

**CATHEDRAL OF SAINT MARY
OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION**

PEORIA, ILLINOIS

A Self-Guided Tour



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DISCOVER SAINT MARY'S

Welcome to the Cathedral of St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception!

The church you have entered is the mother church for the people of Central Illinois in the Diocese of Peoria. This edifice is a testament to the faith of those who came before us and to our current responsibility to further the journey toward God's Kingdom. Built of living stones, this Cathedral inspires us in our worship of God, unites us in common prayer, and sends us forth to give witness to our Faith. Far from being a museum, you will discover as you wander a sense of our rich Catholic tradition, the history and hope of who we are, our communion with the saints, and an appreciation for the beauty of God and God's creation.

It is our fervent hope that your visit to our Cathedral will be an experience of welcome, deep prayer, and inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, pray for us!

Peace and Prayers,

The Most Reverend Louis Tylka
Bishop of Peoria



◆ HISTORY OF SAINT MARY CATHEDRAL

In 1851, Bishop James VandeVelde of Chicago asked a Vincentian missionary, Father Alphonse Montouri, CM, to build a new church in Peoria, offering him \$200 to carry out the plan. In a year, St. Mary's Church (*below*) was built. It was said to be one of the finest churches between Chicago and St. Louis. In 1870, the parish had about 2,000 members.



With the arrival of the First Bishop of Peoria, John Lancaster Spalding, in May of 1877, St. Mary's Church was designated as the Cathedral. In September of 1884, Peoria architect Casper Mehler submitted plans for a new gothic stone church. Rev. Benedict Spalding, the Bishop's brother, personally supervised the construction of the new Cathedral (*right*). On May 15, 1889, exactly four years after the first stone had been laid, the new edifice was dedicated. In 1898, the old cathedral was torn down.

At the turn of the century, the Cathedral became the home parish of Fulton J. Sheen where he was an altar server and received his First Holy Communion. "Being an altar boy at the cathedral fed the fires of vocation," he said in his autobiography *Treasure in Clay*.





In 1913, Bishop Edmund M. Dunne, the Second Bishop of Peoria, initiated the Cathedral's first major renovation for Bishop Spalding's Golden Jubilee. Three new marble altars were installed and twelve windows of the life of the Blessed Virgin Mary were donated by diocesan clergy (*left*).

In 1930, Bishop Joseph H. Schlarman initiated the "**Redemption**", a thorough ten-year renovation of the Cathedral. It included a new Lady Chapel, the old winter chapel makeover, twelve stained-glass windows, a new sanctuary floor, and frescoing (*right*).



In 1953, before the 75th jubilee of the diocese, Bishop William E. Cousins redecorated the Cathedral. The royal magenta with gold stencil was changed to solid pastel turquoise blue with modern paintings of the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary.

Under Bishop Edward W. O'Rourke, the Cathedral underwent a major renovation in 1986. The interior, altars, and woodwork, were painted cream-white.

In 2014, Bishop Daniel R. Jenky, C.S.C., initiated a much-needed outside and inside restoration of the Cathedral. Inspired by the history of the Cathedral, the renovation united past and present and provided continuity in design and historical significance.



◆ ENTRANCE DOORS

The prominent colors of the entrance doors (*back cover*) symbolize the beginning of Christianity in the territory that one day would be the Diocese of Peoria. **Blue and gold stand for the French, honoring the French Jesuit missionary and our forefather, Jacques Marquette. Blue also signifies Our Lady, the principal Patron Saint of the Cathedral.**

◆ NARTHEX

The entrance area was enhanced by Daprato-Rigali of Chicago in 2016.

◆ Ceiling

The vestibule **ceiling depicts the exact constellation of the stars as they appeared on the night of February 12, 1875, when by decree of Pope Pius IX, the Diocese of Peoria was created.** The shooting star represents a large meteorite that fell on the same day near Homestead, Iowa.

◆ Diocesan Crest

As the mother church of the Diocese and the Seat of the Bishop, the diocesan coat of arms is embedded in the floor at the entrance, and images of the crests of previous bishops adorn the vestibule walls.

The diocesan crest was first developed by Bishop Schlarman in 1930. His love of history and deep appreciation for Fr. Marquette and his fellow missionaries led him to put the beginnings of the diocese in a crest.

The golden cross on blue background indicates that the entire territory of today's Diocese of Peoria was originally French. The top fleurs-de-lis honor the Forefather of the diocese, the Jesuit missionary priest Jacques Marquette; the lower one is for his companion, Louis Joliet. The eight-pointed gold star comes from the personal crest of another companion Robert Cavalier de La Salle. It is also a symbol of the Blessed Virgin Mary, patroness of the Diocese. The calumet, or peace pipe, in the center, was a gift of the Native American chief to Father Marquette. The calumet was magical for the Native Americans but served as protection for Father Marquette from their attacks.



◆ Annunciation

The main door to the church nave is flanked by two distinct murals depicting the Annunciation. On the left stands Archangel Gabriel, vested as a deacon, prepared to proclaim the first Gospel. **The dalmatic he wears is from a historic set of gold-embroidered vestments that belonged to the First Bishop of Peoria, John Lancaster Spalding.** On the right stands the Blessed Virgin Mary; she is dressed in a blue garment, which matches what she wears on the sanctuary window.

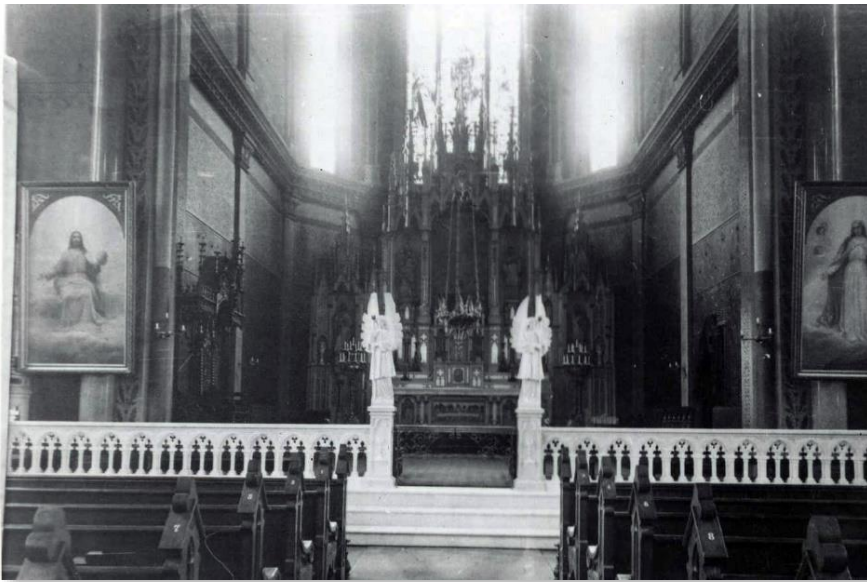


◆ SANCTUARY

◆ Altar

The altar is the chief object of the sanctuary. It should offer an irresistible appeal to the worshipper, the just, and the sinner. Bishop Schlarman insisted that **“nothing, no matter how artistic, should obstruct the view of the altar.”**

