

Cathedral OF THE *Immaculate Conception*

SEPTEMBER 14, 2025 | FEAST OF THE EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS



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 37

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

DEACON DAVID BEACH

DEACON IRVIN LAWRENCE SMITH

TARAH DAVIS
PARISH SECRETARY
TDAVIS@CATHEDRAL.DIO.ORG

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

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 Suffering

Closely tied to learning hope through action is learning it through suffering, reflects Pope Benedict in the next paragraph of Spe Salvi. Suffering is an inevitable part of our human condition, and if we are certain to face it, we can trust that God desires to teach us some important lessons from our experience of enduring suffering. It is this topic which will occupy our reflections for the next few weeks.

The Holy Father comments on how it is important for us as Christians to engage in actions directed toward reducing suffering in the world:

Certainly we must do whatever we can to reduce suffering: to avoid as far as possible the suffering of the innocent; to soothe pain; to give assistance in overcoming mental suffering. These are obligations both in justice and in love, and they are included among the fundamental requirements of the Christian life and every truly human life. (SS 36)

Though we do all that we can to reduce suffering around us, the pope reminds us that eliminating it altogether is something that is outside of our power:

This is simply because we are unable to shake off our finitude and because none of us is capable of eliminating the power of evil, of sin which, as we plainly see, is a constant source of suffering. Only God is able to do this: only a God who personally enters history by making himself man and suffering within history. (ibid.)

With the Incarnation, the seemingly hopeless situation of suffering has a new light to shine on it, giving new hope that there is an answer to the problem of suffering. But the Holy Father cautions us that this is hope, not yet fulfillment. The very presence of this hope, however dim it may seem at times, gives us the courage to persevere in doing good and trusting that the Lord continues to work toward bringing fulfillment to that hope in the fullness of time.

With the growth of various forms of social media over the past several decades, the world has become more aware of the various forms of suffering that exist in the world around us. It can be incredibly disheartening to see these things, and not a few people have questioned their faith in God, wondering: "How can a good and loving God permit such atrocities?" In fact, many have come to the conclusion that since suffering only seems to increase, the only logical explanation is that God must not be real, or that He simply does not care.

Instead of turning away from God in the face of the mystery of suffering, our faith invites us to turn toward God, knowing that even if a "reason" is not provided, the only satisfactory (and true) answer is to be found by turning to God. As Pope St. John Paul II wrote so beautifully in his document on suffering:

Love is also the fullest source of the answer to the question of the meaning of suffering. This answer has been given by God to man in the Cross of Jesus Christ. (Salvifici Doloris, 13)

This is one of the reasons why I find it helpful to have a crucifix nearby at all times, so that when we feel the weight of suffering, personally or in humanity, we can look to that image with faith and "see" the answer, even as we struggle to understand the mystery.

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 15

7am - Paul and Joann Slaughter
(Dave and Susie)
5:15pm - No Mass

Tuesday, September 16

7am - No Mass
5:15pm - No Mass

Wednesday, September 17

7am - No Mass
5:15pm - No Mass

Thursday, September 18

7am - No Mass
5:15pm - Alice Bates
(Rosemarie Bates)

Friday, September 19

7am - George Jacoby
(Julie Berberet)
5:15pm - John and Edith Bakalar
(John Busciacco)

Saturday, September 20

8am - Tom McGee
(McGee Family)
4pm - Richard Dhabalt
(Vicki Compton)

Sunday, September 21

7am - Mary Ann Midden
(Bill Midden)
10am - Annabella Devlin
(Family)
5pm - For The People



As St. Augustine comments on the Psalms, he will often bring up connected scripture passages and explain them as well. Because of this, though the sermons are called “Expositions of the Psalms,” they could also be seen as great commentaries on a wide swath of scripture outside of the Psalms. He speaks to the meaning of the words in the Psalms, but so often uses his sermon as a means to teach whatever else happens to be on his mind.

We would call this a tangent nowadays, but for St. Augustine it was an effective rhetorical teaching device. People expected him to preach for a long time, and so filling that time by

teaching on more than just the “assigned” psalm gave him a lot of leeway to flesh out the deeper meanings of the lines in the psalms and their connection to the rest of scripture.

In his commentary on Psalm 37, he engages in this sort of “tangent” to speak of St. Paul’s famous injunction, “Pray without ceasing.” St. Augustine recognizes that we can’t constantly be saying and thinking words to God. He recognized that people sang psalms while they worked and tried to pray often, but “without ceasing” seemed to be (and is!) humanly impossible - if, that is, you are thinking of prayer simply as speaking words to God.

