

Cathedral OF THE *Immaculate Conception*

JANUARY 25, 2026 | 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 8 ISSUE 4

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 VERY 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



United to the Word of God

In 2019, Pope Francis declared that, beginning in 2020, the Third Sunday of Ordinary Time each year was to be observed as the Sunday of the Word of God. In instituting this celebration, the Holy Father noted the importance of the Word of God to our identity as Christians:

The relationship between the Risen Lord, the community of believers and sacred Scripture is essential to our identity as Christians. Without the Lord who opens our minds to them, it is impossible to understand the Scriptures in depth. Yet the contrary is equally true: without the Scriptures, the events of the mission of Jesus and of his Church in this world would remain incomprehensible. Hence, Saint Jerome could rightly claim: "Ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ" (Commentary on the Book of Isaiah, Prologue: PL 24,17B). (Aperuit illis, 1)

As we continue our reflections on the various aspects of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, we acknowledge that what we can say about His heart has been revealed to us through the written Word of God, which enables us to be united more closely with the Word of God, Jesus Christ, who is the second person of the Holy Trinity. It is therefore fitting that we focus our reflection this week on the following invocation from the Litany of the Sacred Heart:

Heart of Jesus, substantially united to the Word of God, have mercy on us.

The use of the word substantial is key. One of the definitions for substantial is to convey that something has a considerable importance, size, or worth. A person who wins the lottery can be considered to have a substantial amount of money. But this is not the definition that is being used here. Rather, substantial in this case conveys that something belongs to the same substance of something, not just its accidents. Those are philosophical terms, and we understand them best when we speak about the Eucharist. After the consecration at Mass, the bread and wine undergo a change of substance. They may look like bread and wine (accidents), but what they really are is the body and blood of Jesus. The substance of the Eucharist, what it is, is Jesus. So too with the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The heart He had as a human being, while being fully human, was also fully divine, so it shares in the very same substance of the heart of the Word of God who has existed from all eternity in a communion of love with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

By extension, the words that Jesus spoke, which are given to us in the Gospels, are not merely human words. Rather, they come forth from that humanity being substantially united with His divinity. According to our Trinitarian theology, every action of God involved all three persons of the Trinity, so every word that we encounter in the Scriptures are not mere human words. Sure, they have been communicated through the instruments of human authors, but God Himself is the source of all. As such, the Word of God that we encounter when reading and listening to the Scriptures is substantially united to God Himself, so that we believe that when we hear His Word, He is truly speaking to us. Since the image of the heart connotes the love of God for us, every word that He speaks to us is from that love, and it is in an invitation to receive it with love, so as to be more fully united to the One who is love.

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, January 26

7am - Jack Ely
5:15pm - Ana Graciela Ortiz

Tuesday, January 27

7am - Emery Mapes
5:15pm - Jack Ely

Wednesday, January 28

7am - Edward Anselment
5:15pm - John A. Sestak

Thursday, January 29

7am - Edna Freeman
5:15pm - David Steele

Friday, January 30

7am - John "Jack" McCarthy
5:15pm - Edziu Dombrowski

Saturday, January 31

8am - Brother Francis Skube
4pm - Deceased Family Members

Sunday, February 1

7am - Mary Ann Midden
10am - For the People
5pm - Don Smargiassi



In St. Paul's letter to the Colossians, we read, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God" (3:16). This command of St. Paul was directed toward those Christians at Colossae, but is a very timely message for every Christian for all time. It is perennially the task of the Christian to allow the Word of God to penetrate ever more deeply into the recesses of the soul. What this looks like is not some abstract "moving and coming" into the depth of the heart, but rather, a changed and transformed life.

When the Word of Christ dwells in us richly, our actions take the mold of the life of Jesus and we begin to look like him. Our thoughts, feelings, and desires take on the shape of the thoughts, feelings, and desires of Jesus himself. We begin to want to serve others in the way he wants us to serve others. We begin to act in the way he acts in the world, and in doing so, we truly become what we are meant to be as "members of his body" (Ephesians 5:30).

This transformation occurs in very concrete ways. When St. Paul calls the Colossians to "let the word of Christ dwell in [them] richly," he isn't simply asking them to think about Jesus coming inside of them. He is asking them to allow the life of Christ to be lived over again in them - in their actions, thoughts, and lives - by intentionally changing their lives.

St. Paul mentions a few of the ways that Christ's own life can begin to be lived in ours. He mentions "psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs" as one of the ways. Praying and singing the Psalms has always been a fundamental way for Christians to take on the mind of Christ. These are the prayers inspired by the Holy Spirit to lead us into the heart of God. Because of that, the more we repeat the words of the Psalms with our voices and in our minds, the more our minds and bodies take on the mind of God. We could say the same about any part of the scriptures, but for reaching the heart and mind of God, the Psalms and canticles of scripture truly hold the pride of place. The repetition of the Psalms teaches us to think like Jesus.

