

Cathedral OF THE *Immaculate Conception*

SEPTEMBER 7, 2025 | TWENTY-THIRD 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 36

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 VAHLING
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.

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



Learning Hope Through Action

The next setting for learning hope that Pope Benedict proposes is action. He explains how we strive endlessly (implying action) to realize our lesser and greater hopes in life. We have something that we want to achieve, such as training for a race. In order to realize our hope of participating in and completing that event, we put in the necessary practice to reach that goal. Those who have the hope of becoming doctors one day need to put in a lot of work studying, which though daunting at times, is sustained by the hope of completing the requirements to become a doctor.

As good as those various hopes for this life are, we can never lose sight of the great hope of eternal life, which is ultimately the object of the Christian virtue of hope. By keeping that hope always before us, we will not be discouraged when we encounter failures or setbacks in achieving our earthly hopes. How sad it is when somebody puts all their hope in some earthly achievement or goal, and when they do not accomplish it, they say in despair: "My life is over!" But when we are rooted in that hope which does not disappoint, no earthly disappointment can stop our forward progress or rob us of meaning in our lives.

Beyond our own personal hopes, we can also get caught up in hope for better circumstances in which we live more broadly, such as those promised by political leaders or other voices which promise something better than what we currently have. On this point, the Holy Father writes:

If we cannot hope for more than is effectively attainable at any given time, or more than is promised by political or economic authorities, our lives will soon be without hope. It is important to know that I can always continue to hope, even if in my own life, or the historical period in which I am living, there seems to be nothing left to hope for. Only the great certitude of hope that my own life and history in general, despite all failures, are held firm by the indestructible power of Love, and that this gives them their meaning and importance, only this kind of hope can then give the courage to act and to persevere. (SS 35)

He then notes that as we continue to persevere in our actions of doing good, we often fail to see any tangible difference being made in the world around us. Nevertheless, hope helps us to believe that by opening ourselves to God through these actions, we are making a contribution to the salvation of the world that is not insignificant. Such was the attitude of the saints, and such should be our attitude as well.

In this regard, I like to think about the story of the multiplication of loaves in John's Gospel. When confronted with the seemingly impossible task of feeding the large crowd, St. Andrew said the following to Jesus: "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish; but what good are these for so many?" (John 6:9) Using normal calculations, he was correct. But by adding God to the equation, what seemed so little and insufficient was multiplied so that the entire crowd was fed. The next time we consider a small, good deed and wonder: "what good is this for such a big problem?", present it to the Lord in faith that He will apply His multiplying grace to do far more than we ask or imagine, serving to strengthen our hope and that of those around us.

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 8

7am - John Montgomery
(John Busciacco)
5:15pm - Deceased Members of the
Spore Family (Janice Wray)

Tuesday, September 9

7am - Brother Francis Skube
(Community)
5:15pm - Karen Bucari
(Alan Bucari)

Wednesday, September 10

7am - Woody Woodhull
(Karen Johnson)
5:15pm - Judith Ansell
(Rebecca Cole)

Thursday, September 11

7am - Johnstone-Valdez Family
(Rosario Johnstone)
5:15pm - Barbara McGee
(McGee Family)

Friday, September 12

7am - Dr. William Schroeder
(LouAnn Mack & Carl Corrigan)
5:15pm - Intention for Bianca
(D.A. Drago)

Saturday, September 13

8am - Woody Woodhull
(Rebecca Woodhull)
4pm - For The People

Sunday, September 14

7am - Joseph "Jerry" Stasukinas
(Sherry Smith)
10am - Anna Danner
(Catherine Madonia)
5pm - Don Smargiassi
(Family and Friends)



How long is eternity?

When you imagine Heaven - something nearly impossible to rightly imagine - I would wager that what trips you up most and possibly leads you to think that Heaven is boring is the fact that "forever" seems like way too long to do anything, even the best of things. I mean, at some point, won't forever just get boring?

Well, if time works the same way in Heaven that it does on Earth, the answer to that question would be "Yes." But God exists in eternity without getting bored and Heaven will not get boring, ever. The problem with our imagination of Heaven lies in our absolute inability to imagine time working in any different way than it does now. We have no context for "eternity" - God's "eternity."

In the scriptures, we hear the timelessness of God expressed in different ways - "eternal," "years and years," a "day," etc. We have to use these human time categories to describe it, and that is ok. We don't have words or concepts for anything else.

St. Augustine speaks about this in his commentary on Psalm 60. He reflects on the use of "day" to refer to God's time in eternity - God's "day."

St. Augustine explains, "The word today indicates a single day; but this is not the kind of day which is squeezed between yesterday and tomorrow; it does not begin where yesterday ended, nor does it end when tomorrow dawns. After all, God's time is also referred to as "years" in another psalm.... So years, and days, and a single day, all mean the same thing. You can use whichever phrase you like about eternity. And the reason why you can choose freely which way to express it is that whatever you say will fall short of the reality. Yet you must say something, to give yourself a basis on which to think about what cannot be put into words" (Saint Augustine, Expositions of the Psalms 51-72, Translated by Maria Boulding, 199).