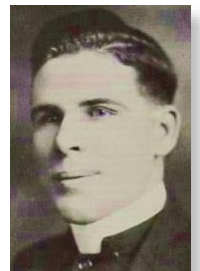
In 1906, the Henebery family of Peoria donated a white marble communion rail, sanctuary steps, and two angels holding lights (*below*); the angels now stand near the holy water fountains at the entrance.



In 1913, the new high altar was dedicated in memory of Matthew and Mary Henebery. In 1986, the Altar of Sacrifice and the pulpit were constructed from the marble communion rail.

Here, on September 20, 1919, the young Deacon Fulton J. Sheen (*right*) was ordained a priest of the Diocese of Peoria by Bishop Edmund M. Dunne.

In 2014, the high altar of Mankato marble from Minnesota was restored to its original natural color with a mosaic of the Lamb of God from the closed St. Peter Church in Peoria.



◆ *The Crucifixion*

The image on the high altar is a replica of an original painting. Bishop Spalding purchased the painting *The Crucifixion (below)* by Yzquierda (1873), a Spanish artist. This almost life-size image originally hung in the old St. Mary's and was transferred to the new cathedral.



During the 2016 cathedral restoration, in order to protect the painting from frequent exposure to light, candle smoke, and incense, the original was moved to the wall above the altar in the Saint Thomas More Chapel. For the same reasons, the main altar currently displays a slightly smaller digital copy of the original painting.

In appreciative words of Bishop Schlarman:

“It is probably the only reminder of old St. Mary’s, where it was originally. In the course of these many years, it suffered a great deal...it is a priceless treasure of the Cathedral and it constitutes a tender bond of grateful memory and love between the present Cathedral and this generation, and Old St. Mary’s and the first beloved chief shepherd of the Church of Peoria.”

Very similar to this painting is the widely-known image *Christ Crucified* by Diego Velázquez (1632). However, the two paintings are two different originals from two different time periods. Placed side by side, differences between them may be found.

◆ Tabernacle

A new tabernacle was constructed in 2016 to be a worthy vessel for the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament. On the inside back wall of the tabernacle are three golden angels, which are components of a previous 1986 tabernacle. After the likeness of the ancient Ark of the Covenant, two adoring cherubim grace the outside of the tabernacle doors. The small spires on the top suggest the design of the old St. Mary's Cathedral four-pointed tower.

On the marble below the tabernacle shine prominent large gold letters saying "ECCE," which means "Behold". It refers to the words said by John the Baptist about Jesus and is repeated at every Mass: "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world." The same is indicated by a beautiful mosaic of the Lamb of God underneath the lettering.

◆ Sanctuary Lamp

The sanctuary lamp is a candle burning constantly near the tabernacle. It offers a first-glance sure sign of Jesus' Real Presence in the tabernacle. The lamp features a silver relief of the Twelve Apostles. The beautiful, rich ornamentation is another reminder of the reverence due to the Eucharist. The new lamp was built in 2016.

◆ Saints Peter and Paul

The statues of the Apostles Peter and Paul have been in the Cathedral sanctuary since Bishop Dunne's renovation in 1913 and are now restored to full color.

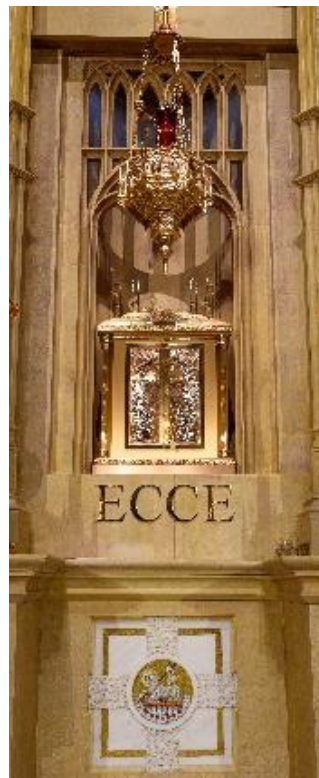
Saint Peter holds keys, which refer to the authority given to him by Jesus, "I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven" with the power to bind and lose.

Saint Paul is holding a sword, a reference either to his martyrdom by beheading or to the Word of God being sharper than a two-edged sword.

◆ Cathedra

The Latin word *cathedra*, a chair, signifies the official seat of the bishop's authority as the Successor of the Apostles. The bishop occupies it when he presides at solemn functions. In the language of the Church, it conveys the idea of authority.

The restored cathedra is composed of several original elements of Bishop Schlarman's cathedra of 1938. The originally sixteen-foot-high ornate throne was simplified in 1986, and its multiple-spire carved canopy, which was then placed above the tabernacle, is once again part of the cathedra. Traditionally, the chair also features the crest of the diocese and the crest of the current bishop. The diocesan crest is explained in the Narthex section on page 6.



◆ Bishop's Crest of Louis Tylka, Ninth Bishop of Peoria

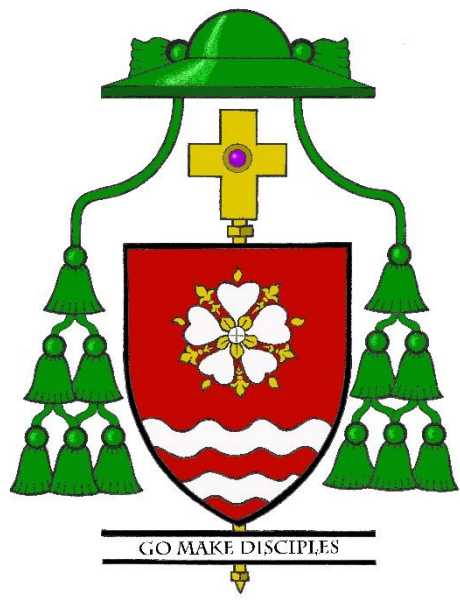
The Bishop's personal crest takes up the right half of the coat of arms while the diocesan crest takes up the left side. In the Bishop's crest, the red symbolizes the Holy Spirit, as the life of any priest and bishop is placed under His guidance.

