

Cathedral OF THE *Immaculate Conception*

MAY 31, 2026 | THE SOLEMNITY OF THE MOST HOLY TRINITY



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 22

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.



Infinite Majesty

Having completed the 50 days of the Easter Season with the celebration of Pentecost last Sunday, the Church provides us with three solemnities in short order, sort of as a way of easing us back into Ordinary Time. Today, we celebrate the Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity. Next Sunday, we will celebrate the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ (Corpus Christi). Then on the following Friday after Corpus Christi, we have the Solemnity of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Several years ago, a friend of mine shared with me a little book that had some reflections on the Litany of the Sacred Heart by Pope St. John Paul II. I do not personally have the book, so it can be hard to track down some of those reflections, but I have been able to locate some of them. I came across one brief reflection in which the Holy Father addresses the following image from the Litany of the Sacred Heart:

Heart of Jesus, of infinite majesty, have mercy on us

The reflection comes during an Angelus address that he offered while making a pastoral to Veneto in Italy. In his address, he said the following (translated from Italian to English):

Behold: the infinite majesty of God is hidden in the human heart of the Son of Mary. This Heart is our covenant. This Heart is the closest presence of God to human hearts and to human history. This Heart is God's marvelous "condescension": a human heart that beats with divine life—divine life that beats within a human heart. (Angelus, 16 June 1985)

As he continues his reflection, he explains how it is in the Eucharist that we are given access to His heart, and he uses another image from the Litany, that the Eucharist is the "house of God and gate of Heaven". He then says:

"House": through Eucharistic Communion, the Heart of Jesus extends His dwelling into every human heart. "Gate": in each of these human hearts, He opens the perspective of eternal union with the Most Holy Trinity. (ibid.)

The goal of the Christian life is to live in greater intimacy in the life of the Most Holy Trinity, a gift given to us in Baptism and deepened throughout our lives. We will share the fullness of this intimacy in Heaven. Because we can hear how difficult the Trinity can be to understand, we maybe shy away from thinking of life with the Trinity or perhaps think we need to understand the Trinity in order to access this gift. But the Trinity is not first and foremost about understanding an idea. It is about relationship with God, who is three-in-one, and God is love. So life with the Trinity is about receiving and living in that love of God, which we have access to through the Sacred Heart of Jesus. In that regard, I like to share the following quote which I have used in the past about the topic of the Trinity:

When people tell you that they don't understand the Trinity and Unity, you should reply: I don't understand it either, but I love it and venerate it. If I understood God's greatness, if God fit into this poor head of mine, my God would be very small. And yet, He does fit -- He wants to fit -- in my heart, in the immense depth of my soul, which is immortal. (St. Josemaria Escriva)

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, June 1

7am - NO MASS
5:15pm - NO MASS

Tuesday, June 2

7am - NO MASS
5:15pm - NO MASS

Wednesday, June 3

7am - NO MASS
5:15pm - NO MASS

Thursday, June 4

7am - NO MASS
5:15pm - NO MASS

Friday, June 5

7am - NO MASS
5:15pm - Brother Francis Skube
(Community)

Saturday, June 6

8am - Betty Rogers
(Glen Rogers)
4pm - Veronica DeRosa
(Bentel Family)

Sunday, June 7

7am - Thomas Conway Sr.
(Family)
10am - Don Smargiassi
(Smargiassi Family)
5pm - For the People



In so many gardens around the world, one might find a statue of a man in a long robe, with a tonsure haircut, a bird on his shoulder and several animals at his feet. This man we all recognize as St. Francis of Assisi. For the vast majority of even faithful Catholics in our contemporary Church, this conception of St. Francis is familiar. He is the saint of the animals. If you went to a Catholic grade school you probably remember a pet blessing on October 4 each year.

Hopefully, if you've read any of the articles in this series, you've realized by now that the animal-loving part of St. Francis was only a direct consequence of his deep and abiding love for Jesus Christ, the one who

created the animals. St. Francis loved Jesus, and he loved poverty. His love for Jesus and poverty was lived out, as I covered last week, in an authentic piety - a compassion, care, and love for God and for all those St. Francis met.

The animals, in some supernatural way, responded to the piety of St. Francis. Maybe they saw in him some resemblance to humanity before the sin of Adam and Eve. Maybe they saw in him a resemblance to their own innocence. As even the scriptures note, all creation praises God. These animals praise him essentially automatically, simply by living according to God's design.

Well, St. Francis lived his life as far according to God's design as possible. Every fiber of his being sought to serve the Lord. This was his piety, and it was noticed by the animals.

