

Cathedral OF THE *Immaculate Conception*

FEBRUARY 15, 2026 | SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME



524 EAST LAWRENCE AVENUE, SPRINGFIELD, IL 62703
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FOUNDED IN 1839 | DEDICATED IN 1928 | BUILT ON FAITH, RENEWED IN HOPE IN 2009

Cathedral Weekly

VOLUME 8 ISSUE 7

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 CHIDOWIE 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.



Our Peace and Our Reconciliation

In just a few days, we will enter the holy season of Lent. Many of us approach Lent with an eager spirit, seen especially by the huge turnout we get at our masses for Ash Wednesday. One would think it is a Holy Day of Obligation (which it is not). I do not think that is the reason why most people come, though. We have an awareness deep down that we need Lent. We approach Lent with a recognition that there are things in our lives where we do not have peace. It might be our relationship with another person, our relationship with ourselves, our relationship with different attachments or bad habits, and at the root of it all, our relationship with the Lord. Therefore, I think we can see Lent as a time where, through the practices of prayer, fasting, and

almsgiving, we have an opportunity to experience reconciliation in those various relationships and so recover the peace that our hearts desire. With that in mind, I have chosen the following invocation from the Litany of the Sacred Heart for our focus this week, and in some ways, for the upcoming season of Lent:

Heart of Jesus, our peace and our reconciliation, have mercy on us

In the Gospel for this Sunday, we continue to hear from the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus offers a more thorough teaching on some of the Ten Commandments. A casual reading of the Decalogue (another name for the Ten Commandments) seems to suggest a list made mainly up of things we should not do. However, as the Catechism of the Catholic Church explains, they “point out the conditions of a life freed from the slavery of sin. The Decalogue is a path of life.” (CCC 2057) They are a path of life because they are all ordered toward something very positive: love, for all of the commandments are summed up as ways in which we love God and our neighbor. When we fail to live that law of love, we experience division which deprives us of peace. Living according to the commandments reverses that.

Perhaps as we prepare for Lent and what practices we want to undertake, spend some time over the next few days thinking about the relationships I mentioned above. Where are we not experiencing peace? Ask the Lord to use whatever your Lenten practices are to be at the service of bringing reconciliation through the Heart of Jesus to those relationships and thus restore peace in your life.

Our Lenten journey is leading us to Easter Sunday, but it must go through Good Friday. On that day, Jesus died on the Cross which makes our reconciliation with God possible, articulated well by St. Paul:

God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we are now justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. Not only so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received our reconciliation. (Rom 5:8-11)

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, February 16

7am - Brother Francis Skube
5:15pm - NO MASS President's Day

Tuesday, February 17

7am - Bill Vogt
5:15pm - John & Edith Bakalar

Wednesday, February 18

7am - Raymond and Eulalia Ohl
12:05pm - Otis Huber
5:15pm - Bill Vogt

Thursday, February 19

7am - Mae Nicoud
12:05pm - Thomas Conway, Sr.
5:15pm - Emery Mapes

Friday, February 20

7am - Sister Annette Embrich ASC
12:05pm - Don Smargiassi
5:15pm - Emma Shafer

Saturday, February 21

8am - Julie Kennedy-Padgett
4pm - Patricia McGuigan-Hubbell

Sunday, February 22

7am - Judith Ansell
10am - Mercedes & Charles Nesbitt
5pm - For the People



ASH WEDNESDAY
FEBRUARY 18

MASS TIMES:
7:00AM
12:05PM
5:15PM

ASHES WILL BE DISTRIBUTED AT
ALL MASSES



The life of St. Francis of Assisi... how might one describe it? It is at the same time a life of gravity and a life of lightness. It is a life of a powerful and influential man but a man powerful only in his extreme weakness. It is a life lived at a particular point in time, but a life affecting all time afterward. It is a life of joy but also of suffering. Francis gave his life to the Lord and Jesus gave it back to him as an adventure to the cross.

In many ways St. Francis is one of the greatest saints who ever lived, to the point of being called an alter Christus - another Christ. He desired in the depth of his being to live the Gospel call of Jesus Christ - the call to poverty, chastity, and obedience. He served the poor, spoke with the rich and powerful, and brought about great reform in the Church through his holiness.

After his death, the order he founded was looking for someone to write his biography and the choice fell to St. Bonaventure. St. Bonaventure took up this task and went on to do research into the life of St. Francis, visiting the places he had been throughout his life. He then wrote a biography that remains a trustworthy source for us today on the life of St. Francis.

