

Chrism Mass
Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception
March 26, 2013

† Most Reverend Thomas John Paprocki
Bishop of Springfield in Illinois

Reverend Monsignors and Fathers, Deacons, Consecrated Religious,
and my dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

This past Saturday some-newly installed bells were rung for the first time at the Cathedral of *Notre Dame* in Paris, France. But this was no ordinary set of bells, nor were they a simple replacement of some old ones that had worn out. You see, during the French Revolution at the end of the eighteenth century, the new French republic ordered the removal of some 10,000 bells from the belfries of France to be melted down and made into cannons and coins. “Not even Notre Dame, France’s most celebrated cathedral, was spared from this act of state-sanctioned vandalism. Its biggest bell, a 13-ton bourdon bell named Emmanuel, remains to this day, but the other nine were destroyed.”¹

In 1856, four new bells were made, but they were cast of poor-quality cannon metal and they were the wrong shape and size, so that they rang totally off key. Regis Singer, who supervised Notre Dame's bell project,