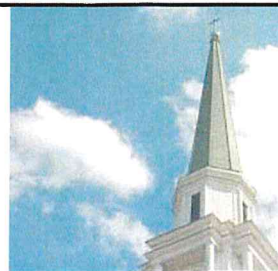


# Saint Aloysius Catholic Church

A Discipleship Parish

## December 21, 2025... Fourth Sunday of Advent



*I wish you all Merry Merry Christmas  
and Grace filled Year 2026!*

Today, we light the fourth candle, which is called the candle of love. The circle is complete. Hope (first candle) brings Peace. Peace (second candle) brings Joy. Joy (third candle) brings Love. The first Christmas happened because "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life" (John 3:16). God loves us first (1 John 4:19).

"God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him" (1 John 4:16). We live in love and in God when we appreciate and reciprocate God's love by sharing his love with fellow human beings. By so doing, Christmas is properly celebrated. Lighting the candle of love is our prayer that love may conquer hate and animosity. May the Advent journey and Christmas celebrations enable us to become channels of God's love. St. Joseph's loving, responsive obedience to God is modeled for us in Matthew's Gospel. This obedience is the central theme of today's readings.

Fr. George Nellikunnel (gnellikunnel@dio.org)	Pastor
Mrs. Denise Reavis	Principal
Mrs. Debbie Mandeville	Parish Administrative Assistant
Mrs. Gail Smith	Business Manager St. Aloysius/St. Cabrini
Mrs. Angie Daniels	School Administrative Assistant
Mr. Rich Pitchford	Maintenance
Mrs. Sarah Williams	Liturgy & Music
Mr. Dave Klestinski	Homebound Ministry
Ms. Mikki Buhl	Ministry Schedule
(mikkimoose@clients.rotundasoftware.com)	

Mass Times: Saturday (vigil) 4:00pm  
Sunday 7:00am & 11:00am  
Holy Days: As announced

Daily Mass: Tues, 8:20am (School Year)  
7:00am (Summer)  
W, Th, 7:00am  
Fri, 6:00pm (Rosary 5:30pm)

Sacrament of Reconciliation: Saturday, 3:30pm

Eucharistic Adoration: Friday, 7:00am - 5:00pm

Parish Office Hours: M - F: 9:00am - 4:00pm  
School Office Hours: M - F: 7:45am - 3:30pm  
2000 E. Sangamon Avenue (mailing address: 2125 N. 21st Street) Springfield, Illinois 62702

Church: (217) 544-4554 Fax: (217) 544-1680  
School: (217) 544-4553 Fax: (217) 544-1680

Today's Gospel, from Matthew, focuses on the person and role of Joseph. For Jesus to fulfill the Messianic prophecy given by Isaiah, Joseph had to, and freely did, accept Jesus as his son. This formal acceptance made Jesus a legal descendant of David because Joseph was a descendant of David. Hence, Matthew makes it clear that Jesus was not the biological child of Joseph. But because Joseph was the husband of Mary at the time Jesus was born, Jesus was legally the son of Joseph and thus a descendant of David.

Like Joseph, we need to trust in God, listen to Him, and be faithful. Although we may face financial problems, job insecurity, tensions in the family and health concerns, let us try to be like St. Joseph, trusting and faithful. Instead of relying on our own schemes to get us through life, let us trust in God and be strengthened by talking to Him in fervent prayer and by listening to Him speaking through the Bible.

We need to experience *Emmanuel* in our lives. Let us take some time to welcome the Christ Child into our hearts and lives this week, so that God may change our world of miseries with the beauty of that love. Do we have any gift for our "Birthday Boy?" Let us check to see if Jesus is on our list this Christmas and if we have a special gift in mind for him. A heart filled with love for God and our fellow-human beings is the birthday gift which Jesus really wants from us. Hence, let us prepare our heart for Jesus, filling it with love, mercy, compassion and forgiveness on this Christmas and every day of our lives.

Thank you for your prayers and generous support for our parishes.