This biography is not arranged in perfectly chronological order like most biographies are arranged today. Instead, St. Bonaventure wrote about St. Francis' life using a set of different themes which are somewhat arranged in the order of activities in the life of Francis. In this way, St. Bonaventure opens up the heart of St. Francis and demonstrates the ways in which St. Francis takes on the life of Christ.

As we move forward into this year of St. Francis, I am going to reflect upon one chapter at a time in these bulletin articles. It may take only 15 weeks (the number of chapter), but it may also take more, in case a chapter or two needs more articles to fully enjoy it.

As a prologue to the article series, I reflect briefly on the introduction to the Biography:

I want to lift up an image that St. Bonaventure uses very indirectly to describe the life of St. Francis.

"This, then," St. Bonaventure writes, "is my principal reason for undertaking this task, that I may gather together the accounts of his virtues, his actions and his words - like so many fragments, partly forgotten and partly scattered - although I cannot accomplish this fully, so that they may not be lost (John 6:12) when those who lived with this servant of God die."

In this sentence, St. Bonaventure sets up a comparison between the memories of the life of the man Francis and the leftover fragments of bread and fish in the Gospel account of the multiplication of loaves. I find this fascinating and beautiful! The idea is this - St. Francis put his little self in the hands of God. God brought about a great multiplication of virtue and experiences in the life of Francis that blessed the Church and was truly nutritious food for the Church. After the death of the holy man, it is the job then of St. Bonaventure to collect those fragments left over so that none of it is lost.

I think this is an amazing way to consider a holy life. Would that all of our lives could end with good and holy "fragments left over" in the minds of all our loved ones and in so many others in the world we don't even know. May the Lord bless and increase our efforts at sanctity. May he help us surrender what little we have into his hands so that he can bring about a great harvest in the world!

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

February 7th & 8th

Envelopes:	\$4,770.00
Loose:	\$3,309.00
Maintenance:	\$322.00
Total:	\$8,401.00

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 FEBRUARY 16

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
School Library

Adoration
4:00 PM
Church

FRIDAY

Rosary
4:45 PM
Church

Stations of the
Cross
6 PM
Church

SATURDAY**SUNDAY**

What's Going on Around the Cathedral?



CCCW Lenten Soup Suppers

Join the women of CCCW for Lenten Soup Suppers throughout this season of Lent! The first Lenten Soup Supper will be Wednesday, February 25, beginning at 6pm in the Atrium. Various homemade soups with bread & crackers will be served. All are welcome!

Bereavement Ministry - Grief Share

The Cathedral will be hosting Grief Share, a weekly, faith-based, grief support group. If you, or someone you know, would like help and encouragement after the death of a spouse, child, family member, or friend, please join us beginning Tuesday, March 3, 1:00-2:30pm in the Cathedral School Library. (Enter through the atrium doors off 5th street parking lot) Grief Share runs for 13 weeks, but guests may join the series at any point and can pick up content they missed during the next cycle. For more information go to <https://www.griefshare.org/> or contact Berni Ely @ 899-6637 or jackandberni96@yahoo.com. To register call 217/522-3342 or email Vicki at vcompton@cathedral.dio.org. All adults, of any or no faith background, are welcome!



BEGINNING MARCH 3
AT THE CATHEDRAL



Ending Hunger With CRS Rice Bowl

This Lent, our community will participate in CRS Rice Bowl—connecting our prayers, fasting and almsgiving to encounter God through our global family. We'll meet, pray for and learn from families in Ghana, Guatemala and Timor-Leste who are rising above the challenges of hunger and malnutrition. Pick up your rice bowl from the tables at each door. Then, visit crsricebowl.org/join to share your Lenten prayer Intentions.

Second Collection - Church in Central and Eastern Europe

Years of war in Ukraine have profoundly affected both Ukrainian society and the Church in Ukraine. By donating to this special collection when it is taken up in our diocese- either through a contribution at Mass or through your parish's e-giving platform- you help the Church in Ukraine and more than 25 other countries in Central and Eastern Europe to witness to Christ's mercy, even in the midst of terrible hardship. For more information about the collection and who it supports, visit www.usccb.org/ccee. Thank you for your help to restore the Church and build the future in Central and Eastern Europe.

St Joseph the Worker Parish Mission - Church Fully Alive!