St. Paul also mentions teaching and admonishing one another. As we teach our faith, whether to our children, our peers, our elders, or those entrusted to us, we become more attentive to the truths of our faith. As we admonish those who are doing wrong, it actually causes us to be more attentive to our own moral life. Living the moral life is a primary way that we take the Word of God into our lives and hearts.

Finally, St. Paul counsels the Colossians to let the Word of God dwell in them richly by living in thanksgiving. Gratitude is that attitude of the heart that recognizes that all we have received is a gift, and it becomes a prayer when we recognize that it is a gift from God. This recognition leads us to speak out in prayer, whether out loud or in our hearts, to God himself and thank him. Entering into this relationship with God our Father is a way of joining Jesus in his eternal thanksgiving to the Father for the gift of his very being (an eternal gift in the relations of the Trinity that we share through adoption).

On this Word of God Sunday, we remember that that Word has come and dwelt among us. He teaches us the way to the Father, and he desires to dwell in us richly. We see that this indwelling is no abstract reality, but a very real and concrete transformation of our lives from a life lived outside of a relationship with the Father to one where we begin to think, feel, desire, and act as the Word of God himself does, as a member of his body on earth. May the Lord strengthen us in our union with him, and may he dwell in us ever more richly. 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

January 10th & 11th

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|--------------|------------|
| Envelopes: | \$4,348.00 |
| Loose: | \$3,479.00 |
| Maintenance: | \$170.00 |
| Total: | \$7,997.00 |

January 17th & 18th

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|--------------|------------|
| Envelopes: | \$3,718.00 |
| Loose: | \$2,913.00 |
| Maintenance: | \$140.00 |
| Total: | \$6,771.00 |

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

Peter Joseph Groff

Child of Thomas and Morgan Groff
Baptized on January 10, 2026

Walker Hayes Mason

Child of Connor and Valerie Mason
Baptized on January 14, 2026

Grady Lee & Graham Andrew Denney
Children of Tim & Kylee Denney
Baptized on January 17, 2026

Deaths

Joan T. Forgas

Date of Death: January 2, 2026

WEEK OF JANUARY 26

MONDAY

Rosary
4:45 PM
Church

TUESDAY

Adoration
4:00 PM
Church

WEDNESDAY

Men's Bible
Study
6:00 AM
School Library

Rosary
4:45 PM
Church

Choir Rehearsal
7:00 PM
Choir Room

THURSDAY

Women's Bible
Study
10:00 AM,
1:00 PM, &
6:00 PM
School Library

Adoration
4:00 PM
Church

FRIDAY

Rosary
4:45 PM
Church

SATURDAY

SUNDAY

Family of Faith
& Faith and
Science Series
6:00 PM
Atrium

What's Going on Around the Cathedral?



Cathedral Meal Train

Meal train dates for 2026 are now open! If you are interested in volunteering in this ministry, please visit www.spicathedral.org/cathedral-meal-train/ for available dates. In an effort to allow multiple volunteers to participate in this ministry, we ask all volunteers to limit sign-ups to no more than 4 dates per month. We also ask that meals be delivered to the rectory by 3:00pm on the chosen dates. Entrees should feed 5 to 6 people; sides are welcome, but not necessary, and please, no desserts. Please contact the Parish Office if you have any questions - 217-522-3342. Thank you!

SUNDAY ANNOUNCEMENTS



Diocese of Springfield, IL – Care Manager

Do you have a healthcare background? Do you love your Catholic faith and have a desire to help priests set and meet healthy living goals? Our diocese is seeking applications for a unique, mission-driven position dedicated to providing essential healthcare navigation and support for our clergy. This role does not require hands-on clinical care. Please submit your resume to REC@metacareusa.com

Confirmation with Dr. Brant Pitre

Is Confirmation really necessary if we've been baptized? What is the connection between the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost and the graces bestowed at Confirmation? Why are there different practices in the Church about the proper age to receive Confirmation? How does Confirmation strengthen us to endure persecution as we witness to Jesus? Discover the answers to these questions and more in this Lectio series on the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Cathedral Women's Bible Study, Thursdays at 10:00 and 1:00, 8 weeks starting on Feb 5. Study guide available for purchase at \$26.00.

Second Collection - Church for Latin America

Soon our diocese will take up the Collection for the Church in Latin America. For more than 50 years, this collection has given Catholics in the United States an opportunity to share faith in unity with our brothers and sisters in Christ throughout Latin America and the Caribbean islands. Your support for the Collection for the Church in Latin America helps church leaders throughout Central and South America and the Caribbean to fulfill their mission to preach the Word of God and to awaken a love of Scripture in the hearts of those they serve. Our diocese takes up this collection on the weekend of Jan 31/Feb 1, 2026. Please be generous toward this collection. For more information on the Church in Latin America and the many projects funded by the collection, please visit www.usccb.org/latin-america.