But St. Augustine would have agreed with St. John Damascene who defined prayer as “the raising of one’s mind and heart to God.” (CCC 2559). St. Augustine focused on the desire of the heart in addition to the words spoken. Yes, we need to speak words to God - we need to make a sacrifice of time to pray with words. But, we can’t do that without ceasing. What we can do without ceasing is to desire God and his peace.

St. Augustine writes:

“Let your desire to be before [God], and there your Father, who sees in secret, will reward you. This very desire is your prayer, and if your desire is continuous, your prayer is continuous. The apostle meant what he said, Pray without ceasing (1 Thes 5:17).”

For Augustine, this “desire” is nearly synonymous with “charity.” We desire what we love and vice versa. While charity may spring forth in holy activity, it comes out of a desire of the heart.

He thus continues, “The chilling of charity is the silence of the heart; the blazing of charity is the heart’s clamor. If your charity abides all the time, you are crying out all the time; if you are crying out all the time, you are desiring all the time; and if you are desiring, you are remembering rest” (Expositions of the Psalms, 37.14. Translated by Maria Boulding).

In this vein, the charity that dwells in our heart by grace, and overflows into actions of love of God and neighbor, is a real desire for the life of God. As we desire that heavenly life, and journey toward it in Christian discipleship, we are interiorly praying with a prayer of desire. This interior desire sets aflame the words of prayer that we pray and makes our acts of charity be in accord with God’s holy will.

Father, send us your Holy Spirit. Draw us close to your Son. Give light to our minds and lead us in your paths. Help us desire what you desire, and above all, to desire you. Come, Holy Spirit, set us on fire with your love - set us on fire with desire for God!

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

September 6th & 7th

Envelopes:	\$4,635.00
Loose:	\$2,222.00
Maintenance:	\$959.00
Total:	\$7,816.00

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 SEPTEMBER 15

<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		Men's Bible Study 6:00 AM School Library	Women's Bible Study 10:00 AM, 1:00 PM, & 6:00 PM School Library	Rosary 4:45 PM Church	K of C Scholarship Dinner 6:00 PM Atrium	50 Year Anniversary Mass 2:00 PM Church
Spanish Bible Study 6:00 PM School Library		Rosary 4:45 PM Church	Adoration 4:00 PM Church			
		Cathedral Bible Study 6:00 PM School Library	Vatican II Adult Faith Formation 7:00 PM Atrium			
		Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM Choir Room				

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



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.

"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 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!

The Cross is Not Negotiable

"Holiness isn't for wimps," Mother Angelica famously said. "And the cross isn't negotiable, sweetheart — it's a requirement."

I love Mother Angelica, and I love this quote. Following God is tough, and to do it you have to make a decision to be tough, to endure tough things — and ultimately, to love the toughness of it all, because within that struggle God meets us with mercy and salvation.

But in light of today's readings, I think Mother Angelica would forgive me for tweaking her words a tiny bit.

Holiness is for wimps, because the cross isn't negotiable.

When the unfaithful among the Israelites were bitten by the serpents, they were healed by looking upon the instrument of their suffering: the serpent itself, mounted on Moses' staff. With a literary flourish that puts Homer and Shakespeare to shame, God inverts that primitive symbol. To heal us, he invites us to look upon the cross — the sacrifice which achieved our redemption.

Jesus came here to die on that cross for us. For the wimps. Because we couldn't do it ourselves, even if we tried. We couldn't right all of our wrongs, not if we had a million years to do it. We would keep screwing it up. We would keep failing. We're wimps; that's what we do.

But the cross — the cross is a magnificent invitation to something more. Divinity Himself, assuming the cloak of flesh and the weight of sin, so that when we look at the cross we might recognize ourselves. So that we might see what we have been, what we are, what we could be.

And none of it is negotiable.

Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman
©LPi

Around the Diocese

- **Catholic Charities Mobile Food Pantry** reaches out to feed disadvantaged people facing poverty in rural communities across our 28-county diocese. Our 7 Mobile Food Pantry trucks deliver meat, fresh produce, dairy and nonperishable food items all year long to those in need. We humbly ask you to consider a gift to help us continue to feed God's children through our mission to "extend to all the healing and empowering presence of Jesus." Every gift you give, no matter how small, makes a difference. Donate today at: https://cc.dio.org/ways_to_give/donate
- **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/exdi2Jyrbpo3zNrC7> 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.