

Cathedral OF THE *Immaculate Conception*

MARCH 29, 2026 | PALM SUNDAY OF THE LORD'S PASSION



**524 EAST LAWRENCE AVENUE, SPRINGFIELD, IL 62703
CATHEDRAL PARISH OFFICE: 217-522-3342
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FOUNDED IN 1839 | DEDICATED IN 1928 | BUILT ON FAITH, RENEWED IN HOPE IN 2009

Cathedral Weekly

VOLUME 8 ISSUE 13

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
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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.



Pierced with a Lance

Every year, on both Palm Sunday and Good Friday, we listen to the account of the Lord's Passion. On Palm Sunday, we hear the account from one of the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark or Luke) and on Good Friday, we always hear the account from John's Gospel. Having both accounts is helpful as there are certain details that are unique to each account.

For example, after Peter denies Jesus, Luke alone recounts the words: "And the Lord turned and looked at Peter." (Lk 22:61)

That simple detail has been a source of many hours of meditation for me personally, praying with the power of the gaze of Jesus – His sorrow when I choose against His will, and His delight when I consider His profound love for me.

One detail of the Passion which is only found in John's Passion narrative is the account of the soldier piercing the side of Jesus after He had died on the Cross. Here is what we will hear:

So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and then of the other one who was crucified with Jesus. But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs, but one soldier thrust his lance into his side, and immediately blood and water flowed out. (Jn 19:32-24)

The Church has reflected deeply on this scene, seeing the blood and water as symbols of the sacraments of the Eucharist (blood) and Baptism (water). We can therefore say that the pierced Sacred Heart of Jesus is the source of the sacramental life, and as such, is the source of our ongoing spiritual lives. I have therefore chosen the following invocation from the Litany of the Sacred Heart for this Holy Week:

Heart of Jesus, pierced with a lance, have mercy on us.

During Holy Week, spending time praying with the Crucifix can be a fruitful spiritual exercise. Looking at Jesus hanging on the Cross evokes a variety of emotions. On the one hand, we know that it was our sins that were the cause of His suffering. This certainly fills us with sorrow. But as we gaze upon the wound in His side, we are filled with hope as we recall the gift that comes from this sacrifice – new life for us and the light of hope that scatters our darkness.

In that regard, I share one of my favorite little quotes about the Crucifix, which I first came across many years ago in a Stations of the Cross booklet. The quote has been attributed to St. Bonaventure, and it encourages us to look upon the Crucifix and see in it an invitation to draw close to Jesus in this most powerful image of His love for us:

Behold Jesus crucified! Behold His wounds received for love of YOU! His whole appearance betokens love. His head is bent to kiss you. His arms are extended to embrace you. His heart is open to receive you. Oh what love! Jesus dies on the Cross, to preserve you from eternal death.

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, March 30

7am - Dan Sexson (Sharon Sexson)
12:05pm - Ed Sr. & Emily Riordan (Riordan Family)
5:15pm - Ben Gaston (Gregory and Marie Fleck)

Tuesday, March 31

7am - Andy O'Neill Jr. (Berberet Family)
12:05pm - Alma Dumont (McGrath Family)
5:15pm - NO MASS
6:30pm - Chrism Mass

Wednesday, April 1

7am - Andrew Hoefler (Kehoe Family)
12:05pm - Margaret Vaplon Miller (Eric and Joanna Miller)
5:15pm - Thomas Conway Sr. (Family)

Thursday, April 2

7am - NO MASS
5:15pm - NO MASS
6:30pm - For the Priests (Mass of the Lord's Supper)

Friday, April 3

7am - NO MASS
3pm - Liturgy of the Lord's Passion
5:15pm - NO MASS

Saturday, April 4

8am - NO MASS
4pm - NO MASS
8pm - For the People (Easter Vigil)

Sunday, April 5

7am - Raymond & Eulalia Ohl (Angela Ohl-Marsters)
10am - Betty Rogers (Glen Rogers)
5pm - NO MASS

LENTEN SECOND COLLECTIONS

MARCH 1	CATHOLIC CHARITIES
MARCH 8	HELPING HANDS
MARCH 15	CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES COLLECTION
MARCH 22	CATHEDRAL PARISH STUDENT ASSISTANCE FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION
MARCH 29	ST. MARTIN DE PORRES CENTER
APRIL 3	HOLY LAND
APRIL 5	SEMINARIANS



Holy Simplicity

While St. Francis is perhaps best known nowadays (popularly) for his love of nature and animals, these loves were in large part only accidental. The reason he is a great saint is not because of his earthly loves but because of his undying and tireless love of the Lord, Jesus Christ. He loved the incarnation of the Lord; he loved the nativity, the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus; he loved the Holy Eucharist - Jesus' continued presence here on earth.