CTK Lenten Bible Study

Join us for a new five-week study called Life Everlasting: Heaven, Hell, Death, and Judgment. In this study, Catholic scholars Dr. Edward Sri and Dr. Jeffrey Morrow will guide us through the Church's teachings on the last things—not to fill us with fear, but to inspire us with hope. Together, we'll discover how living each day in light of eternity gives meaning to our struggles, clarity to our choices, and strength for our journey of faith. This study is designed to fit into your busy schedule, with minimal homework or reading. We will watch a 30 minute video each week, followed by light discussion. Meetings are on Thursday mornings, 9:30 AM to 10:45 AM beginning on Thursday February 19th, through Thursday, March 19th at CTK Parish. Cost of materials is \$20. Registration deadline is Sun 2/2. All are welcome! For more information and to register, please email Kristin Luker at KLuker@LukerDentalCare.com or phone her at 217-341-8753.

Keep Christ in Christmas Poster Winners

Fr. Augustine Tolton Council #16126 would like to congratulate the winners of the "Keep Christ in Christmas" poster competition! Thank you to all the children that submitted posters to help remind us of the true meaning of Christmas. The winning participants have won a \$25 gift card and their posters will move on to the District level competition for the Knights of Columbus.

Kindergarten: Faustina G.

Grades 1-2: William H.

Grades 5-6: Grace W.

Grades 7-8: Evelyn H.

CCCW is Getting Wild with Trivia!!

Join the CCCW for an animal themed trivia night on February 7th, 2026 6pm-10pm in the Cathedral Atrium. Soda, Beer and Wine will be sold, but attendees are encouraged to bring their own snacks. Cash prizes will be awarded for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place. \$10 per person, with 8-10 person teams. Register your team by January 30th by emailing Judith Carstens at jnjarstens5@sbcglobal.net

Sea of Galilee Moments

Young or old, believer or non-believer, rich or poor, healthy or sick: it doesn't matter who we are. It doesn't matter what our life looks like. If we are a human being, if we have a soul, we stand on the shore of a great and powerful sea, a net in our hands and a hunger in our soul.

So what's in the sea? I don't know about yours, but mine is filled with feelings of inadequacy. It's filled with fear and resentment and confusion. It's filled with misplaced pride. It's deep. It's dark. It's well-stocked.

I cast my net, over and over again. What else is there to do? If I draw back a harvest, it can sustain me for days, weeks, maybe even years. The nourishment of the sea can keep away the hunger pangs — for a time. You can survive on fear and resentment and pride if it's all you have. You'll never feel full, and you'll never be strong, but you'll survive on what the world can offer you — so long as you keep coming back to the shore.

This is where Jesus finds us.

If I close my eyes, I can picture the moments exactly, all of them: my Sea of Galilee moments. I could describe them to you — the day, the year, what was happening in my life, what I wanted and what I needed and what gnawing hunger had brought me, once again, limping, crawling back to the shore.

But you wouldn't understand my Sea of Galilee moments, just like I wouldn't understand yours. There is only one who understands, and his is the voice we heard, clear and strong: "Put down the net, and come with me."

Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

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Around the Diocese

- **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
- **Saint Meinrad for the Graduate Theology Program Open House**, Feb 14-15. Tour campus, attend class, pray at liturgy, and meet professors and students. Learn more about our flexible and affordable offerings and register at saintmeinrad.edu/openhouse. All are welcome.
- **SDCCW Lenten Retreat: Heaven Meets Earth - A Journey through the Holy Mass** - February 24-25 at Villa Maria Conference Center on Lake Springfield. Led by retreat director Sr. Margaret Schreiber, OP, PhD, this retreat offers spiritual presentations, prayer, Holy Mass, Confession, fellowship, and time for quiet reflection. All women are welcome—bring your sister, your mom, or a friend. Registration forms with the cost and further information are available at www.dio.org/events. Deadline to register is February 14. For more information, contact Mary Ann Sullivan at 217-822-1928 or Janet Zimmerman at 217-494-4743.
- **Save the Date: Upcoming DCCW Springfield Deanery Meeting**, February 28, 2026, 9am-12pm, Holy Trinity Catholic Hall, Stonington, IL. Stay tuned for more information and details about the event. We look forward to seeing you there!
- **Solemnity of the Annunciation: Women's Faith, Wine, and Chocolate Night** - Women are invited to an evening of fellowship centered on Christ and Our Lady, beginning with Mass at 6 p.m., followed by wine, chocolate, and discussion on womanhood modeled after the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Wednesday, March 25: 5:30 p.m. - 9 p.m. Cost: \$10 Registration Deadline: March 20 Contact: events@dio.org. Register at: dio.org/events