

Cathedral OF THE *Immaculate Conception*

AUGUST 31, 2025 | TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME



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 35

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

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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



Purifying Prayer

In our previous article, we reflected on the all-too-common experience of waiting in prayer, not receiving a clear answer from the Lord when we turn to Him, even waiting for long periods of time before we receive any sort of clarity, if we indeed receive any at all. Drawing upon the wisdom of St. Augustine, Pope Benedict explained how this waiting can be used as a form of purification by which our desires are expanded and our hope sustained.

In the next paragraph, the Holy Father writes about how to make prayer become a purifying power in our lives. He writes the following:

For prayer to develop this power of purification, it must on the one hand be something very personal, an encounter between my intimate self and God, the living God. On the other hand it must be constantly guided and enlightened by the great prayers of the Church and of the saints, by liturgical prayer, in which the Lord teaches us again and again how to pray properly. (SS 34)

Relational prayer is something that I have spent a fair amount of time reading and thinking about over the past few years. It has been enlightening to encounter insights from many writers and speakers on this form of prayer, and having experienced it in my own prayer, it is something that has made a profound difference in my relationship with the Lord. For that reason, I was happy to read the first line quoted above. But perhaps more consoling to me was the pope's reminder of the necessity of also using the great prayers from the tradition of the Church, as well as liturgical prayers. As life-giving and intimate as personal prayer can be, there are times when it is hard to pray in this way, and it is easy to fall into discouragement, feeling like I have lost the ability to pray, or that I somehow need to rediscover the right formula. In those moments when it can be hard to enter into intimate, relational prayer, those familiar prayers are always available, and when prayed in a spirit of faith, are never less effective than relational prayer. To offer a powerful example of this, Pope Benedict offers the following:

Cardinal Nguyen Van Thuan, in his book of spiritual exercises, tells us that during his life there were long periods when he was unable to pray and that he would hold fast to the texts of the Church's prayer: the Our Father, the Hail Mary and the prayers of the liturgy. (ibid.)

The Holy Father then explains how it is not either relational prayer or public, liturgical prayer. Rather, it is both/and. We need both forms, and by keeping both in our arsenal of prayer, the Lord will continue to effect that purification "by which we become open to God and are prepared for the service of our fellow human beings." (ibid.)

Therefore if you find yourself like me sometimes really struggling to put words or thoughts together to speak with God in a personal and intimate way, take comfort in those prayers you have known since your youth, and with the confidence of a child, bring them to the Lord, trusting that He is listening and working for your good.

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, September 1

7am - Betty Rogers
(Family)
5:15pm - No Mass

Tuesday, September 2

7am - Bob and Dorothy Berberet
(Julie Berberet)
5:15pm - Cesare Chiaradonna
(Geny Chiaradonna)

Wednesday, September 3

7am - Marjorie Johnson
(Dcn David Beach)
5:15pm - Judith Ansell
(James and Billie Langfelder)

Thursday, September 4

7am - Helen (Bobbie) McCarthy
(Family)
5:15pm - Clate and Lessie Dortch
(Bev and Larry Smith)

Friday, September 5

7am - Tom McGee
(McGee Family)
5:15pm - Mary Jane Kern
(Estate)

Saturday, September 6

8am - Mary Kaufman
(McGee Family)
4pm - Pamela Harmon
(Archie Harmon)

Sunday, September 7

7am - For The People
10am - Deceased Members of CCCW
(CCCW)
5pm - Josephine Beagles
(Family)



Over the course of his life of ministry, Saint Augustine of Hippo wrote and/or preached a sermon which served as a commentary on each of the 150 psalms. Some of these commentaries are very long, some short, some psalms have several homilies instead of just one, and most psalms are given a deeply spiritual interpretation in the light of Christ and the Church. These commentaries have been compiled into one great series of homilies called St. Augustine's Enarrationes in Psalmos - "Commentaries on the Psalms." Over the next several weeks, I will be reflecting on various snippets of these writings.

In a passage of St. Augustine's commentary on Psalm 73, he refers to the scriptures in a unique and meaningful way. He calls the scriptures "Letters of God." I see this as a really heartfelt and personal way of looking at the bible - Augustine saw the scriptures as a communication from God to us in the form of "letters." John Rotelle, O.S.A., the editor of this passage in the version I used to read this commentary, notes St. Augustine's use of this phrase, probably because of its rarity.

Rotelle also mentions that Pope Pius XII refers to the scriptures this way in his encyclical *Divino Afflante Spiritu*. When Pope Pius XII writes about this, he explains, "it behooves us to be grateful to the God of all providence, Who from the throne of His majesty has sent these books as so many paternal letters to His own children" (DAS, 19, emphasis added). They are written out of the love of a fatherly heart.

Because of this love that is at the source of all the scriptures, Pope Pius XII and St. Augustine, as well as the bishops in our own contemporary church, would highly encourage our reading of the scriptures. We often think it is hard to hear God's voice, but if we only picked up the scriptures, we would read the letters God has written to us.

Each of these letters is different. We have historical texts written to us today to remind us what God has done in our world and in history to save us. We have prayers he has written for us like the Psalms. We have love letters like the Song of Songs. We have ancient stories and writings that teach us the wisdom of God's mind. God has spoken to us, and he has done so by inspiring these writings from the minds and pens of holy human authors from the ancient Israelites and the first Christians.