The two white (or silver) waves at the bottom of the shield symbolize Lake Michigan (the shores of which are near the Archdiocese of Chicago where Bishop Tylka served prior to becoming a bishop) and Lake St. Mary (at the seminary he attended). The waves hearken to our Baptism, which initiates us into the life of Christ and also alludes to John the Baptist.

The main charge - a mystical rose - is comprised of several layered elements to reflect that each aspect of our faith builds upon the various encounters we have with the Lord, the Church, and others. Together, they create a symbol of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This is a slight reference to the parish of Mater Christi where the Bishop served for ten years as pastor. In addition, the rose also alludes to the need to grow in our faith, which blossoms as it grows. The larger petals of the rose consist of heart shapes surmounted by small tongues of fire; this resembles the traditional image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, which represents His sacrificial love for us. The flames above each heart also remind us of the Holy Spirit. The Sacred Heart was a particular devotion of St. Julie Billiart, the patroness of a parish where the Bishop served as pastor.

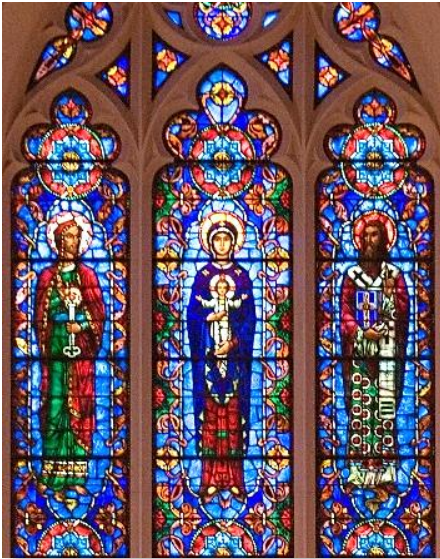
At the center of the rose are five gold (or yellow) petals surrounding a silver (or white) roundel on which there is a cross. This represents the Sacred Host in the monstrance, and it is placed at the center of the image as a way of expressing the Eucharist being at the center of the life of faith. Traditionally, a heraldic rose is depicted with thorns which, in this instance, have been shaped like the fleur-de-lis. This has multiple meanings as it alludes to St. Joseph and to the Bishop's home parish of St. Joseph, St. Louis the King (the Bishop's baptismal patron), and the Archdiocese of Chicago and the Diocese of Peoria (from whose coats of arms they were borrowed).

The motto below the shield is "GO MAKE DISCIPLES" (Matthew 28:19).



◆ Sanctuary Floor

The Travertine tile floor bears a quote from the Prophet Malachi—*From the rising of the sun even unto the setting thereof my name shall be great among the gentiles and in every place there shall be sacrifice* (Malachi 1:11). It was installed in 1934 as the beginning of Bishop Schlarman’s cathedral renovation. While enlarging the sanctuary, it is also a vivid reminder that the Mass is truly a sacrifice. In every Mass, Christ’s sacrifice for the redemption of mankind is truly made present. Thus, along with the theme of the Cathedral windows—the spreading of the Gospel to all nations—this Sacrifice is offered “from the rising of the sun to its setting.”



◆ Great Sanctuary Window (left)

This magnificent window, one of the highlights of Bishop Schlarman’s renovation, was designed by Wilbur H. Burnham of Boston in 1936. Ralph A. Cram described the window as “the best ever produced.” **The central figure of the window is the Virgin Mary under the title of “Theotokos” (God-Bearer in Greek).** The image is a copy of a 9th-century mosaic discovered in 1933 in the ancient church Hagia Sophia in Istanbul, Turkey.

On your left is the Prophet Isaiah, holding tongs with burning coal, which symbolizes his calling and his purification by the hand of an angel. He had prophesied many years before Jesus’ birth that “a virgin shall bear a son and shall name him Emmanuel.” Pictured on your right is St. Cyril of Alexandria, a Bishop, who defended Mary’s title of Mother of God at the Council of Ephesus of 431 A.D. Both

Saints stand as witnesses to Mary’s singular role as the God-Bearer.

◆ Sanctuary Walls

The sanctuary is distinctly set apart from the rest of the church by a **three-color arch**: deep **red** for the Blood of Christ, **silver** for the water that flowed from His side, and **blue** for Mary, the Patroness of the Cathedral.

The **sanctuary walls** are adorned with elegant white-gold stenciling alternating four designs of Eucharistic and Marian symbols. All artwork was executed by Daprato-Rigali of Chicago in 2016.

◆ Procession of Angels

The angels in a long procession toward the altar are modeled after the Victorian style of the white marble angel statues near the entrance. The angels on the left side of the sanctuary are processing as altar servers, while the angels on the right side are carrying the bishop’s liturgical vesture. **The unique detail of the entire procession is that all of the items carried by the angels are the same as those used in this Cathedral.** The murals were painted in 2015.

◆ Sanctuary Dome

The high dome above the main altar features a rich gold leaf design in which are set fourteen medallions with traditional symbols of the Catholic Faith.

◆ Seven Medallions of Jesus



Sacred Heart



Anchor



Lamb of God



Pelican



Christ's Monogram



Eucharist



Crucifixion

◆ Seven Medallions of Mary



Immaculate Heart



House of God



Morning Star



Queen of Heaven



Mystical Rose



Gate of Heaven



Vessel of Devotion



◆ MAIN NAVE



◆ **Lanterns** (*left*)

On Christmas morning in 1935, the new light fixtures for the Cathedral were unveiled. They were made by the Kinsey & Mahler Co. of Peoria according to the plans of Ralph A. Cram, a renowned Boston architect.

Each lantern, more than seven feet tall, weighs 485 pounds.

◆ **Stations of the Cross**

These traditional Stations of the Cross are oil paintings on the tin. They came from the St. John Newman Center in Champaign, Illinois. Restored and reframed, they were installed in the nave of the Cathedral in 2007, replacing modern art Stations from the 1986 renovation.

