

Cathedral OF THE *Immaculate Conception*

OCTOBER 5, 2025 | TWENTY-SEVENTH 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 40

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



Worth the Suffering?

As he continues to reflect on the theme of suffering with and for others, noting how important this is to the good of humanity, Pope Benedict poses the following questions we would all do well to consider regarding our willingness to suffer:

Yet once again the question arises: are we capable of this? Is the other important enough to warrant my becoming, on his account, a person who suffers? Does truth matter to me enough to make suffering worthwhile? Is the promise of love so great that it justifies the gift of myself? (SS 39)

Theoretically speaking, we know that the answer should be 'yes' to all of these questions. Yet when, in reality, we have to make the decision to suffer for another, for truth, for love, we can sometimes hesitate. We calculate the cost of extending ourselves, we consider the possible pain we might experience, the rejection that we might experience, the disappointment we might experience. The fear of how our offering ourselves might be received sometimes results in our turning back in on ourselves and deciding not to subject ourselves to possible suffering after all.

To help us in addressing those fears, the Holy Father directs our attention to Jesus Christ, who in becoming one of us, entered into the experience of suffering and in so doing, offers us hope and encouragement. The pope explains:

Man is worth so much to God that He himself became man in order to suffer with man in an utterly real way—in flesh and blood—as is revealed to us in the account of Jesus's Passion. Hence in all human suffering we are joined by one who experiences and carries that suffering with us; hence con-solatio is present in all suffering, the consolation of God's compassionate love—and so the star of hope rises. (ibid.)

As I wrote about in my previous article, knowing that somebody is with us in our suffering gives us courage, for the pain of isolation is one of the greatest pains in suffering. Though the physical pain may not be removed, the emotional pain is often lessened significantly when someone is there by our side.

It is helpful to recall the Lord's presence with us in any form of suffering we encounter, whether it be our own suffering, or the suffering we bear with and for others when we choose to love them. This is one of the reasons why I always keep a small crucifix in my pocket. When I begin to feel the pangs of suffering, I can just reach into my pocket and feel that crucifix and be reminded that He is with me in this suffering, that I am not alone. It also serves as a reminder that when I choose to enter into the suffering of another person, whether it be visiting a sick person in the hospital, listening to them as they share their sorrow for sin in the confessional, or when delivering a hard truth that may not be received so willingly, I am reminded that the Lord is extending His arms to embrace both of us – the one suffering, and me as I share in their suffering.

The pope concludes his reflection in this section by mentioning the example of the saints who in so many ways embraced suffering – sometimes heroically, even to the point of death – and now enjoy the peace of eternal life in Heaven, the fulfilment of the hope that kept them from fleeing from suffering, but leaning into it with love for God and for others. May their witness encourage us to do likewise, and so become witnesses ourselves to a world that is in desperate need of such witnesses.

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, October 6

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

Tuesday, October 7

7am - Michael Poggi
(Family)
5:15pm - Karen Bucari
(Alan Bucari)

Wednesday, October 8

7am - Rev Msgr James O'Shea
(McGee Family)
5:15pm - Veronica DeRosa
(Bentel Family)

Thursday, October 9

7am - Barbara K. McGee
(McGee Family)
5:15pm - Woody Woodhull
(Karen Johnson)

Friday, October 10

7am - Judith Ansell
(Rebecca Cole)
5:15pm - Intention for Bianca
(DA Drago)

Saturday, October 11

8am - Armando Chiaradonna
(Geny Chiaradonna)
4pm - For The People

Sunday, October 12

7am - Mary Ann Midden
(Bill Midden)
10am - Dcn Jerry Cato
(Dcn Larry and Bev Smith)
5pm - Betty Rogers
(Family)



I have always loved to read, and back when I was in high school, I loved to read very large books. I think I enjoyed the challenge that a thick tome presented, and also a story that didn't just end right away. I would read fantasy, science fiction, historical fiction, adventure, fairy tales, and even saint stories. Reading was how I found my Confirmation saint, St. Thomas Aquinas. Reading was how I grew to love writing and it has been a great conversation starter over the years. Reading has also been one of the primary ways God has chosen to work in my life. By the grace of God, a book fell into my hands when I was seventeen that not only satisfied me for its size but also changed the way I thought about God.

This book was the spiritual diary of St. Faustina Kowalska - a big red book I found one day as I was looking for something to read. Looking back, I don't exactly know why I enjoyed it at that age. Still, the way that St. Faustina wrote about her experience of the Mass, her time before the tabernacle, her discernment of her vocation, and especially her experience of confession made me re-think all of those things myself. I think it was one of the first times I really understood how these sacraments and parts of a life of prayer can be a real and tangible means of actually drawing closer to God.

I also needed her message of mercy. As St. Faustina writes in one of the most often quoted passages of the diary, Jesus says to her, "proclaim that mercy is the greatest attribute of God. All the works of my hands are crowned with mercy" (300). I needed to hear that God would love me and any sinner no matter what I ever did, and that the door to his mercy was wide open in the sacrament of reconciliation. I needed to hear how real his presence in the Eucharist was and how his presence in the host at Mass is a gift from his merciful heart. He is there and he pours out love from there, from his wounded heart.