These letters are "Paternal" because they teach us, they guide us, and they offer us a sense of protection in the Truth. God has given a great gift to his people by sending them his Word, both in the words of scripture and also in the flesh in Jesus Christ. We meet Him in prayer, in the Eucharist, in his Church, and also very deeply in and through the scriptures. The Letter to the Hebrews tells us that God's word is living and effective. He truly speaks to us in these scriptures, just as deeply as he first spoke to the people who first read them. His word does not "expire." It doesn't "run out."

Thanks be to God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, for such a great gift!

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 23rd & 24th

Collection numbers were unavailable at the time of publication. Please check back next weekend for these collection numbers.

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!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS



WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 1

<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 Cathedral Bible Study 6:00 PM School Library 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	Cathedral Summer Fest 5:00 PM Parking Lot	

What's Going on Around the Cathedral?



First Friday Concert Series

Join us on Friday, September 5, 2025 at 7pm in the Cathedral for a First Friday Concert! September's concert will feature Ritual Action: Woodwind Trio. 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!



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



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 for more information. Interested candidates should provide a cover letter and resume to Fr. Brian Alford, balford@dio.org and Business Manager Kim Gunter, kgunter@cathedral.dio.org.

SUNDAY ANNOUNCEMENTS



K of C Steak and Whiskey Scholarship Dinner

Join us for the 6th Annual Steak and Whiskey Scholarship Dinner, Saturday, September 20, and enjoy a good meal, some premium bourbon and live music. Doors open at 6 p.m. and dinner starts at 6:30 p.m. \$75 per person; the evening includes a cash bar, salad, steak, baked potato, vegetable, four bourbon tastings, and dessert from Pease's at Bunn Gourmet. Tea and water will be available for free. Attendees must be 21 or older. Reservations are required and are due Wednesday, September 17. Reservations are online only at: <https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/father-tolton-knights-of-columbus-scholarship-dinner>

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>

OCIA Meal Volunteers

Each session of OCIA starts with a simple meal to build community. If you would be interested in providing a meal for approx. 12 people on a Tuesday evening, it would be greatly appreciated. Homemade or takeout, either is fine. Contact Vicki for more information or to schedule a date. vcompton@cathedral.dio.org, or 217/522-3342. THANK YOU!

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 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, or 217/522-3342.

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 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, or Program Director Brian Huber, bhubie@comcast.net.

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, or contact Gracie Ortiz at gortiz@dio.org or (217) 698-8500. Let us honor your milestone of faith and love!

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!

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.

What Did You Expect?

Moms have a lot of jobs, and it's usually the case that none of them pay very well.

My work as a chef? Zero compensation, and my clientele are very rarely pleased with my efforts. My role as a teacher, a maid, a chauffeur, a therapist — same deal. Ironically, these jobs consume so much of my time that I am constricted in my work as a writer — the only sphere where I do actually garner any earnings.

It is so easy to grumble about all of this, and I do it all the time. Because despite the fact that I know better, I expect repayment for my good deeds. Deep in my soul, I expect it.

That's a huge problem.

In my defense, I don't think this is a very uncommon thing. I think, if we're being really honest, we all expect "payment" for being a good person. We want God to give us what we ask. We want people to treat us a certain way. We want our day to go smoothly. We expect these things as a matter of course; we feel entitled to them, and we become grumpy when we are denied them. I worked so hard. I gave so much. What was it all even for?

But what if we expected absolutely nothing?

When you hold a banquet, Jesus said, invite those who cannot return the favor. Give not just without the expectation of repayment, but without the possibility of it.

Think about that for a minute. What does that even look like — no possibility of payment?

I know what that looks like in my own life. It's giving more to the literal poor, yes, but it's also giving more — and more happily, more lovingly — when I cook and clean and drive and write and console. It's not lamenting that no one appreciates me — it's actually hoping no one does.

It's learning to love the lowest place at the table. Because in the lowest place, we are closest to God

Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman
©LPi

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 7th 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.
- **National Day of Remembrance for Aborted Children** will take place on Saturday, September 13th from 10am-11am at the Two Hearts PRC building at 519 N Bruns Lane in Springfield. This event is co-sponsored nationally by the Pro-Life Action League, Priests for Life, and Citizens for a Pro-Life Society, and hosted locally by Two Hearts PRC.
- **Calling all men juniors in high school and above!** Join Bishop Paprocki and Priests of the Diocese for an Andrew Dinner at 5:00pm on Sunday, September 21 at Little Flower in Springfield. The Andrew Dinner is a simple/low key gathering where we will pray, share a meal, and have conversations about Priesthood and how best to discern what vocation God is calling you to. If you would like to attend, sign up at this link: <https://forms.gle/exdi2Jyrpbo3zNrc7> or email Fr. Zach Samples at zsamples@dio.org. We hope to see you there!
- **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
- **Life Chain Sunday** will occur on October 5th from 2pm-3pm. Pro-Life prayer warriors will gather in quiet prayer as a public witness to the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. For more information, please call the Two Hearts PRC offices at 217-523-2700.