

Cathedral OF THE *Immaculate Conception*

SEPTEMBER 21, 2025 | TWENTY-FIFTH 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 38

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



Turning into Suffering

A few years ago, I heard a story about how bison on the Great Plains react to storms. Unlike cattle who tend to turn away from the storm in hopes of avoiding it, bison turn into the storm and face it head on, literally. The claim is that by doing so, they minimize the impact the storm will have on them and they get through it faster. For those animals that turn away from a storm in hoping to avoid it, the storm often catches up to them and they spend more time in the storm. I do not really have a way of verifying this as a fact, though I have heard it in different presentations, but even if it cannot be proven as fact, the principle applies and it provides a helpful lesson for how we face storms in our lives as Christians.

In the next paragraph of *Spe salvi*, Pope Benedict reflects on how tempting it is for us to run from suffering when it comes, to do everything that we can do avoid it in our lives. By doing so, however, we find ourselves often worse off than if we had not turned into the suffering. The Holy Father explains:

It is when we attempt to avoid suffering by withdrawing from anything that might involve hurt, when we try to spare ourselves the effort and pain of pursuing truth, love, and goodness, that we drift into a life of emptiness, in which there may be almost no pain, but the dark sensation of meaninglessness and abandonment is all the greater. (SS 37)

Instead, like bison about to encounter a storm, we should not flee in fear, but turn into the suffering:

It is not by sidestepping or fleeing from suffering that we are healed, but rather by our capacity for accepting it, maturing through it and finding meaning through union with Christ, who suffered with infinite love. (ibid.)

As a way of demonstrating this, the pope quotes a rather lengthy account from the Vietnamese martyr Paul Le-Bao-Tinh († 1857) who suffered imprisonment and torture in a condition the martyr described as “a true image of everlasting Hell.” It is well worth going to this paragraph and reading it to see the remarkable effect of turning into suffering with faith in Jesus Christ.

I will quote what Pope Benedict writes as he reflects on this inspiring quote, words which I find extremely fruitful for our reflection when faced with suffering:

This is indeed a letter from Hell, but it also reveals the truth of the Psalm text: “If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I sink to the nether world, you are present there ... If I say, ‘Surely the darkness shall hide me, and night shall be my light’ —for you darkness itself is not dark, and night shines as the day; darkness and light are the same” (Ps 139 [138]:8-12; cf. also Ps 23 [22]:4). Christ descended into “Hell” and is therefore close to those cast into it, transforming their darkness into light. (ibid.)

By God’s Providence, I was recently praying with Psalm 139 and was struck by that same line, alternately translated as: “even darkness is not dark for you and the night is as clear as the day.” (Ps. 139:12) This is one of the great gifts of the Psalms, as they provide ready responses to pretty much every human emotion that we face. Therefore, when we are confronted with the storm of suffering in our lives, we can turn toward it, and call upon the Lord, reciting those words, and asking Him to be our light to guide us through the darkness and pass safely to the other side with the gracious assistance of His protecting grace.

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 22

7am - Grover Gaston
(Gregory and Marie Fleck)
5:15pm - Shirley Logan
(Lisa Logan & Lori Logan Motyka)

Tuesday, September 23

7am - James Kulavic Jr.
(Lou Ann Mack & Carl Corrigan)
5:15pm - Woody Woodhull
(Betsy Hemann)

Wednesday, September 24

7am - Mary Ratna Kumari
(Family)
5:15pm - Tricia McCoy
(Vicki Compton)

Thursday, September 25

7am - Judith Ansell
(Kelly and Elena Delaney)
5:15pm - Intention for Doris
(D. A. Drago)

Friday, September 26

7am - Brother Francis Skube
(Friend)
5:15pm - Thanks For Many Blessings
(Richard and Kay King)

Saturday, September 27

8am - Helen Gaupel
(Julie Berberet)
4pm - Deceased Members of DuBeck
and Ohl Families (Angela Ohl Marsters)

Sunday, September 28

7am - Catherine Fitzgerald
(Family)
10am - For The People
5pm - Mercedes and Charles Nesbitt
(Kathy Frank)



I find it difficult to choose one of the Psalms as a “favorite” - mostly because I have found so many of them to be undeniably powerful and meaningful at different times in my life. If I did have to choose, however, one that would be very near the top of my list is Psalm 45 - a song about the marriage of the King. I love it because of its bold and tender imagery. The first half of the Psalm is bold in its description of a very powerful king, who, if he is not God himself, is at least very God-like. The second half, on the other hand, tenderly describes how the young maiden chosen to be the spouse of the king prepares herself to “enter the palace of the king” (15).

Unsurprisingly, as St. Augustine interprets this marriage-themed Psalm, he reads it in light of the marriage that God desires to have with humanity. All through the Old Testament are hints, prophecies, and outright statements of the nearly unbelievable truth that God desires such a close and intimate relationship with his people that we would call it a “marriage.” For example, we read in Isaiah, “As a young man marries a virgin, your Builder shall marry you; and as a bridegroom rejoices in his bride so shall your God rejoice in you” (62:4-5). This prophecy is fulfilled most completely in Jesus, who comes to make us one with him. The Church becomes his body and we can be said, mystically, to have a “one-flesh” union with him: He is our head, we are his members.

In the tender second half of Psalm 45, the young woman is told that the King desires her beauty. St. Augustine comments on this verse:

“For the king has desired your beauty. ... But who is this king? He is your God. See now how right it is for you to abandon that other father, and that other nation that was yours, and come to this King who is your God. He is your God and your King, your King and your Bridegroom. The King you are marrying is God; he provides you with your portion, by him you are adorned, by him redeemed, by him healed. Whatever you have in you that can please him, you have as his gift” (Expositions of the Psalms, 44.26. Translated by Maria Boulding).