These were his great loves, and out of love for the whole past and present life of Jesus Christ, St. Francis loved poverty and simplicity.

What is holy simplicity?

My apologies about this near pun, but we may ask the question, "Is simplicity simply about having fewer things? Is it just about slowing down and taking time to stop and smell the roses?" Based on me asking the questions this way, you've probably guessed that the answer is "no, it's not that," and you would be correct!

Simplicity runs deeper than possessions.

Certainly, in St. Francis' case, his renunciation of worldly possessions gave him a greater ease in his simplicity of life, but his simplicity began before he renounced all worldly possessions. It was something not so much external but internal, and I would argue that this quality of simplicity is something shared by every saint.

St. Francis had no conflicting loves.

St. Francis had no conflicting desires.

He was not complicated.

How could this be?

It could be because he had only one true love and thus only one desire - to love and serve the one he loved. At even this somewhat early stage in his life where he is just beginning the foundation of his religious order and a few men are beginning to join him, he willfully channeled all of his love, strength, and desire to the service of his divine king.

As Francis hears those words from the Gospel that I wrote about last week, he knows he cannot do anything but live in just the same way. St. Bonaventure writes, "He directed all his heart's desire to carry out what he had heard and to conform in every way to the rule of right living given to the apostles" (Quoted from *The Life of St. Francis*, Translated by Ewert Cousin, ch. 3.1). This led him to wear the habit, accept men who wanted to join him, go about preaching and teaching, and to eventually write a first draft of a rule of life for these brothers so that they could live in accord with the Gospel demands.

There was no ulterior motive here. There was solely a desire to live like Jesus and to serve Jesus - to draw others to love Jesus in his life, death, resurrection, and continued living presence in the Eucharist. And this one-ness of mind and heart drew other men to Francis to live in the same way.

You would think that this radical poverty would turn people away, but no! The heart behind the poverty - the desire behind the simplicity - set other hearts on fire!

May we too love with one love, desire with one desire, and so be truly simple. May the Lord bless us this lent, through the intercession of St. Francis, with a renewal of Holy Simplicity!

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

March 21st & March 22nd

Envelopes:	\$4,411.00
Loose:	\$4,509.00
Maintenance:	\$20.00
Total:	\$8,940.00

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 MARCH 30

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Rosary 4:45 PM Church	Adoration 4:00 PM Church Grief Share 1:00 PM School Library Chrism Mass 6:30 PM Church	Men's Bible Study 6:00 AM School Library Rosary 4:45 PM Church Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM Choir Room	Mass of the Lord's Supper 6:30 PM Church Altar of Repose 7:30-11:00PM Atrium	Stations of the Cross 12:05 PM Church Liturgy of the Passion of the Lord 3:00 PM Church	Blessing of the Easter Food 11:00 AM Church Easter Vigil 8:00 PM Church	Easter Sunday Masses 7:00 AM & 10:00 AM Church No 5:00 PM Mass

What's Going on Around the Cathedral?

EASTER TRIDUUM SCHEDULE

Holy Thursday Mass of the
Lord's Supper
6:30pm

The Liturgy of the Lord's Passion
on Good Friday
3:00pm

Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday
8:00pm



EASTER SUNDAY MASSES

7:00 AM
10:00 AM



SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY

DEADLINE TO SUBMIT APPLICATION:
APRIL 30, 2026

CCCW/Knights of Columbus 2026-27 Scholarships

The Cathedral Council of Catholic Women (CCCW) and the Fr. Augustine Tolton Council 16126, Knights of Columbus are pleased to announce that the application period for the 2026-27 academic year scholarships is now open. Scholarships will be awarded and used to offset tuition at a Catholic high School and will be awarded to students who are members of registered active Cathedral parish families. Applications are available as hard copies at the parish office during parish business hours or in the atrium, a PDF of the application form will be available at the Scholarship Application link on the parish website (spicathedral.org), or the application may be completed online. The deadline for submission of completed applications and documents is 11:59 PM on Thursday, April 30, 2026, either online or by hard copy. Hard copy submissions should be placed in a sealed envelope and addressed to CCCW/Knights of Columbus Scholarship Committee and returned to the parish office in the rectory. Thank you for your interest, and good luck to all applicants!

SUNDAY ANNOUNCEMENTS



Called to Share Bread for Life

Holy Week, the heart of the liturgical year, invites us to journey with Christ through his Passion, Death and Resurrection. As we witness the Last Supper and Jesus' gift of the Eucharist, we are reminded of our call to be bread broken for others. Let us draw strength from the Bread of Life and dedicate ourselves to serving our sisters and brothers who bear heavy crosses, bringing hope and resurrection to the world. Visit crrsicebowl.org/holy-week to learn more.