Join St Joseph the Worker Parish in Chatham, IL for on Sunday, March 1 and Monday, March 2 at 6:00 PM for their Parish Mission - Church Fully Alive! What would your life be like if you were more FULLY ALIVE! Lee Roessler is a well-known passionate genuine Christian musician whose charm persuasively invites an audience to find their hope and strength in Christ! Joe Farris an experienced and esteemed public speaker, Joe aims to deliver education, inspiration and entertainment to a variety of audiences.

SDCCW Springfield Deanery Meeting All women are invited to attend the Springfield Deanery, Council of Catholic Women meeting on Saturday, Feb 28th at 9am, at Holy Trinity Parish Hall in Stonington, IL. Chuck Martin, Executive Director of the Christian County Coal Mine Museum in Taylorville, will be our guest speaker. Did you know that the museum has a special display dedicated to daughters of coal miners? Chuck, who is very passionate about the industry, will offer intriguing stories about the first female coal miners and their rich history in central Illinois! The meeting includes: a wonderful breakfast, business meeting, speaker(s), recitation of the Rosary, door prizes, 50/50 raffle, and more! Please contact Janet DeClerck, Christian County Area Rep for the Springfield Deanery at 217-827-9670 by Feb 23rd to register.

Holy Hour for Peace

The Dominican Sisters of Springfield welcome all to join them for a virtual holy hour for peace, 4-5 p.m. Thursday, February 26. They offer this prayer at the request of the bishops of the United States who have asked for prayer before the Blessed Sacrament for the cause of peace in our communities, in our country, and for those suffering persecution anywhere in the world. Please join us in this moment of hope and healing. Access the livestream at springfieldop.org/livestream

Fr. Tolton Council 16126 Knights of Columbus

Following the example of our founder, Blessed Michael McGivney, we are a brotherhood committed to boldly living our faith and serving our families, parishes and communities. Below are some upcoming activities and events hosted by the Fr. Tolton Council based here at the Cathedral parish:

- **February 26** - Council Meeting at 7:00 PM, council chambers, 1st floor school hall
- **March 29** - 5th Sunday Rosary after 10 AM 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, bhubiecomcast.net.

The Carpenter and the Law

My husband and I couldn't believe our luck: our new house had a deck. It was more than a couple of broke millennials had ever dared to dream. Lounging in our patio furniture drinking coffee and watching the cars drive past, we felt like Kennedys at Hyannis Port. We had arrived.

Well, until it started falling apart.

To be fair, my husband knew this was going to happen all along, because he's a person who uses words like "joist" and "weight-bearing" correctly. He took one look at the deck at the open house and knew it wasn't up to code. "We're going to have to reinforce this at some point," he told me. "Whatever!" I replied, daydreaming about twinkle lights and porch parties.

Sure enough, our second summer in the house, he had to rip the rotting surface boards off. The biggest issue was that the joists were too far apart; when we stepped on the boards, they bowed and almost cracked, lacking adequate support beneath. But we weren't going to redo the whole deck — we're not actually Kennedys. We (okay, he) simply ripped the surface boards off, added the necessary joists, and replaced the decking with newer, better, stronger wood.

Simply put, my husband did not come to abolish the deck, but to fulfill it.

The law of Moses was like a good deck, admirably built. You could say "Raqa," your heart filled with anger, and the law didn't break. But that anger treads heavily on boards not adequately supported. Over time, the anger becomes too much to bear. And that board — that law, that heart — it'll break. Just you wait.

And when it does, you'll see why: there wasn't anything beneath, holding it up.

So God sent a Carpenter to reinforce the law. The Carpenter crafted joists from prudence, fortitude, justice and temperance — strong virtues that can withstand a lifetime of battery, if properly maintained.

And the law still holds.

Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

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Around the Diocese

- **St John's Breadline Souper Bowl** - The Souper Bowl fundraiser benefitting Catholic Charities St. John's Breadline will be serving up fresh soups to go. These made-from-scratch soups will be available on Friday, February 20th at the Catholic Pastoral Center circle driveway, 1615 W. Washington Street, Springfield, IL, from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m., or until sold out. The soup options include: chicken noodle soup, vegetable, and steak chili. The suggested donation is \$10 for 32 oz. of soup. All proceeds will benefit the St. John's Breadline. Advanced orders may be placed on our website: <https://cc.dio.org/events/sjb-souper-bowl-spring-2026>.
- **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