So, in a very beautiful way, for St. Augustine and for so many Christians who read and pray this Psalm in a Christian light, the King is God - Jesus Christ our Lord. And you and I as members of the body of Christ are the bride, because the Church is the bride of Christ. Jesus desires your beauty, and that beauty is what he has created in you by redeeming you and washing you clean from your sins. Your clean soul is a beautiful soul, a fitting place for God to dwell.

I would highly encourage you to pray Psalm 45 with this reality in mind. Although the original human author would not have been thinking of Jesus as the King, the Holy Spirit certainly had our Lord in mind when he inspired this Psalm. Similarly, the human author of the Psalm would not have known the bride to be the Church, but the Holy Spirit knew. We can, therefore, recognize that the King in the Psalm can be read as Christ himself and the bride is the Church. You are the beloved one of God, you are beautifully clothed in gold when you are sacramentally washed by his blood. When you reach heaven, you will enter his palace to live with him forever.

O Jesus, beloved of my soul, draw me close to you. You desire my beauty - make me beautiful by freeing me from my sins! Amen.

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 13th & 14th

Envelopes:	\$3,384.84
Loose:	\$3,107.57
Maintenance:	\$122.00
Total:	\$6,614.41

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

Ulysses Sherwood Brant
Child of Andrew & Lydia Brant
Baptized on September 14, 2025

Joel Parada & Giselle Parada
Children of Juan Carlos & Victoria Gonzalez
Baptized on September 14, 2025

WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 22

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	Rosary 4:45 PM Church		Family of Faith 6:00 PM Atrium
Spanish Bible Study 6:00 PM School Library	OCIA 6:00 PM School Library	Rosary 4:45 PM Church	Adoration 4:00 PM Church			
		Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM Choir Room	CCCW Meeting 6:00 PM School Hall			
			K of C Meeting 6:00 PM School Classroom			

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 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



CHANTICLEER

SATURDAY
OCTOBER 4, 2025
7:00 PM

Chanticleer Concert at the Cathedral

The GRAMMY® Award-winning vocal ensemble Chanticleer is known around the world as “an orchestra of voices” for its wide-ranging repertoire and dazzling virtuosity, and will be performing at the Cathedral on Saturday, October 4, at 7:00 PM! Seating is General Admission, \$20 Adult Tickets, \$10 Student Tickets. Tickets are available for purchase online here: <https://dio.ccbchurch.com/goto/forms/364/responses/new> For more information on Chanticleer, visit www.chanticleer.org.



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



Holy Hour in Memory of Pregnancy & Infant Loss

The month of October has been designated Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Month in the United States. The Church calls children "the supreme gift of marriage" (Gaudium et spes, n. 50). Losing a baby, whether through miscarriage or as an infant, is one of the deepest forms of grief and pain that a couple may endure. Unfortunately, many couples often suffer without any support, as in the case when a couple loses a child before sharing that they were pregnant with others, or insufficient support because family and friends are unsure of what to say or do because of the difficulty and often suddenness of losing one so young. The Cathedral will be hosting a Holy Hour on Thursday, October 16 at 7 pm to offer prayerful support to anybody who has been affected by one of these tragic losses.

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 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!

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.

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.



CANDLELIGHT VIGIL & HOLY HOUR IN MEMORY OF

*Pregnancy & Infant Loss
Awareness Month*

7:00 PM
OCTOBER 16, 2025

Soctober Collection

It's that time of year again - SOCTOBER! The Ladies of the CCCW will once again collect new and gently used (include only those you would accept for your own family) socks, hats, and gloves. These items are shared with agencies serving homeless or at risk families and individuals of all ages who are in need. White baskets will be in the Atrium throughout the month of October for your donations. Thank you for your willingness to serve our most vulnerable brothers & sisters!

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...

- **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.

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!

Baby Bottle Boomerang

It's time again for the Baby Bottle Boomerang in support of First Step Women's Center. On your way out of the church grab a bottle. Over the next few weeks fill it up with cash and checks and change and return it to the Cathedral by the end of the month. First Step provides compassionate, holistic care to women who are facing an unintended pregnancy. Thank you for your generosity!

God and Mammon

Dealing with money is unpleasant.

You might be good at dealing with money (I am not). You might even do it for a living (I do not). You might be careful to use as much of your money as you can for good purposes (I try to, but man, these skyrocketing grocery prices are killing me).

But ultimately, money does not bring out the best in us. We waste it. We manipulate it. We hoard it. We become obsessed by it. We let pursuit of it define our decisions. Money is something akin to — it corrupts by touch, it seems. But unlike witchcraft, you can't avoid money altogether. It's necessary. These dollars and cents keep us alive in this world, for a time. We need them for food, for warmth, for health.

Jesus' parable of the untrustworthy steward sums up all our anxieties surrounding material wealth and the delicate balance we have to strike of caring for our physical needs while prioritizing our spiritual ones. But the parable reminds us that we can't escape money, just like we can't escape the world and all the barriers forged by this world between man and the happiness his Creator intends for him. We could retreat to the highest, remotest mountaintop, but the human condition would follow us there.

We would still feel doubt. We would still feel pain. We would still feel fear. We would still sin.

And we would still be hungry and cold. We would still need money.

Money will never be something that is easy to handle virtuously. But guess what? Nothing in this world is. And it's probably best that we remember that.

Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman
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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
- **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.