I bring this up today because if today, October 5, weren't a Sunday, it would be the feast day of St. Faustina. Her message of mercy was nothing new, but it was God's timely reminder to the world to turn back to him. While we're on earth there is always time to turn back to him. Plus, once we have received his mercy, our task becomes that of helping others draw near to God's mercy also.

I think most Catholics have had the thought after Confession - "If the world ends now, that would be ok" - said with a grin. We recognize that the more time we have here on earth, the more time there is to mess up! But, seen in another light, the more time we have on earth, the more time we have to seek God's mercy. Time is one of God's greatest gifts. As St. Augustine comments on a passage from Psalm 60, he counsels us, "Don't try to chop down the bridge of mercy after you have crossed over yourself. Let it remain in place forever" (Expositions of the Psalms, 60.6) This "bridge" is the time we have left on earth.

While we have the time, we can enter the door of the confessional, we can receive that mercy, God's greatest attribute. We turn to St. Faustina today and ask her intercession to help us never fear the "size" of our sins or the love of God. Pray for us today, St. Faustina, and pray for all those in need of God's mercy!

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 27th & 28th

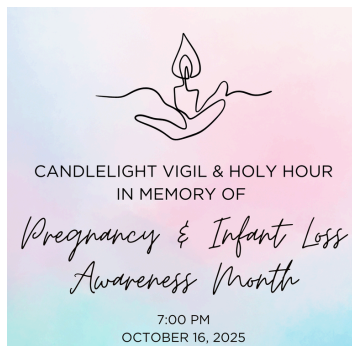
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|--------------|------------|
| Envelopes: | \$4,460.00 |
| Loose: | \$2,728.00 |
| Maintenance: | \$150.00 |
| Total: | \$7,338.00 |

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 OCTOBER 6

| <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 Spanish Bible Study 6:00 PM School Library | Adoration 4:00 PM Church | Men's Bible Study 6:00 AM School Library Rosary 4:45 PM Church Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM Choir Room | Adoration 4:00 PM Church Women's Bible Study 6:00 PM School Library | Rosary 4:45 PM Church | | |

What's Going on Around the Cathedral?



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.



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



**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



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!

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 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!

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!

All Soul's Day Remembrance

The Church has encouraged prayer for the dead from the earliest times as an act of Christian charity. A special Mass of Remembrance will be offered at 7:00 pm, Monday, November 3, at the Cathedral, devoted to remembering and praying for those who have died during the past year as well as praying for the consolation of the family members who survive and grieve. Please call the parish office at 217-522-3342 if you would like attend and remember a loved one who has died during the past year. We will have a candle prepared and provide you with instructions for lighting the candle during the Mass of Remembrance.

Eternal Rest: The Art of Dying Well

We all have very real questions about death. What happens when we die? What does Scripture teach about death? How do we prepare for the life to come? Explore the mystery of death, dying, and everlasting life through Eternal Rest, with Cathedral Women's Bible Study groups. Eternal Rest examines the origin of death, the afterlife, and the powerful reality around the sacrament that ushers us into eternal life. Eternal Rest presents the Catholic Church's teaching about death and God's response to it with wisdom and truth, gentleness and compassion, so we can think about and prepare for death in the light of Jesus Christ, the Author of life. Contact Vicki to reserve your place and order a workbook, \$13. vcompton@cathedral.dio.org or 217/522-3342
Thursdays, October 9, 16, 23, 30 @ 10:00am or 1:00pm in the Cathedral School Library

World Mission Month: A Call to Hope

Each October, the Church invites us to rediscover our missionary vocation. This year, Pope Leo XIV, following the inspiration of Pope Francis, calls us to become "Missionaries of Hope Among the Peoples," inspired by St. Paul's words: "Hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit" (Rom 5:5). In the 50th anniversary year of Evangelii Nuntiandi, we are reminded that "modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers" (41). Through prayer, sacrifice, and giving, we too become witnesses—bringing the hope of Christ to those who long for love, justice, and peace. Let us begin this month with open hearts, ready to respond to the Church's call to support the 1,124 mission territories where the Church is young, growing, and often persecuted. Together, may we be bearers of hope where it is needed most.

Knights of Columbus Upcoming Events

Putting Christ at the center of our lives through Charity, Unity and Fraternity.

- **October 18** - Men's Leadership Summit All men, not just Knights, are invited to a day-long conference at St. Boniface in Edwardsville. Deadline has been extended to October 10. Details are on our council website.
- **October 23** - Council Open House and Membership Meeting Learn about the benefits of membership in the Knights of Columbus as we welcome our Assistant General Agent Shaun Moore for a presentation about various insurance and investment products available for members and their families. All are welcome to join us at 7 PM on the first floor of the school.
- **November 20** - Annual Memorial Mass for Deceased Members We pray for those who have gone before us in faith at the 5:15 Mass.

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.

