



# DIocese OF SPRINGFIELD IN ILLINOIS

## OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

April 26, 2022

Reverend Dan Bergbower  
Pastor, St. Agnes Parish  
245 N Amos Ave,  
Springfield, IL 62702

Dear Fr. Bergbower,

Please give my gratitude to all the parishioners, staff, and council members of St. Agnes Parish. It was a blessing to celebrate the Lord's resurrection and especially His Divine Mercy with all of you this past Sunday. I thank everyone who sacrificed time, energy, and prayer to make the weekend possible, and I thank the Lord for the outpouring of His graces upon us all.

I also write to acknowledge and recall the truly blessed conversation we were able to have Sunday afternoon with members of the parish staff, finance and parish councils, other parish leaders and also those working in your school. I think I speak for everyone when I acknowledge the Lord's grace at work in our conversations. It was inspiring to hear of the many things that you already do across the four pillars of our Diocesan Synod, calling and forming disciples, and inviting them into a life given to the Lord in service and stewardship. Here I can only mention a few highlights that struck me during the afternoon, but know that I praise God for all the ways His grace is bearing fruit in your parish! First of all I was inspired by the sincere work you are doing to invite and welcome new (and old) members of the parish into a committed faith and sacrament-centered life. Radical hospitality of this sort is not an easy, automatic matter, but you are training and growing the number of parish-apostles (as they truly are!) who are willing to be sent out carrying Christ's Love to those who need it anew. In terms of prayer, I am glad to hear of new opportunities for Adoration as well as various small groups now meeting each week. These and other ways of conversing with God must be the bedrock on which all our missionary efforts are based. I am encouraged to hear of your beginning efforts at family faith formation, as well as so many hopes and plans for a deepening of the evangelical character of your school. Christ promises great fruit for those with great trust!

More could be said, but let me end with some encouragement for the whole parish: yes, we live in challenging and changing times, but Our Lord beckons each of us simply to take the next step in trust after Him. We do not have to know the whole road, just the faith, hope, and love that He invites us into today. I pray that we all receive the courage we need to build the Catholic culture that we truly desire, knowing that Jesus does too.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Thomas John Paprocki  
Bishop of Springfield in Illinois