Fr. George Nellikuinnel, Pastor  
St Aloysius and St Cabrini



## Principal's Page

Mrs. Denise Reavis

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Carl Affrunti  
Gale Borders  
Blake Handley  
Dave Klestinski  
Mary Ann Mann  
Brad Mills (Chair)  
Joyce Zaffiri

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Matt Noonan  
Ryan Spearie (Chair)  
Larry Tebrugge  
Earl Schroeder

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[schoolboard@santalloysius.org](mailto:schoolboard@santalloysius.org)

Joan Bestudik  
Eric Danner  
Sarah Danner  
Tom Paoni  
Rachel Towner  
Joel Washko (Chair)  
Steve Washko III

### Liturgy Committee

Sharon Jones  
Steve Kehoe  
Kim Lesko (Chair)  
Rita Lesko  
Mary Coady

Our students are learning about Jesus' family tree, lighting the candles on our Advent wreath, and completing acts of service. All these activities remind us that we are waiting in joyful hope and preparing our hearts for the birth of Jesus at Christmas. The Christmas spirit is contagious in our building! From children singing Christmas program songs to our Advent displays



St. Aloysius School had the **pleasure** of hosting the 2025 Parochial School Speech Meet. Many thanks to all our guest judges and student volunteers for helping to make this such a successful event. Special congratulations to all our 7th grade students who earned a first or second place ribbon!

**All-school Mass** will be Tuesday, January 6th at 8:20am. All are welcome!

**Thank you** to the teachers, PTO members, and student participants who helped with our Advent Prayer Walk. Thank you to the PTO for providing Hot Cocoa and Cookies after our Advent Prayer Walk. We appreciate all you do!

**Thank you, Diocese of Springfield!** St. Aloysius School has received \$4,264.00 from the Springfield Diocese "Harvest of Thanks, Springtime of Hope" Endowment to be used for tuition assistance. We are thankful to all in the diocese who make this gift possible.

**Magic Match Sponsors** are a tremendous help to our school. Sponsoring a classroom helps purchase items needed for students and teachers to thrive in their learning. A special THANK YOU! to all of our Magic Match Sponsors.



**St. Nick Shopper...** Thank you to everyone who helped make St. Nick Shopper a success! From setting up to wrapping gifts, you made the season a little brighter for our students. An extra word of thanks to our PTO for coordinating this fun holiday St. Aloysius tradition

Thank you to all the volunteers for making **Bingo** a great success! The program needs a few, steady workers. I know that this will ensure the continued success of this most important fundraising event. Don't forget to join us for Bingo at Caritas Hall, 909 E Converse, Saturday, December 27 at 11:45am for Early Bird, other games begin at noon. Play bingo during our times, help make this a fun and profitable activity for St. Aloysius School! Please consider volunteering. Volunteers are needed! You can text or call Rhonda (217) 670-4458. Thank you for your support. Also a very special thanks goes to Rhonda for managing this essential fundraiser every Saturday.



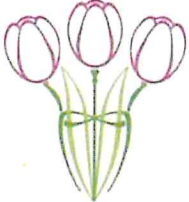

**Families and Children Welcome!** "Let the children come to me and do not prevent them; for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these." - Luke 18:16 Families and children are always welcome at Mass at St. Aloysius. While we strive for a reverent liturgy, we appreciate children of all ages worshiping with us - they are the future of the Church. We warmly welcome large families, new families, new babies and new baptisms. Parents: If your child needs a break or if it makes you more comfortable, the cry room and vestibule are available.



*"Love is the True North  
that always leads us home."*

Our next **Family Mass** is Saturday, January 24th at 4:00pm.