◆ **Statue of Christ the King**

The inscription at the base of the statue reads “*Rex Sum Ego*” (I am a King), which was Christ's response to Pilate asking him, “Are you a king?” In his left hand, Christ holds the *globus cruciger*, a globe with the cross on top, symbolizing Jesus' dominion over the world. In his right hand, he holds the scepter, a symbol of majestic authority. The statue was installed on Thanksgiving Day of 1938.

◆ **Statue of Saint Francis of Assisi**

This statue of St. Francis of Assisi was installed by Bishop Jenky to honor all of the Franciscans who have served the diocese of Peoria throughout its history. In his left hand, St. Francis holds a skull, the symbol of death. **Anyone who strives to live like Jesus, “is freed from the fear of death, which no longer shows the sarcastic sneer of an enemy but, as St. Francis wrote... the friendly face of a ‘sister’ for whom one can also bless the Lord: ‘Praised be the Lord for our Sister, bodily Death’”** (Pope Benedict XVI)

◆ Medallions of the Prophets

The medallions painted in 2016, are listed below in the order beginning on the left above the pulpit, around to the back of the church, and back toward the cathedra on the right.

◆ Prophet Amos

Before Amos became a prophet of Divine Judgment, he was a shepherd by profession, which is represented by a shepherd's staff.



◆ Prophet Jonah

Jonah was a disobedient prophet who rejected his divine commission. He was cast overboard in a storm and swallowed by a big fish. After three days, he was spewed on the shore and returned to his task of preaching repentance to the people of the city of Nineveh, who believed his message of doom and repented immediately. Jonah also prefigures “the Son of Man in the heart of the earth three days and three nights.”

◆ Prophet Hosea

The Book of Hosea opens with his marriage to Gomer, a prostitute, who symbolizes Israel's infidelity to God through sin, while Hosea stands for God's fidelity to Israel in spite of its sins.





◆ Prophet Micah

The tower symbol comes from Micah's prophecy, "And you, O tower of the flock, hill of daughter Zion! To you it shall come: the former dominion shall be restored, the reign of daughter Jerusalem."

The image of the broken yoke comes from Nahum's prophecy about the restoration of Israel: "And now I will break his yoke from off you and will burst your bonds sunder."



◆ Prophet Nahum

The image of the broken yoke comes from Nahum's prophecy about the restoration of Israel:

"And now I will break his yoke from off you and will burst your bonds sunder."



◆ Prophet Jeremiah

The princes of Judah imprisoned Jeremiah in an old cistern because he kept preaching a disturbing message to the king. The image is a powerful reminder that fidelity to the truth may bring persecution, but no matter how deep the mire may seem to be, God always provides.

Daniel, faithful in worship of the true God in spite of the king's command, was thrown into the lion's den. The next morning, the king found Daniel alive, because God Himself preserved his servant from death. Thus, Daniel is represented by a pair of lions.

◆ Prophet Daniel





◆ Prophet Ezekiel

The image of a gate is a reference to Ezekiel's vision of the Temple. It reminds us that though the Temple in Jerusalem has been destroyed, all the baptized are part of the New Temple of Christ's body.

The image of a fallen idol conveys Baruch's condemnation of all forms of idol worship, which plagued Israel throughout its history. "Better, therefore, is a just man who has no idols, for he will be far from reproach."



◆ Prophet Baruch



◆ Prophet Obadiah

Obadiah's prophecy is a cry for vengeance against the pride and crimes of Edom, symbolized in this image. "The pride of your heart has deceived you, you who live in the clefts of the rock, whose dwelling is high, who say in your heart, 'Who will bring me down to the ground?'"

The horn comes from the prophet's call to repentance: "Sound the horn in Zion!" The first section of the Book of Joel is also concerned with the locusts plaguing Israel.



◆ Prophet Joel

◆ Prophet Malachi

An angel symbolizes the Prophet Malachi, whose name means "messenger" or "angel." Malachi foretold the coming of the Messiah and John the Baptist.





◆ MAIN NAVE WINDOWS

The set of twelve windows was designed and executed by Wilbur H. Burnham of Boston in 1939. Bishop Schlarman was most pleased to tell him that “many strangers come to see the Cathedral windows.”

◆ Spreading of the Gospel Throughout the World

This is the order of the windows beginning at the Our Lady of Guadalupe altar, around the church, and back toward the sanctuary to the St. Joseph altar on the right.

◆ The Great Commission (right)

- The Dove, a symbol of the Holy Spirit
- “Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.” (Matthew, 28, 16-20)
- The Keys of the Kingdom
- St. Peter in Rome
- The tiara, a symbol of the papal authority

◆ The Apostles in Rome and Spain

- The Roman Eagle holding a sword, A symbol of St. Paul’s martyrdom; the words *Paulus Civis Romanus* (Paul, a Roman Citizen) are inscribed underneath the eagle
- St. Paul and St. Barnabas converting Sergius Paulus, the Governor of Cyprus
- The coat of arms of Spain where the Apostle James preached the Gospel; the eagle holds a script that reads *Una Gran de Libre* (One Great Free Country)
- St. James in Compostela, Spain
- S.P.Q.R means *Senatus Populusque Romanus* (Senate and People of Rome); pictured are the columns of Hercules, called by the Romans the Rock of Gibraltar and Ceuta



◆ Augustine and Constantine

- The *Chi-Rho*, the Christian emblem Constantine placed on his banner
- Constantine was told, "In this sign you shall conquer" and the sign of the Cross was placed on the shields of all his men (313 A.D.)
- St. Menas standing between two reclining camels, the symbol of Christian Egypt
- St. Augustine, Bishop of Hippo in North Africa (d. 430), with his mother St. Monica
- Angel piercing a heart with an arrow symbolizes St. Augustine's words, "You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you"

◆ Saint Patrick and Saint Remigius (*right*)

- A hand holding shamrock, a symbol of the Holy Trinity
- St. Patrick preaching the Gospel in Ireland (461 A.D.)
- Coat of arms of Eire (Ireland)
- St. Remigius, Bishop of Rheims, baptizing Clovis, King of Franks (496 A.D.)
- Coat of arms of Clovis