T-Shirt Fundraiser - Sacred Heart in Virden

Celebrate the canonization of St. Pier Giorgio Frassati and St. Carlo Acutis and support diocesan vocations! 100% of profits from sales will support vocations to the priesthood in our diocese! Art by Fr. Daniel McGrath! 100% Cotton Navy T-shirts (Gildan – Heavy Cotton T-shirt, Unisex) Fundraiser hosted by Sacred Heart Church in Virden, IL. For questions, contact the parish office at secretary@sacredheart.dio.org or 217-965-4545. To order, visit www.sacredheartvirden.com

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!

The Father Who Knows What You Want

It's easy to give your kid what he's asking for. It's hard to give him what he wants.

If a kid asks to eat an ice cream cone, there's nothing wrong with giving him one. But if he's grumpily demanding an ice cream cone at 7:45 in the morning, what he wants — whether he realizes it or not — is some protein and whole grains and a little encouragement to get him going on his day.

So you give him eggs and toast, and you watch him struggle to accept it. Sometimes he does and sometimes he doesn't, but either way, you'll be here. You'll forgive him for whatever names he calls you and you'll put the healthy breakfast in the fridge, waiting for him when he's ready to eat it.

"Increase my faith." I've said it to God plenty of times, imagining a prayer life that is effortless and a sacramental life that is uncomplicated, an acceptance of truth that is unshakeable. Easy faith — that's what I'm asking for, and lots of it, please.

But easy faith isn't faith at all, and faith that you aren't strong enough to hold will break your arms. And what God will never do is say, "Sure, kiddo, here you go," and pass off a false gift as the real thing, just to make us both feel good. He won't hand me something I'm not strong enough to hold.

That would be a classic lazy-father move. That would be an ice-cream-cone-at-7:45 a.m. move.

Instead, He watches carefully while I navigate the bumpy terrain of the spiritual life, ready to whisper directions in my ear. He holds his breath while the challenges of this world create deep grooves in my soul — and then He irrigates those grooves with the life-giving waters of grace, transforming them into valleys of consolation and respite.

Sometimes I call Him names. Sometimes I refuse what He's offering. It's not what I asked for, after all.

But it's what I want. Luckily, He knows that better than me

Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman
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Around the Diocese

- **Legion of Mary Rosary Rally**, October 11, 2025, 1:00 p.m. Christ the King Church
- **Men's Leadership Summit in Edwardsville**, Saturday, October 18th at St. Boniface Church in Edwardsville (110 N Buchanan St), 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. 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.
- **Red Mass for Legal Professionals**, Sunday, October 26, 2025, at 10:15am at St. Boniface, 110 N. Buchanan St., Edwardsville. Bishop Thomas John Paprocki and Chief Judge Christopher P. Threlkeld invite all legal professionals and their families. Judges are invited to join the entrance procession in judicial robes. Brunch follows Mass at Bella Milano with Keynote speaker: Darren Price, Esq. RSVP by October 18 to Sarah Kreke: skreke@st-boniface.com or 618-656-6450.
- **WIN \$100,000 with the SHG MEGA RAFFLE!** Tickets are on sale NOW! Purchase your ticket(s) at SHG.org. Early bird drawing is on Friday, October 24, and final drawing is on Friday, October 31. Thank you in advance for your support of SHG!
- **Springfield Deanery, Council of Catholic Women Meeting**, Saturday, November 8th, 10 am, St. Peter's, Petersburg, IL. Speakers: Gina Gillmore-Wolter, on Saving New Salem, And Mary Stewart, on Pastoral Council and Subcommittees. Lunch provided by the St Peter's Ladies Group, donations appreciated! Deadline to RSVP is October 31st! Contact Mary Stewart at 217-341-7808 for more information. Deborah Pilapil, President, Spfld Deanery CCW. Register for the meeting on Signup Genius! <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C084CACAC2BABFEC43-58907086-springfield>
- **The Letter – A Faith in the Future Event**, Wednesday, November 19 at 5:30 p.m., Mission Outreach Warehouse, 4930 LaVerna Road. Hospital Sisters Mission Outreach is launching Faith in the Future, a series of events that will be focused on Catholic social teaching (care for creation and care of those who are poor or vulnerable) and specifically be geared toward young people in our Diocese who are Catholic or associated with a Catholic entity. We are delighted to invite you to our first Faith in the Future event, which will be a screening of the film The Letter, a movie documenting Pope Francis' invitation to Rome for four young environmentalists. This stunning film not only shares the stories of these advocates, but it also calls all of us to care for the Earth and celebrate the blessing from God that nature is.
- **Treasures of Italy Pilgrimage**, April 13-24, 2026, Hosted by Fr. R. Dean Probst. Visiting Venice, Florence, Assisi, Monopello, Lanciano, San Giovanni Rotondo, Monte Sant'Angelo, Sorrento, Pompeii, Monte Cassino, Rome with Papal Audience. \$5,299 from St. Louis. Contact Fr. Dean 217-494-6326 or rdprobst@gmail.com for more info or brochure.