# — Parish Data —

PARISH CALENDAR				Weekly Offering		
December 21	7:00am		Morning Mass			
December 21	11:00am		Morning Mass	<u>Week 23</u>	<u>December 7</u>	<u>Total to Date</u>
December 23	8:20am		Morning Mass	<b>Weekly Offertory</b>	<b>\$8,986.00</b>	<b>\$144,383.82</b>
December 24	7:00am		Morning Mass	<b>Shepherd one Student</b>	<b>\$721.00</b>	<b>\$9,125.00</b>
December 24	3:30pm	Children's Choir Concert		<b>Building Fund</b>	<b>\$1,150.00</b>	<b>\$24,518.00</b>
December 24	4:00pm	Christmas Eve Mass		<b>Bingo</b>	<b>\$1,107.00</b>	<b>\$17,164.00</b>
December 24	11:30pm	Adult Choir Concert		The budgeted amount is the minimal required to maintain services, employee benefits, utilities, and maintenance at current levels and provide for debt payment, unbudgeted repairs or improvements for the Parish. Weekly Offerings budget for the month of December is \$40,000.00. We have received 22% of needed funding to meet essentials.		
December 25	12:00am	Christmas Midnight Mass				
December 25	7:00am	Christmas Morning Mass				
December 26		<u>No Adoration/Benediction/Rosary</u>				
December 26	6:00pm		<u>No Evening Mass</u>	<b>Parish Community Tithe</b>		
December 27	8:30am	Street Ministry (St. Cabrini)		As you have read in the Catholic Times, the Annual Catholic Services Appeal has been discontinued. The diocese will be assessing its parishes on a monthly basis, based on 10% of its income each month to provide the needs of our diocesan church. Please consider increasing your giving to the parish by the amount you previously gave to ACSA, so that we can handle this new monthly, pay-as-we-go obligation. Sept. Tithe-\$3,262.00. Oct. Tithe - \$2,740.00		
December 27	11:45am		Bingo			
December 27	3:30pm		Confession			
December 27	4:00pm		Evening Mass			
 <b>Special Prayers and Blessing</b> Please pray for the repose soul of <i>Rita E. Smarjessce</i> Eternal Rest Grant to him. O Lord and let perpetual light shine on her.				<b>Debt/Accrued Deficits</b>		
<b>Weekly Attendance - November December 13-14</b>				<b>Unpaid Diocesan Liabilities</b>		
Sat 4:00pm	Sun 7:00am	Sun 11:00am	Total	Paid		
<b>24</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>124</b>	Amount owed (December 13, 2025)		
				<b>\$229,700.65</b>		
<b>Parish Ministry Schedule - December 27-28</b>						
Saturday 4:00pm		Sunday 7:00am		Sunday 11:00am		
Cantor						
Lector	Gary McCandless	Brad Mills	John Mehlick			
E.M.	Tom Kohlrus Gary McCandless	Erin Rachford	Sherry Daniels, John Melick Matt Noonan			
Servers	Rachel Schrenk	Megan Nielson Joshua Nielson	Dom Guimking Brantley Riech			
 In charity, please remember in your prayers... 2024... Steven Young Patricia Durako, Regina Rakers, Sandra Scott, David Daniels, Halfred Hildebrand, Jr., Joseph Perkinson, Charles Bedolli, Samuel and Bonnie Falzone, James Selinger, Tom Stevens, Frank Tucker James Bartlett. 2025... Larry Forbes, Marilyn, Gustafson, Kenna Diaz, Kay Morrow, Judith Guinn, William Bredemeyer, Annette Raffa, David Jones, Judith Bregowy and August Egger.						

# Parish Bulletin Board

**Solemnity of Mary the Mother of God...** The Masses for this holyday of obligation will be Thursday, Jan. 1st 7:00am @St. Aloysius and 8:00am @St. Cabrini. \*Morning Mass the week of December 29th will be at 7:00am. Friday January 2 Adoration begins @ 7:00am with Benediction and rosary at 5:00pm. Evening Mass @ 6:00pm. May the blessings of Christmas continue to be with you.

**Many Thanks...** are extended to all who made our Christmas liturgies very special. Our special gratitude goes to the servers, ushers, Eucharistic ministers, choir, cantors, Liturgy committee, all those that helped decorate the church and the maintenance and office staff. Your time, talent, and effort are a true blessing to our parish. Thank you for your faithful service and for helping to make this Christmas season special.