◆ England and Germany

- Coat of arms of former Catholic See of Canterbury
- Pope St. Gregory the Great sends St. Augustine of Canterbury and Benedictines to England (596 A.D.)
- White horse on the red field: the crest of Widukind, King of Saxons
- Baptism of Widukind (785 A.D.) with Emperor Charlemagne as his sponsor
- The Magic Thunder oak felled by St. Boniface, Apostle of Germanic tribes

◆ Scandinavia and the Slavic Peoples

- Coat of arms of the former Catholic See of Uppsala, Sweden
- St. Ansgar, a Benedictine, preaching the Gospel in Scandinavian countries (865 A.D.)
- Crests of Greece, Bulgaria, and Romania
- Brothers St. Cyril and St. Methodius, Apostles to the Slavic nations (863 A.D.), and baptism of St. Stephen, King of Hungary (1000 A.D.)
- Coat of arms of Hungary

◆ Poland and China

- Polish and Bohemian crests joined under the crown
- The Catholic Bohemian Princess Dobrawa consents to marry the Polish Duke Mieczyslaw on condition that he become a Christian and Christianize his people (956 A.D.)
- Coat of arms of China, the Chinese dragon
- Pope Nicholas IV sends to the Emperors of China and Persia the Franciscan John of Montecorvino, who became Archbishop of Peking, China (1294 A.D.)
- Lion, a symbol of Persia

◆ Columbus and the Americas

- Coat of arms of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain
- Columbus' ship, the *Santa Maria*, touches San Salvador on October 12, 1492; his other ships, *Pinta* and *Nina*, are in the background
- Coat of arms of Christopher Columbus
- Planting of the Cross by Columbus, accompanied by Spanish Benedictine Bernard Boyl
- Crest of San Salvador, two palm trees bending over a cross

◆ Saint Francis Xavier and Saint Peter Claver

- Coat of arms of the Xaverio family
- Jesuit St. Francis Xavier preaching the Gospel in India and Japan (d. 1549)
- Coat of arms of Japan
- Jesuit St. Peter Claver, the Apostle of the Colored races, preaches the Gospel to Black slaves at Cartagena, Colombia, South America (d. 1654)
- The white hand of Saint Peter Claver releases a shackle from the black hand of a slave

◆ Father Marquette and Father Kino (below)

- A Native American and calumet
- Jesuit Father Jacques Marquette celebrating Mass near Starved Rock in Illinois on Holy Thursday and Easter Sunday (1675); he is considered the forefather of the Peoria Diocese
- Tyrolese eagle
- The Padre on horseback; Jesuit Father Kino (d. 1680), a native of Tyrol, known as a missionary to Southern California, Northern Mexico, New Mexico, and Arizona
- Coat of arms of Mexico



◆ Saint Junipero Serra and Maryknoll

- Santa Barbara Mission California
- Franciscan Junipero Serra, founding the Mission of San Diego, California, the oldest of the California missions (1769)
- Coat of arms of Maryknoll
- Bishop James A. Walsh and Father Thomas F. Price, cofounders of Maryknoll, the American Foreign Mission Society, and a Maryknoll Sister
- The American Eagle

◆ Pope Pius XI and the Church of Peoria (*below*)

- Coat of arms of Pope Pius XI
- The Pope of the Missions Pius XI, Cardinal Pacelli, the future Blessed Pope Pius XII, and Cardinal Mundelein of Chicago
- Coat of arms of Pope Benedict XV
- The first three Bishops of Peoria: (center) John L. Spalding (1877-1908); (left) Edmund M. Dunne (1909-1929); (right) Joseph H. Schlarman (1930-1951); all kneeling before Mary, Queen of the Missions
- Reaper of Allotting, the symbol of death

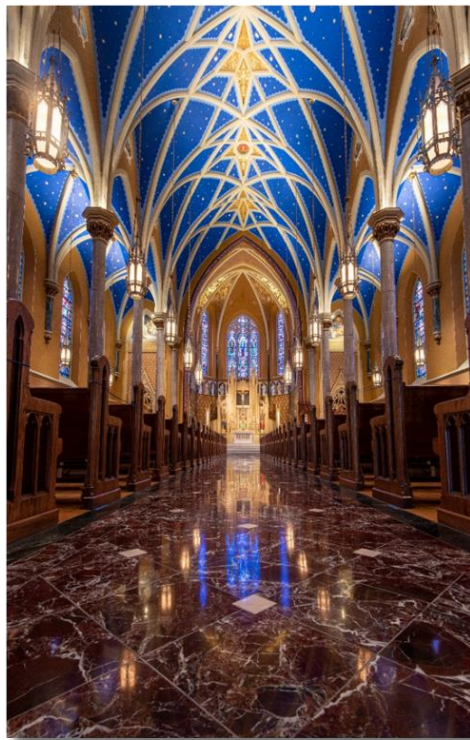


◆ Ceiling and Floor

Above the main nave and side aisles is a magnificent starry sky with shooting stars and all the planets of the solar system, including Pluto, which was discovered by Clyde Tombaugh from Streator, Illinois, a town within the Diocese of Peoria.

Below the stars is a new marble floor featuring a **deep burgundy tile, representative of the Blood of Christ**, with inlaid cream diamonds that highlight the main aisle.

A glossy dark green tile replaced the old flooring in the side aisles between three sections of pews as well as in the St. Thomas More Chapel and its entryway.



◆ Medallions of the Priesthood *(ceiling)*

The three medallions were completed in 2016.

◆ Book of the Gospels

The **Book of the Gospels** represents the **diaconate** as the first degree of Holy Orders. At the ordination of a deacon, the bishop presents him with the book of the Gospels. The book depicted belonged to Fulton Sheen and for several years was used at diaconate ordinations in the Diocese of Peoria. **The book is at the Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen Museum just a block away from the Cathedral.**



◆ Chalice

This **chalice**, a **symbol of priesthood**, belonged to Bishop Joseph H. Schlarman, the Third Bishop of Peoria, who in his time dedicated much of his efforts to the Cathedral renovation and proper understanding of the liturgy. Today the chalice is used at our priestly ordinations.



◆ Miter

The **miter** represents the **third degree of Holy Orders, the bishopric**. It is a sign of the authority of the bishop, from whom all priests and deacons of the diocese receive their authority. This miter is one belonging to Bishop Daniel R. Jenky, C.S.C.