St. Bonaventure includes so many stories about wild animals like rabbits and birds that came to St. Francis to be near to him. One bird came near and would only leave after St. Francis turned and gave the bird his blessing (Life of St. Francis, 8.8). St. Francis once told a sheep to praise God, and it would enter the Church the brothers were praying in, bow down, and seem to pray (8.7). St. Francis would speak to them calling them, "brother," or "sister," in a loving way, and they responded with something near friendship.

What lesson can we take from this?

It is somewhat difficult, in our current culture, to understand the perspective that St. Francis had toward these animals. Why did he love them? He loved them because they were loved by Christ. He loved them in reference to Christ. And they loved him because of his love for Christ. He didn't simply have a knack with animals. He didn't have a special superpower to commune with nature. No, he lived an active love toward them as a part of God's creation and because of God's love.

It is very common in our culture to idolize our pets and to love our animals inordinately, for their own sakes, and even at times above other human beings. St. Francis' love for animals is actually a very good model for all of us - a model of truly indifferent love for these creatures of God. He did not love the animals simply because they were animals or because of anything they did for him; he loved them because they were loved by God. He did not love them for their own sakes; he saw their place in creation as the servants of God and the servants of human beings.

May St. Francis pray for us that we might be filled with the Holy Spirit's gifts of wisdom and understanding in order to properly see the design of the universe. May he pray that we would be filled with piety, to draw near to our creator with love, affection, and the innocence of the animals!

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

May 23rd & 24th

Envelopes:	\$4,356.00
Loose:	\$4,918.00
Maintenance:	\$65.00
Total:	\$9,339.00

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

Corie Antoinette Dutton
Child of Jesse & Haley Dutton
Baptized on 05/24/2026

Weddings

Christopher Royer & Meagan McNicholas
Married on 05/23/2026



WEEK OF JUNE 1

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	Adoration 4:00 PM Church	Rosary 4:45 PM Church	First Saturday Concert 7:00 PM Church	
Spanish Bible Study 6:00 PM School Library		Rosary 4:45 PM Church	Women' Bible Study 10am & 1pm School Library			
		Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM Choir Room				

What's Going on Around the Cathedral?

Father Brian Alford

will be on the air for the



Radiothon

16 JUNE
1:00 - 2:00 p.m.



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**EMPLOYMENT
OPPORTUNITY**

**COORDINATOR OF
FAITH FORMATION
AND MISSION**

The Cathedral is Hiring a Coordinator of Faith Formation and Mission

The Cathedral is looking to hire a Coordinator of Faith Formation and Mission. This role is a professional catechetical leader responsible for the total religious formation program of the parish for all ages. As a representative of the Rector, the Coordinator implements the parish religious formation program in accordance with the parish Mission Statement and goals, and develops a Parish Catechetical Plan to guide the ongoing work of faith formation. The Coordinator manages program content, volunteers, and budget and coordinates with other parish ministries and activities. 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.



May Food Pantry Needs

Holy Family Food pantry is in need of cereal, jelly and canned meals like stew, pasta, soup. Place donations in the blue bin in the atrium. Thank you for your generosity!

Vatican II Didn't Do What You Think It Did

Vatican II in the 1960's continues to be discussed, implemented, debated, and disagreed upon all these decades later. But did Vatican II really implement changes so many people think it did? The answer is no. Go to youtube.com/diospringfield or search "Dive Deep" on all the major podcast platforms to listen and subscribe. Dive Deep is the podcast of the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois.

First Communion/Confirmation Volunteers Needed

The Diocese welcomes high school volunteers to help at the Cathedral for Sacraments. For Saturday events, arrival time is 9:00 a.m. (although you can help set up at 7:00 a.m.); you will finish by 1:30 p.m. For Tuesday events, arrival time is at 5:00 p.m. (although you can help set up at 3:00 p.m.); you will finish by 9:15 p.m. You must be Safe Environment trained and background checked. There are a variety of dates available, and the sign-up is available here: <https://dio.org/volunteer-to-help-with-sacraments-at-the-cathedral-parishioner/>

Games and Puzzles Needed

Our Senior Socials are looking for 300-piece puzzles, poker chips, dominoes, dice and other games senior citizens might enjoy. If you've got some of these you no longer need, we'd be happy to accept them. Just bring to the Cathedral atrium. Thank you!