**Thankyou** to all of you for the nice thoughts, cards and gifts during this Christmas season. Fr. George

**Year-End Giving...** We are grateful for the generosity of our parishioners throughout the entire year. During December, many people review their giving and determine that a year end charitable gift will benefit their tax status for the calendar year. If you wish to make a donation to St. Aloysius by making a general parish contribution to the church, or a gift to the School's Annual Fund, you may drop it into the collection basket during Mass or mail to the school or parish office. All charitable contributions must be postmarked and/or received by December 31, 2025 to be included in the year-end statement for tax year 2025. If you would like to drop off additional donations for 2025 the parish office is open this week. Closed January 1 for New Years Day. Thank you for your generosity!

Save the Date... **Parish Mission.** Sunday, March 1- Wednesday, March 3, 2026. A Journey to Joy. Watch the bulletin for more information.

**We could always use more** Lectors, Eucharistic Ministers, and Servers for our weekend liturgies. These important ministries serving at the alter are crucial to our celebration of the Eucharistic. Please consider volunteering for a ministry. If interested please contact Mikki Buhl or the parish office.

A **playpen** will be placed in the vestibule of the church next weekend. (January 10-11) The Springfield Pregnancy Care Center needs these baby items in our playpen collection... Diapers (newborn or preemie) baby wipes, preemie, newborn up to 3 month clothing/sleepers, pacifiers, baby spoons, sippy cups, Baby wash, lotion, and shampoo. Thank you for your generosity!

**A Pilgrimage to Italy...** Join Fr. George on a 10 day pilgrimage to Italy from October 5-15, 2026. Highlights include visits to the birthplace of St. Aloysius, and the shrine of St. Aloysius. Also a visit to the birth place of St. Francis Cabrini. The pilgrimage features daily Mass, first-class hotels, private luxury transportation, professional guides, and all admission fees. Cost: \$4,995.00 per person (includes round-trip airfare, taxes, meals, and more). For details or to register, visit Holy Land Tours LLC @ holylandtoursllc@gmail.com or Jiryis Alyateem @1-503-866-5698.

Knights of Columbus Council 4175 (Springfield North Council) will have **January fish fries** on January 9, January 16, and January 30, 2026 from 4:30pm - 7:00pm.

**Save the Date...** for the Illinois Pro-Life March and Mass for Life on Thursday, March 19, 2026 at the Sangamon Auditorium on the campus of the University of Illinois Springfield and then the streets around the Statehouse in Springfield.

**Parish Calendar...** Please let the parish office know of events, meetings, etc. for the church calendar to avoid scheduling conflicts. This includes the church basement.

**Thank you...** The advertisements that appear in this bulletin completely defray all publishing costs which the church would otherwise incur. Please patronize the sponsors on the back of this bulletin and thank them for their kind generosity.

**St. Aloysius Prayer Chain...** If you have a special intention or someone whom you would like prayers offered please email Mrs. Vikki Warren... whomper5@aol.com

**Stewardship ...** Gracious and loving God, we understand that you call us to be stewards of your abundance, the caretakers of all you have entrusted to us. Help us to use your gifts wisely and to share them generously. May our faithful stewardship be the hallmark of our discipleship, a visible sign of our commitment to Christ. We pray with grateful hearts, in Jesus' name. Amen.



## Mass Intentions

**December 29 Fifth Day within the Octave of the Nativity of the Lord**

**December 30 Sixth Day within the Octave of the Nativity of the Lord**  
7:00am Emma Brandon+

**December 31 Seventh Day within the Octave of the Nativity of the Lord**  
7:00am James Bartlett+

**January 1 Solemnity of Mary, Holy Mother of God**  
7:00am Rita Smarjesse+

**January 2 St. Basil the Great St. Gregory Nazianzen**  
6:00pm All Souls

**December 27 Most Holy Name of Jesus**

**December 28 Epiphany of the Lord**  
Sat 4:00pm Calista Kohlrus+  
Sun 7:00am All Parishioners+  
Sun 11:00am David Jones +

# Around the Church

**Prayer Warriors** are welcome to pray in front of Springfield Planned Parenthood 601 N. Bruns Lane. For more information... [www.springfieldrtl.org](http://www.springfieldrtl.org).