◆ SIDE ALTARS

The side altars were consecrated in 1938. Now renovated, both are surrounded by stencil designs of St. Joseph's and Our Lady's monograms as well as fleurs-de-lis to honor the French origin of this territory. Each side altar features the Saint in the main image, a corresponding mural, and a **monogram mosaic** from the closed St. Peter Church in Peoria, all of them installed in 2016.

◆ Saint Joseph Altar

In 2007, Bishop Jenky added the statue of St. Joseph to the Cathedral statuary. It was carved by the grandson of the artist who made the statue of Christ the King in 1937.

◆ *The Death of Saint Joseph*



According to tradition, Joseph died before the beginning of Jesus' public ministry. The mural depicts the blessed death of St. Joseph, with Jesus pointing him to heaven with a tear in his eye and Mary at his side. That is why he is the Patron Saint of a happy death. The Archangel Gabriel at the foot of the bed holds a lily, a symbol of purity. He had brought God's message to Mary and reassured Joseph to take Mary as his wife.

◆ Our Lady of Guadalupe Altar

The Cathedral parish has served a large Hispanic population that has a great devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe. Very appropriately, a large image of Our Lady of Guadalupe was painted by a Mexican artist, Jesús Jauregui in 2016, the same year as the mural below.

◆ *Juan Diego Before the Archbishop of Mexico City Juan de Zumárraga*



In 1531, the Virgin Mary appeared to a Mexican peasant, Juan Diego, and asked that the bishop of Mexico City build a church on Tepeyac Hill. Desiring to ensure the authenticity of the apparition, the bishop requested a sign. In the midst of winter, Juan Diego brought him roses blooming on the hill in his garment called a *tilma*. It was not the roses that persuaded the bishop but the image of Mary, miraculously imprinted on Juan Diego's tilma.



◆ SAINT THOMAS MORE CHAPEL (Relic Chapel)

In 1938, Bishop Schlarman, a great devotee of St. Thomas More, dedicated the adjacent winter or daily Mass chapel and new stained-glass windows to St. Thomas More and his two fellow martyrs of the Church in England, John Fisher, and Oliver Plunkett.

The St. Thomas More Chapel is also the usual place for the sacrament of baptism. The marble baptistery, ambry (cabinet with the holy oils), and the Easter candle are housed in the chapel. During the Eastertide, the celebration of baptism takes place near the sanctuary.

In the last twenty years, **the chapel has become a treasury of relics.** These include several Relics of Our Lord's Passion, such as the Relic of the True Cross (*below*). According to ancient tradition, a vigil light burns constantly before them.



In 2016, the original painting of *The Crucifixion* was transferred from the high altar to this chapel (see page 8).



◆ STAINED-GLASS WINDOWS OF THE SAINT THOMAS MORE CHAPEL

The windows were designed by Wilbur H. Burnham of Boston in 1938, widely praised ever since.

◆ Saint Thomas More

An accomplished intellectual and lawyer, St. Thomas More was the chancellor of England under King Henry VIII. Seeking an annulment of his marriage, the king declared himself the head of the Church in England. Thomas More refused to take the Oath of Supremacy, which resulted in his martyrdom in 1535.

◆ Saint John Fisher

Bishop St. John Fisher was renowned for his writings in defense of orthodox Catholic teaching. His zeal for the truth brought him into opposition with King Henry VIII over the king's desire to annul his marriage. Bishop John Fisher vigorously defended papal supremacy, which led to his imprisonment and beheading shortly before Thomas More's martyrdom in 1535.

◆ Saint Oliver Plunkett

The Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of Ireland, St. Oliver Plunkett worked to strengthen the faith among the struggling Irish Catholics, especially during times of persecution, which forced him to live in hiding. He was accused of rebellion, condemned to death, and martyred in 1681.

◆ Father Gabriel de la Ribourde *(right)*

In 1680, a French Franciscan Recollect missionary, Father Gabriel de la Ribourde, and his companions stopped near Seneca, Illinois, to repair their canoes. While he walked away to pray his breviary, Father Gabriel was attacked and killed by members of the Kickapoo tribe.

A cross near Saint Patrick Church in Seneca stands as a memorial to this *protomartyr* of Illinois.



Four additional windows in the chapel's hallway portray North American Martyrs.

◆ Saint Jean de Brebeuf

A French Jesuit, St. Jean de Brebeuf worked among the Huron tribe for twenty-four years, converting seven thousand to the Faith. In 1649, he was captured and tortured to death by the Iroquois. After he died, the Iroquois cut out his heart and ate it; they were so impressed by his courage that they wished to receive a portion of it by consuming his heart.



◆ Saint Rene Goupil (*left*)

A Frenchman, St. Rene Goupil was a skilled surgeon who joined Isaac Jogues for a mission to the Hurons. They were captured by the Iroquois. St. Rene was tortured for two months, and the wounds disfigured him so much that St. Isaac Jogues was reminded of the Prophet Isaiah's words, "He had no majestic bearing to catch our eye, no beauty to draw us to him." In 1642, St. Rene was killed for teaching one of the Iroquois children the Sign of the Cross.

◆ Saint Jean de Lalande

A lay assistant to the Jesuit missionaries in Quebec, Jean de Lalande went with Isaac Jogues to mission to the Iroquois in 1646. They were captured by Mohawks. Isaac Jogues was beheaded and his body was thrown into a river. Jean de Lalande was martyred the next day as he attempted to recover the body of Isaac Jogues.

◆ Saint Isaac Jogues

From a wealthy family in Orleans, France, St. Isaac Jogues joined the Jesuits and requested to work in Quebec. Along with Rene Goupil, Jogues was captured by the Iroquois in 1642. He endured a year of torture until he escaped and returned to France. His index fingers had been cut off, requiring him to obtain special permission from the pope to say Mass.

By his own request, he returned to Quebec. Peace had been reached with the Iroquois, and he set out to mission to them, the very people responsible for his mutilation. On the way, the Mohawks captured him. St. Isaac Jogues was tomahawked and beheaded near Albany, New York, in 1646.



◆ LADY CHAPEL

In 1937, the Lady Chapel was added to the cathedral's main nave to provide a proper connection with the sacristy for full pontifical ceremonies. It was dedicated to Our Lady. All images in the chapel are of women of the Old- and New Testament and their counterpart Saints.

