

**The Memorial of Saint Bede the Venerable  
Mass of Thanksgiving and Dedication  
Decatur Catholic Radio WDCR 88.9 FM  
St. Mary's Hospital Chapel  
Decatur, Illinois**

**+Most Reverend Thomas John Paprocki  
Bishop of Springfield in Illinois**

Dear Reverend Fathers and Deacons, brothers and sisters in Christ, I am very happy to be with you today to celebrate this Mass of Thanksgiving for Decatur Catholic Radio. As your Bishop, I am happy also dedicate this new station for the proclamation of the Gospel, mindful of the command of Jesus to “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” (Matthew 28:19-20).

I thank you for the great efforts you have already exerted in bringing Catholic Radio to the Decatur area and I congratulate you on this fine achievement for the faith. The programs that will soon be heard cover a wide array of interests, from spiritual insights and catechesis to Papal Masses and other liturgical celebrations. Catholic radio both lifts the heart to God and feeds the hunger of the intellect.

Today's memorial of Saint Bede is a fitting day to launch WDCR. Though Saint Bede was taken from us to see the face of God 1,274 years ago, the example of his life is of great benefit to us as we seek to announce the Gospel of Jesus Christ on the airwaves of the Decatur area.

Saint Bede spent all but seven years of his life in the monastery of St. Peter at Monkwearmouth in the Northumbrian region of England; he was 64 or 65 years of age at the time of his death. Of his life Saint Bede says, "I wholly applied myself to the study of the Scripture; and amidst the observance of the monastic *Rule* and the daily charge of singing in church, I always took delight in learning, or teaching, or writing."

So deeply did he love the Scriptures and study them that he could rightly say, "With all my heart I seek you" (Psalm 119:10) and from within the monastery he could say, "I find joy in the way of your decrees more than in all riches" (Psalm 119:14). It is this same message that WDCR will now proclaim for all to hear inviting the faithful to grow in knowledge and love of the faith and inviting nonbelievers to an encounter with Jesus Christ.

It was his love of learning and the great depths into which he plunged himself into the mysteries of God found in the Scriptures that earned him the title, even within his own lifetime, of *Venerabilis*, the Venerable. And though he rarely left the monastery, his teachings and reflections on the faith spread far and wide during his lifetime, and afterwards they have spread even farther.

The Venerable Bede spent his life in the service of the Gospel and sought always to help the faithful better understand the Word of God and to encounter in it, ever more deeply, the love of God. His theology is an “interweaving [of] the Bible, [the] liturgy, and history;” in short, his theology is eminently Catholic.<sup>1</sup> It was to this task – of expounding the faith of Jesus Christ entrusted to the Church - that he devoted himself with great zeal and joy; it is to this same task that WDCR will soon be devoted.

Reflecting on the teachings of Saint Bede, the Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI notes that the example of Saint Bede is timely even for us today. Particularly noteworthy is the realization that Saint Bede “recalls two essential tasks: to examine the marvels of

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<sup>1</sup> Pope Benedict XVI, General Audience Address, February 18, 2009.

the Word of God in order to present them in an attractive form to the faithful” and “to explain the dogmatic truths, avoiding heretical complications and keeping to ‘Catholic simplicity’, with the attitude of the lowly and humble to whom God is pleased to reveal the mysteries of the Kingdom.”<sup>2</sup>

These two tasks of presenting the marvels of God to both believers and nonbelievers alike and of clearly and simply explaining the teachings of the Church are your tasks as well; Catholic radio exists for these two purposes. If you dedicate yourselves to them, you will, with Saint Bede, spread the Gospel far and wide to all who seek the truth.

May God give us this grace. Amen.

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<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*