**Biblical Walk Through the Mass...** The Mass is nothing short of amazing. Through it, we encounter God in the most intimate way possible as we hear him speak to us in the Liturgy of the Word and as we receive him Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity in the Holy Eucharist. Join Cathedral Women's Bible Study to explore the extraordinary biblical roots of the Liturgy and reveals what it all means and why it all matters. This fascinating tour of the Mass will renew your faith and deepen your love for and devotion to the Holy Eucharist. Thursdays, Jan 8 - Feb 5 @ 6:00pm in the Cathedral School Library. Order your workbook at [ascensionpress.com](http://ascensionpress.com).

**Pray for peace...** Practice the First Saturday devotion! It is essential for world peace and the salvation of souls. Go to [www.bluearmy.com](http://www.bluearmy.com) to learn about the First Saturday virtual pilgrimage for the 100th anniversary of Fatima.

**Covenant Network Catholic Radio...** Catholic Radio programs include Catholic teaching, prayers, and call-in programs. You can listen on a smart speaker, tell Alexa to play Covenant Network Catholic Radio, on our App, Covenant Network, online at [OurCatholicRadio.org](http://OurCatholicRadio.org), or on your local Catholic radio station, AM 1080 and 92.7 FM.

**Centennial Campaign Prayer...** Loving and Gracious God, we come before you, acknowledging that all our gifts are from your generous hand. WE are grateful for your countless blessings and for the opportunity to serve you this Centennial (Capital) campaign. As our parish embarks on this journey, we ask for your wisdom and guidance in discerning how best to use our resources to advance your kingdom. May our hearts be open to your spirit, and may we be faithful stewards of the gifts entrusted to us. We pray through the intercessions of St. Aloysius that this campaign will be a testament to your grace and a source of blessing to our parish. May we work together in unity and faith, knowing that with your help, we can accomplish great things. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.



**Mary, The Holy Mother of God...** The solemnity is a rather recent addition to the cycle of sessions, Sundays and feasts in our liturgical year. We have Pope Paul VI to thank for the 1974 enshrining of the devotion to Mary into our calendar on January 1. It is also a day in our calendar as World Day for Peace. Let us pray... God of heaven and earth, you came to us and took our earthly flesh, through the gift of Mary's yes. She is our Mother in faith, as she is your earthly mother. We are thankful beyond our ability to thank you for the gift of her Son as our brother and savior. Through her self-giving, we have been reconciled to you. Bless us as we begin this New Year and endow us with the desire and ability to create a world of peace. We ask all this, through the intercession of Mary to you, one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

**Biblical Walk through the Mass.** The Mass is nothing short of amazing. Through it, we encounter God in the most intimate way possible as we hear him speak to us in the Liturgy of the Word and as we receive him Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity in the Holy Eucharist. Join Cathedral Women's Bible Study to explore the extraordinary biblical roots of the Liturgy and reveals what it all means and why it all matters. This fascinating tour of the Mass will renew your faith and deepen your love for and devotion to the Holy Eucharist. Thursdays, Jan 8 - Feb 5 @ 6:00pm in the Cathedral School Library. Order your workbook at [ascensionpress.com](http://ascensionpress.com).

**Cathedral Women's Bible Study.** Perhaps you think God doesn't have a plan for you and your family. But Jesus is the Lord of History, yours included. Join Dr. Sean Innerst in *Foretold*, a new series from the Augustine Institute that weaves together the Old and New Testament stories, highlighting their connecting threads of prophecy and fulfillment. What was promised in the biblical story came to pass through Jesus, his apostles, and the Church. Ultimately, this biblical history is your history. Just as the prophecies of the Old Testament were fulfilled, you can trust that Jesus will care for you and your story. Encounter this profound mystery and reality for yourself in *Foretold*. Cathedral School Library, Thursdays at 10:00am and 1:00pm starting on Jan 8, and running for 8 weeks. FREE and open to all women!