◆ Our Lady of Perpetual Help

Our Lady of Perpetual Help is the titular patron of the chapel and the designated Patroness of the Diocese of Peoria. In 2007, on the 130th anniversary of the arrival of our First Bishop John L. Spalding, her icon was solemnly enthroned by Bishop Daniel R. Jenky, C.S.C., in a gilded triptych.

The large Greek initials on both sides of the image say that Mary is the Mother of God. The child Jesus, clinging to His Mother, is almost losing a sandal; he is frightened by a vision of two angels revealing to Him the instruments of the Passion. Michael the Archangel holds a lance and a reed with a sponge soaked in gall. Archangel Gabriel, who holds the cross and the nails. Jesus' little hands are pressed into Mary's hand as a reminder to us that, just as while on earth, He placed Himself entirely in her hands for protection, so now in Heaven, He has given into her hands all graces for those who ask her.

The wooden gilded triptych was made specifically for the Lady Chapel in 1937. It is richly ornamented and contains various symbols of Mary:

- **Mary's monogram** with twelve stars: "... a crown of twelve stars" (Revelation 12:1)
- **Navicula** (Latin for "small ship," meaning the Church) and a star (Mary) above it
- **Tower of Ivory**, indicating Mary's singular beauty and purity
- **Ark of the Covenant**: as the Mother of God, Mary became His exclusive dwelling place



◆ Tomb of Venerable Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen (left)

In 2019, the centennial year of his priestly ordination in this Cathedral, Fulton Sheen's remains were transferred from St. Patrick Cathedral in New York to the church of his childhood and vocation, St. Mary Cathedral in Peoria. His tomb is below the image of Our Lady of Perpetual Help. At left is a listing of key dates in Fulton Sheen's life. At right is his coat of arms and episcopal motto, "Da Per Matrem Me Venire" ("Grant that I may come [to You] through the mother [Mary]"). The letters JMJ, which he would scrawl on a blackboard at the start of his television programs, honor Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. In his autobiography *Treasure in Clay*, Archbishop Sheen wrote that

he hoped someone would put JMJ on his tombstone.

◆ Saint Teresa of Calcutta

The portrait of Mother Teresa was made during her memorable visit to the Peoria Cathedral in 1995. **Her connection with Peoria has been maintained since the late 1950s through yearly donations from our Diocesan Council of Catholic Women and also through the presence of her Sisters in Peoria.** Below the portrait is a relic of St. Teresa's hair, donated by her Sisters, the Missionaries of Charity.

◆ Saint Anne

The statue was modeled after the famous sculpture of Saint Anne de Beaupre in Canada, when, in 1937, Bishop Schlarman chose to make its replica for the Cathedral in Peoria. St. Anne is depicted wearing a crown as is the Child Mary, who will become the future Queen of the Universe.

◆ Madonna (*right*)

In 1913, on Bishop Spalding's Golden Jubilee of priestly ordination, a young Peorian and talented architect, sculptor, and designer Joseph G. Cowell, was given the task of the Cathedral redecoration. Along with three new marble altars and windows, the work included this new statue of Madonna for a side altar. **This statue was present when the young Fulton Sheen served Mass in the Cathedral and was ordained a priest.**

Sometime during the 1960s, the statue found its new home in the garden of the Guardian Angel Orphanage in West Peoria, where it stayed for several years. Roughened by the weather yet still beautiful, the tender Madonna finally returned to the Cathedral to a place of honor in the Lady Chapel.

◆ Saint Therese

As a fifteen-year-old girl, Therese of Lisieux, France, desired to become a Carmelite. She was at first rejected as too young, but a year later was allowed to enter the cloister. She devoted herself to doing small tasks with great love, formulating a spirituality of her "Little Way." Out of obedience, she wrote her autobiography, the popular *Story of a Soul*. During the last three years of her life, she heroically suffered from tuberculosis and died in 1897 at the age of twenty-four. **She is especially venerated in the Diocese of Peoria as the Patroness of Vocations.**

◆ Golden Roses of Saint Therese

On both sides of the statue of St. Therese of Lisieux are encased six golden roses with one beautiful message. A priest once promised that for every vocation to consecrated life from his parish he would give a Golden Rose to St. Therese, and he has done so twelve times. **As the Patroness of Vocations, St. Therese is honored and frequently invoked by our seminarians and by anyone discerning a vocation in the Church.**





◆ STAINED-GLASS WINDOWS OF THE LADY CHAPEL

The windows designed by Wilbur H. Burnham of Boston were installed in 1936. They depict in pairs the Old- and New-Testament women and their modern-day matching Saints.

◆ Eve

The first woman from the Book of Genesis is surrounded by related characters: the first man, Adam, the Hand of God, and the angel guarding the Garden of Eden with a flaming sword. Lurking at the bottom is the serpent, the Devil, who seduced Adam and Eve to sin.

◆ Ave Maria

This window depicts Mary at the Annunciation. At the top of the window is the Holy Spirit, symbolized by the dove, descending on Mary. A candle, a symbol of prayer, and string, a symbol of work, illustrate Mary's devotion to both. A golden tower with blue shields references Mary as the Tower of Ivory and the House of Gold, as a symbol of her purity. At the bottom is the Archangel Gabriel appearing to Mary.

◆ Ruth (*right*)

The Book of Ruth in the Old Testament tells the story of a Moabite widow who left her native land to accompany her mother-in-law to Israel. There, Ruth gleaned barley in the fields of Boaz in order to provide for herself and her mother-in-law. Boaz espoused Ruth, and she became the great-grandmother of King David.

◆ Saint Clare of Assisi

Born to a noble family in Assisi, Clare chose a life of poverty like her contemporary St. Francis, whose preaching struck a chord in Clare's soul. Later, inspired by her joyful life, her own mother, sister, and other women joined Clare in a new religious community, the Second Order of Saint Francis, also known as the Poor Clares. St. Clare is often depicted with a ciborium or monstrance because of a famous story about her defense against a mob invading the convent. Raising the ciborium in their sight, the attackers fell backward and fled.

◆ Judith

According to the Old-Testament story, to save her Jewish nation, a valiant woman Judith made her way into the Assyrian camp and the tent of Holofernes. Intoxicated by wine, he was enticed by Judith's beauty. Taking advantage of his inebriated state, she cut off his head, leading the Jews to victory over the Assyrians.