K of C Baseball Trip

The Fr. Tolton Council of the Knights of Columbus is planning a day at the ballpark in Peoria to watch the Chiefs in action. The game is June 7th at 2:05 PM and includes an all you can eat buffet, plus soda and water, and great seats, too. Tickets are \$44 per person and transportation is on your own. Friends and family are welcome! Prizes for the first people to register! To place your ticket order visit <https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/peoria-chiefs-day-at-the-ballpark>.

How to Live in the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the most mysterious of the persons of the Trinity, and His work in our lives is not always apparent - for example, can you answer the question, "How am I living out of the gifts given to me at the sacrament of Confirmation?" If you want to know and understand more of what God desires for our relationship with the Holy Spirit, join Fr. Daniel McGrath at 7:00 PM in the Cathedral Atrium after the feast of Pentecost, on June 8, 15, 22, and 29, as we dive into the gifts of the Holy Spirit and the effect of the Holy Spirit on our lives!

The Gift of Not Understanding

I once listened to Bishop Daniel Flores — a renowned scholar and prelate — give a 70-minute talk on the Trinitarian nature of God. In those 70 minutes, Bishop Flores said a lot of eloquent things. But what that really landed with me was not any group of words, but a single gesture.

Defining hypostasis, the term we use for the “the reciprocal dynamic relations that constitute distinct identities within the Godhead” (yes, I am using his words because I could never, in a million years, trust my own) Bishop Flores said “the Father and the Son are true God, but the Father is not the Son, and the Son is not the Father. How not? Different hypostasis.”

And here his eyes grew wide; he turned his head and opened his hands, drawing back as if from a spooked horse. The implication was clear: Any further than this, I dare not go.

I've never felt so seen.

Sometimes, I make the mistake of thinking that I am unique in my inability to understand the great mysteries. Sometimes, I despair that I am not a “better Catholic” — one who will rush headfirst into the crosshairs of a hard question, confident in the words that come immediately to my lips.

But when I saw Bishop Flores flinch at the thought of defining how, exactly, the Son is not the Father, and vice versa, I remembered that only fools rush in where angels fear to tread.

This Sunday, friends, take heart: our failure to understand is not a poverty. It is a gift. It propels us constantly back to the wellspring of our glorious Faith — to Scripture, to Tradition, to the in-dwelling of the Holy Spirit which sustains each and every one of us who dare to believe.

Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

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Around the Diocese

- **Naomi and Ruth Women's Ministry @ St. Agnes, Summer Sundays Book Study.** Sessions 1-3 Sundays June 7, 14, 21; Sessions 4-7 Sundays August 2, 9, 16, 23. 2pm in the Parish Center. Order your book through Amazon or the Parish - Cost \$25/book includes video access. Contact Cathy Becker at St. Agnes for more information - 217-793-1330 or at cbecker@sacsipi.org
- **The Washington Street Mission** is excited to announce that our 2026 Annual Charity Golf Outing will be held on Friday, June 5th at Edgewood Golf Club in Auburn, Illinois. This event will help to raise much needed funds for the Mission. Please feel free to contact me (telephone - 660/349-8095; e-mail - bartowbog1@yahoo.com) if you have any questions or would like to discuss this opportunity further.
- **Summer Immersion Experience 2026**, Single Catholic women ages 20-45 who are curious about religious life are invited to a national service immersion experience hosted by four Dominican Sisters' congregations in Springfield June 16-20. The group will live at Sacred Heart Convent and experience the rhythms of apostolic religious life, which includes community life, prayer, active service, and theological reflection. There is a \$50 participation fee, but no woman will be turned away for lack of funds. Apply soon at springfieldop.org/events or call Sister Denise Glazik, OP, 217-787-0481 for questions.
- **Called and Courageous Women's Conference in Springfield** - Life is full of highs and lows, and it can be hard to see where God is in the middle of it all. At this year's Catholic Women's Conference, discover how to trust God in the messy, real moments of everyday life. Learn how your emotions influence your spiritual life and how to challenge the lies that lead to self-criticism, comparison, and discouragement. You'll leave with practical tools to learn how to recognize God in your daily life, grow in prayer, and live with greater confidence in your identity as a beloved daughter of God. No matter what your season of life - single, married, divorced, widowed, young adult, or retired - you'll find encouragement, community, and hope. When? Saturday, October 10. Christ the King parish Center, Springfield. Women ages 18+. Cost \$30. For the full schedule, speaker information, and registration, visit go.dio.org/cac. Even if you are on the fence about God, remember: God is not on the fence about you. Questions? Contact Gracie Ortiz at gortiz@dio.org or 217-321-1124.