SDCCW Scholarship Opportunity

The SDCCW (Springfield in IL Diocesan Council of Catholic Women) is pleased to give \$2,000 for education beyond high school to four 2026 female high school graduates from the Springfield Diocese in IL who exemplify the SDCCW's mission. The mission of the SDCCW is to support and empower all Catholic women in spirituality, leadership and service. The SDCCW is affiliated with the National Council of Catholic Women (NCCW). Applications are available in the Cathedral Atrium, and must be mailed to the SDCCW Scholarship Program by April 15, 2026. For further questions, please call Rita Devore at 217-821-7517. Thank you!

A Work of Mercy

In an effort to assist our parishioners who have mobility issues, we would like to ask that the parking spaces adjacent to the handicapped spots, be left available for those who have difficulty walking distances. These are the 10 parking spots on the north and south sides of the sidewalk that cuts our parking lot in half. If you are able to walk easily, please do not park in these spots. Thank you!

Caring for the World – April 7

The Catholic Church is the largest non-governmental provider of health care services in the world, with 65% of Catholic health facilities located in low-resource areas globally. Each year, Hospital Sisters Mission Outreach (located in Springfield) supports more than 100 Catholic hospitals and clinics in Africa, Asia, Ukraine, and Central/South America by donating critical medical supplies and equipment. To celebrate World Health Day on April 7, we will honor the life-saving role Catholic health care plays globally at the 5:15 Cathedral Mass and a World Health Fair in the Atrium following Mass. Mission Outreach will be there to show how the work they do is building a healthier world, especially for mothers and babies in need.

Support our parish by giving online

Scan the QR code above to donate online and support our parish. Thank you for your generosity!

I Was Hungry and You Gave Me Food

Holy Family Food Pantry is in great need of macaroni and cheese, pasta, spaghetti sauce and tuna. Pick up a few extra for the food pantry when you are shopping for these Lenten staples for yourself. Drop off your donations in the blue bin in the atrium. THANK YOU!

Grounded in Hope - Cathedral Women's Bible Study

Grounded in Hope, based on the book of Hebrews, will help you encounter Jesus in such a powerful, comforting, and stabilizing way that He can become your lifeline. Grounded in Hope is ideal if you long to know Jesus with greater intimacy and are ready to grow in your trust in Him as your true source of hope. Order your workbook at walkingwithpurpose.com Thursdays starting on April 16 @ 10:00 and 1:00, Cathedral School Library

Attention all seniors...Senior Social

To help shake off the winter woollens and welcome spring you are invited to the launch of Senior Socials, a monthly event connecting area Catholic seniors. Come meet other retired/senior citizens for an afternoon of games, cards, conversation and snacks. We'll supply it all; you can just come as you are! Hope to see you on Wednesday, April 15, 3:00pm-5:00pm in the Cathedral Atrium. Please share this invitation with your senior friends and relatives.

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!



The Humanity of Holy Week

We have all sold Jesus out, at one point or another. Some of us have done it more than once, and we've done it for a lot less than 30 pieces of silver.

We have all denied Christ, and we have done it more than three times and under much less pressure than Peter, who feared for his life when he shouted, "I do not know the man!"

We have all struck the face of God — out of anger? Fear? Confusion? All of the above? — screaming, in agony, "Prophecy for me!"

At one point or another, we have all looked at our Lord beaten and betrayed, and we have all said, as Pilate did: "What shall I do with Jesus called Christ?"

And we have all hung on the cross chosen for us, crying out in bewilderment: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

Holy Week is a week where we see humanity, in all its vulnerability and ignorance. We see it in the "villains" of the piece, like Judas, and in the morally neutral characters like Pilate and the Jews who have been misled about Jesus. We even see it in the "good guys" like Peter.

In this, the holiest week of the year, we see ourselves at our very worst. The chasm between man and his Creator is an ancient one, and it is driven deep and wide — by the pridefulness of Adam and Eve, yes, but also by every poor choice you and I have ever made.

Every "I don't know the man!"

Every "Prophecy!"

Every "What shall I do with Jesus?"

These cries echo forth from the depths of this chasm.

But this week — this Holy Week — a bridge is built across the chasm. And God reaches out His hand.

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Around the Diocese

- **Maintenance Job** - St. Cabrini Parish, 1020 N. Milton, Springfield is looking for a maintenance person experienced in maintaining property and equipment and who is willing to do normal janitorial work, also. Interested persons should call St. Cabrini's Parish office at 217-522-8555.
- **Join Us in Prayer** - Every first Sunday of each month, the Springfield Chapter of the Mother of Eucharist and Grace will be holding their monthly novena in the Blessed Sacrament Adoration chapel from 2:50-3:45. This devotion stemmed from the Blessed Mother's appearance to Carmelo Cortez identifying herself to him as the Mother of Eucharist and Grace. Everyone is welcome to participate. Call Rose Amon at 217-926- 2976 for any questions. We will not be meeting Easter Sunday, April 5th