◆ Saint Joan of Arc

Born in 1412 to a French peasant family, Joan lived a simple childhood until the age of thirteen, when she began having visions of the Saints and hearing voices commanding her to assist the King of France against the English. Joan was given command of the French armies and led them to victory, driving the English out of Orleans. Eventually, the English captured Joan and burned her at the stake as a heretic in 1431. She was nineteen years old.

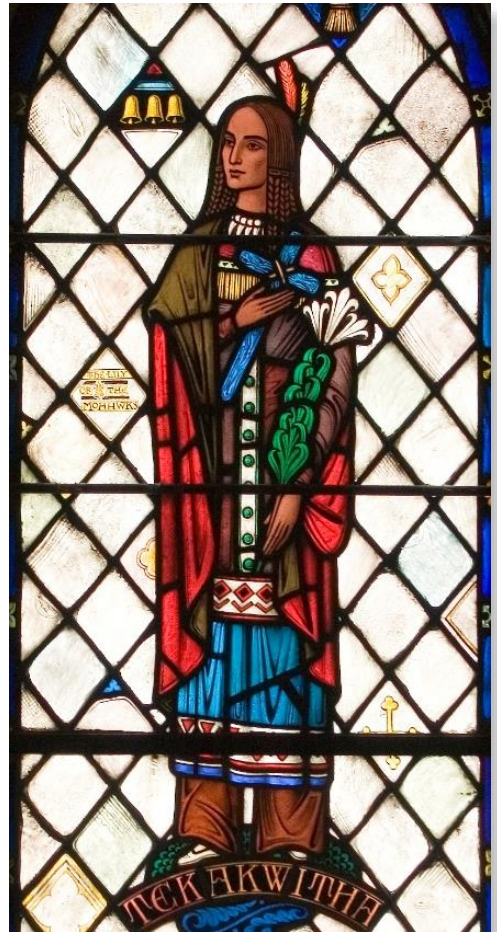
◆ Esther

Armed with fervent prayer and penance, Esther, a queen from the Old Testament, risked her own life and dared to approach the king with her request to spare her Jewish people from being destroyed. She won his favor and her nation was saved.

◆ Saint Kateri Tekakwitha *(right)*

Kateri Tekakwitha of the Mohawk Tribe at Ossernenon (today's New York state territory) was orphaned as a child due to a smallpox epidemic, which left her scarred and almost blind. Desiring to be baptized and consecrate herself to Christ, she refused a marriage urged by her adoptive family and was forced to leave her tribe. After her death in 1680, at the age of twenty-four, due to a long illness, her face was cleared of all smallpox scars and became beautiful again. For her purity, she is also known as the Lily of the Mohawks.

In 1936 when the windows were designed, Kateri's cause for canonization had been opened since 1884, but not progressing. For this reason, it was quite unusual that she should be featured on a church window. Bishop Schlarman, providentially believing in her cause, put her image on the window long before she became the first Native-American Saint of the Catholic Church in 2012.





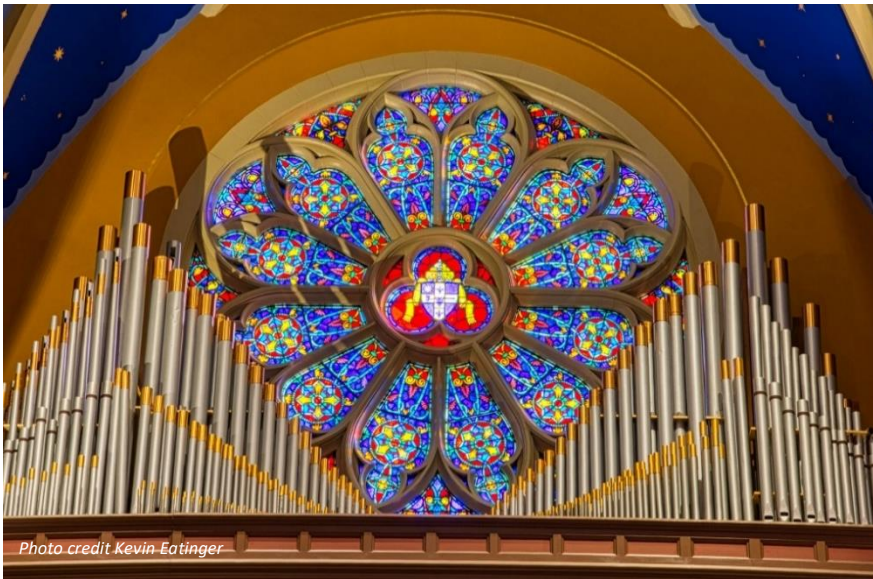
◆ ORGAN

In the late fall of 1935, Bishop Joseph H. Schlarman appointed a noted church musician Dom Ermin Vitry, OSB, from St. Mary's Institute in O'Fallon, Missouri, to design the new cathedral organ. He personally supervised the construction of the instrument at the Wicks Factory in Highland, Illinois. It was built to be a three-manual organ with 3,329 pipes and keys made of genuine ivory. **In 1937, it represented the greatest and latest achievement in organ building.**

- The organ weighs 28,000 pounds; 12,000 pounds of metal were used to make the pipes.
- The wire for the electrical connections is long enough to circle the globe several times.
- Eleven kinds of lumber were used to make the various wooden parts.
- A select group of seventy-three experienced organ builders took part in its construction.
- Eight weeks were required for the organ's installation.
- The most recent tonal improvements were done by Hal Gober in 2005.

◆ GREAT ROSE WINDOW

In October of 1937, a large great rose window was installed in the organ gallery above the Cathedral entrance doors. The window features the diocesan crest in its center. For a detailed description of the crest, please refer to the earlier section on the narthex on page 6.





◆ CONCLUSION

Bishop John Lancaster Spalding often praised nobleness and beauty. He wrote:

“The true function of art is interpretation. It translates nature [and this cathedral] into words and forms of truth and beauty.”

This is why and how the Cathedral makes God’s presence so profound and palpable. May all who enter here experience that this is the house of God and a gate of heaven.



◆ MASS TIMES

Monday - Friday 7:00 am (English)

Sunday 10:30 am (English), 12:15 pm (Spanish)

◆ For more information visit catholicpeoria.com and celebratesheen.com

CATHEDRAL OF ST. MARY

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The Catholic Diocese of Peoria * 309.671.1550 * catholicpeoria.com
Most Reverend Louis Tylka, Bishop of Peoria