In other words, we have to use our human concepts of time to speak about eternity. At the same time, we have to recognize that our human words fall short, and the reality is and will be so much greater and better. We will never get bored because we will be in the eternal now of God's day. "Long" and "short" may not even make sense in heaven, but we'll have to wait until then to find out!

Until that day, we experience a small foretaste of that heavenly now in our prayer, at the Mass, and in beautiful experiences of love. These moments can feel timeless, peaceful, and heavenly. May the Lord teach us through our earthly experiences of eternity to never stop desiring the rest he has in store for us. As St. Augustine also would say, our hearts will be restless until they rest in God. Peace!

Stewardship of Treasure

August 23rd & 24th

Envelopes:	\$4,980.00
Loose:	\$4,136.00
Maintenance:	\$60.00
Total:	\$9,176.00

August 30th & 31st

Envelopes:	\$4,650.00
Loose:	\$3,880.00
Maintenance:	\$220.00
Total:	\$8,750.00

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

Henry James Carnes
Child of James & Mary Carnes
Baptized on August 23, 2025

Weddings

Ben Lange & Julia Mayfield
Married on August 23, 2025

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

CALENDAR OF EVENTS



WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 8

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Rosary 4:45 PM Church	Adoration 4:00 PM Church	Men's Bible Study 6:00 AM School Library	Women's Bible Study 10:00 AM, 1:00 PM, & 6:00 PM School Library	Ignatius Book Fair 10:00 AM School Hall	Ignatius Book Fair After All Masses School Hall	Ignatius Book Fair After All Masses School Hall
Spanish Bible Study 6:00 PM School Library		Rosary 4:45 PM Church	Ignatius Book Fair 10:00 AM & 6:00 PM School Hall	Rosary 4:45 PM Church		Family of Faith 6:00 PM Atrium
		Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM Choir Room	Adoration 4:00 PM Church			

What's Going on Around the Cathedral?



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



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>



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



PSR for Extraordinary People

PSR for Extraordinary People will begin the 2025-2026 academic season on Wednesday, September 10, 2024. The first week will be a "Welcome" Mass at Blessed Sacrament starting at 5:30p followed by dinner in the school cafeteria. Regular classes run from 6:30-7:30pm every Wednesday evening during the academic year. Class is held at Blessed Sacrament School. Our class is designed to meet the needs of developmentally disabled youth & adults who want to grow in their Catholic faith and share fellowship with other like-minded people. Please call Jane Mosey-Nicoletta (217-971-4179) or Blessed Sacrament Parish (217-528-7521) for details and season opening information.

"CARLO ACUTIS - Roadmap to Reality"

WDCR Decatur Catholic Radio is proud to present the movie "Carlo Acutis Roadmap to Reality" on Tuesday, September 16 at 6:30 p.m. at the Lincoln Square Theatre, 141 N. Main St., Decatur. Tickets are \$5 each; for Your Tickets to this family movie, please call WDCR 217-464-1099 or download a flyer at wdcrradio.com.

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.

Experience the Men's Leadership Summit in Edwardsville

Join men from across the diocese on Saturday, October 18th at St. Boniface Church in Edwardsville (110 N Buchanan St) for a Men's Leadership Summit featuring John Edwards, host of Just a Guy in the Pew. The purpose of this summit is to bring single and married men together to support one another, get inspired by their faith, gain or enhance leadership skills, and discuss best practices in men's ministry. John is a dynamic, inspirational speaker and spiritual leader. His background and down-to-earth, practical approach appeals to sons, fathers, brothers, and friends who are Just a guy in the pew and to those interested in men's ministry. Visit the [Men's Leadership Summit event page](#) to watch the John's powerful story and to register. Cost is \$30 which includes materials and a catered lunch. Questions? Contact Gracie at (217) 321-1124, or email gortiz@dio.org.

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...

- **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 18** Membership Meeting, 7 PM on the first floor of the school. Guests are welcome!
- **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.

Gospel Meditation - 23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

One hot Arizona summer afternoon my car ran out of gas. I phoned the parish office and begged for help. My secretary came and helped me fill the gas tank. She chided me, "If you can't manage getting your car from A to B, how can we expect you to guide the parish where it needs to go?" Point taken, Julie. I vowed to always make sure I have plenty of gas in my car.

The Lord Jesus chides us in this week's Gospel, too. He uses the two images of a man building a tower and a king marching soldiers into war to make this single point: acquire what is needed to follow him or look ridiculous. We rightly mock the builder who lacks money for his tower and the king with a short-handed army. But our mocking boomerangs back on us. How do we expect to follow Jesus to the end with insufficient detachment from our possessions and divided hearts?

The good news is, there is still time. Jesus is building a great tower to heaven—his own body. So we renounce all and give ourselves to him as his precious stones. Jesus is waging a battle against our enemy. So we forsake all and swear allegiance and march under his banner. In this way, we will finish what has begun in our discipleship. Or better put, our Lord will have the stones and soldiers required to see his great work through.

Father John Muir
©LPi

Around the Diocese

- **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.