**Interior Freedom Book Study Series...** Join us for a four-week study of *Interior Freedom* by Fr. Jacques Philippe at the Villa Maria Conference Center with Father Herman Joseph O.Praem. This accessible and profound spiritual classic helps us learn how to experience inner freedom despite the many external and internal circumstances beyond our control. Copies of the book may be ordered online. Schedule... January 26, February 2, February 9, and February 16. Each night is 6:15pm - 7:45pm and includes a Rosary and discussion. Contact: [events@dio.org](mailto:events@dio.org). Register at: [dio.org/events](http://dio.org/events).

**Catholic Times is going monthly in 2026.** Beginning in 2026, Catholic Times will transition from a biweekly publication to a monthly magazine. This change will allow for expanded coverage and more in-depth storytelling across the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois. The magazine will feature more comprehensive articles, better photography, and a stronger mix of features and diocesan news. The new monthly format will also bring improved paper quality, a more consistent production schedule, and an enhanced reading experience that better reflects the life and vitality of our Catholic community.

**Stewardship Reflection...** The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. "*And whatever you do, in word or in deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.*" Colossians 3:17. Giving thanks to God and using our words and actions to give all glory to God is the foundation of living a stewardship lifestyle. We were made in God's image and likeness, gratitude and generosity is in our DNA. As beloved sons and daughters of God, we are all part of God's family. Using our gifts to help others is our gift back to God and helps grow the Body of Christ here on earth and establishes a pathway to Heaven for each of us.

December 21, 2025

Written by  
THE  
FAITHFUL  
DISCIPLE

## Fourth Sunday of Advent

Is 7:10-14 | Rom 1:1-7 | Mt 1:18-24

### **GROW AS A DISCIPLE** | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

Throughout my life, I have had a litany of requests for God. I have asked for mundane and ultimately inconsequential favors and also for guidance in much more important matters. But I have often hesitated to ask for the deepest desires of my heart. Those requests feel too big, too impossible, and possibly too selfish — as though asking these things would take away from God’s ability to provide for others. But in thinking this way, I am putting limits on a limitless God. In today’s first reading, the Lord speaks to Ahaz and tells him to ask for a sign — “let it be deep as the netherworld, or high as the sky!” When Ahaz refuses, God speaks through the prophet Isaiah to deliver the most impossible promise — that “the virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall name him Emmanuel.” God wants to give us everything we need to be close to him, so much so that he sent his Son to open the pathway to eternal life with him. God *wants* us to ask for him to do the impossible because he longs to give generously to us.

### **GO EVANGELIZE**

#### PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

God brings about his plan of salvation in an extraordinary way: The virgin Mary conceives Jesus in her womb through the power of the Holy Spirit. Although God does all the spiritual heavy lifting here, notice that our Gospel tells us that he also desired and asked for Joseph’s cooperation. “Do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home,” the angel tells Joseph. The Gospel tells us that Joseph “did as the angel of the Lord commanded him.” In our work of evangelization, God does the heavy lifting: it’s God who moves the hearts of others to seek him. But the amazing thing is that God still wants us to be part of the way his plan unfolds. We, too, cooperate with God’s work of sharing the faith and bringing salvation to others by our actions and obedience.

### **PRAY**

As we begin this final week of Advent, the Church continues to pray with the O Antiphons, which we hear in the hymn, “O Come, O Come Emmanuel.” Listen to the refrain, which speaks of Israel’s immense longing to be set free and for her savior to appear. As you reflect on the first reading and upon this hymn, bring your own deepest desires to the Lord. Spend some time in prayer asking for what you need to draw closer to God.





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