold for \$10. Register after all Masses August 30-31 or by emailing Vicki at [vcompton@cathedral.dio.org](mailto:vcompton@cathedral.dio.org) or by calling the parish office 217/522-3342.

## Faith Formation for Children

The Order of Baptism emphasizes that parents are the first teachers of their children in the ways of the faith. The Second Vatican Council, in *Lumen Gentium*, calls the family the "domestic church" insisting that "parents, by word and example, are the first heralds of the faith with regard to their children" [cf. *Lumen Gentium* §11]. Given the emphasis placed on parents, we want to help parents to be what they are called to be in Christ: true heralds of the Gospel to their children. To support parents in this important task, the Cathedral sponsors a whole-family catechetical program that meets on Sunday evenings twice a month. Children meet with catechists while parents and teens meet for formation with our priests. More information and a chance to register will be available after all Masses on August 30-31. Contact Vicki to have registration forms emailed to you, [vcompton@cathedral.dio.org](mailto:vcompton@cathedral.dio.org) or 217/522-3342.

## Estudio Bíblico: Jesús y la Eucaristía

Invitamos a todos a participar en el estudio bíblico Jesús y la Eucaristía, una serie de siete sesiones que explora el misterio de la Eucaristía como fuente y cumbre de nuestra fe. Las reuniones se llevarán a cabo los lunes, de 6:00 p.m. a 8:00 p.m., en la Biblioteca de la Escuela de la Catedral Inmaculada Concepción en Springfield, Illinois, los días 8, 15, 22, 29 de septiembre; 6, 20 y 27 de octubre (no habrá sesión el 13 de octubre por el Día de la Raza). Todas las sesiones se impartirán únicamente en español. ¡Todos son bienvenidos!

We invite everyone to participate in the Bible study Jesus and the Eucharist, a series of seven sessions that explores the mystery of the Eucharist as the source and summit of our faith. The meetings will take place on Mondays from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. in the Library of the Cathedral School of the Immaculate Conception in Springfield, Illinois, on September 8, 15, 22, 29; October 6, 20, and 27 (there will be no session on October 13 due to Columbus Day). All sessions will be conducted in Spanish only. All are welcome!

## Gospel Meditation - 21<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

I've been hiking Camelback Mountain in Phoenix, Arizona most of my life. It is a vigorous forty-five minutes to the top. Near the peak, the end suddenly appears much further away, and steeper. At that moment, a descending hiker often offers encouragement: "Keep going! The peak is right there. It's not as far as it looks. You can do it!" It usually works. After another five minute push, you summit and enjoy a glorious panorama of the Sonoran Desert in the Valley of the Sun.

When Jesus is asked about how many people are saved, he says: "Strive to enter through the narrow gate" (Luke 13:24). How many? Strive! Focus on your journey. What does heavenly census taking have to do with you or me? How would it help a hiker on a mountain to ask the others coming down, "How many people are going to make it to the top?" A normal response would be something like: "How is that a relevant question? Carry on!"

Jesus links one virtue directly to salvation: perseverance (cf. Matt 24:13; hypomone in Greek). Strive! Endure! Keep going! The one absolutely necessary virtue is perseverance, to not give up on our journey. The mountain we struggle to climb is often our own weakness, failures, and sins. Persevere in prayer. Keep celebrating the sacraments. Embrace daily duties. With God's grace, you are strong enough to keep going. Perhaps the peak is not as far away as you might fear. Keep going!

Father John Muir  
©LPi

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## Around the Diocese

- **Season of Creation Mass Scheduled at Sacred Heart Convent**, The public is welcome to open the 2025 Season of Creation by celebrating Mass with the Dominican Sisters at Sacred Heart Convent, 1237 W. Monroe St., Springfield, 62704. Join them at 9:00 a.m., Monday, Sept. 1. Plenty of off street parking, fully accessible chapel.
- **St. Cabrini's Fall Festival**, Sunday, September 7<sup>th</sup> from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at St. Frances Cabrini Parish. There will be music, children's games, health fair, country store, food, drinks, and more. Raffle tickets are available now and at the Fall Festival.
- **2025 SDCCW Convention**, Wed., Oct. 1, 9:00 AM – 3:30 PM, with Mass at 11:00 AM, Bishop Thomas Paprocki, Main Celebrant, St. Paul's Church and Trinity Hall, 1411 Main St., Highland, IL - "LET YOURSELF BE LOVED" Claire Dwyer desires that all women know how deeply they are loved by God. She is a wife and mom of six and grandmother of two, living and working remotely for the Avila Foundation as Content Editor of Spiritual Direction.com from her home in Arizona. She is a speaker, retreat leader, and author of *This Present Paradise: A Spiritual Journey with St. Elizabeth of the Trinity*. Contact the Parish Office for registration information - registration is due Sept. 14. Questions - [sdccwinil@gmail.com](mailto:sdccwinil@gmail.com)
- **Volunteers needed for the St. John's Breadline to help serve 300 plus meals a day!** Multiple opportunities for daily volunteers: prep food, serve guests, wash dishes, clean, and ride along for deliveries. Background check and volunteer orientation required prior to service. Interested in volunteering or have further questions please contact: Patrick McConnell, Area Director Springfield Catholic Charities, 217-523-4551 ext.114 / [mcconnell\\_spfld@cc.dio.org](mailto:mcconnell_spfld@cc.dio.org)