

**Homily for Bishop Paprocki's Tenth Anniversary of Episcopal Consecration
March 19, 2013**

**Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception
Springfield, Illinois**

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

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

Earlier today Pope Francis celebrated his Inaugural Mass in St. Peter's Square, or as the Vatican Information Service lists it, the "Eucharistic celebration to inaugurate the Petrine ministry." During this liturgy, the new Roman Pontiff received the symbols of his office: the pallium, symbol of a shepherd made from wool, and the fisherman's ring. The prayers in the libretto that accompanied these gestures made clear that these symbols were bestowed on the new Pope by the Lord Himself from the hands of a Cardinal acting as the Lord's agent.

Pope Francis opened his homily by saying, "I thank the Lord that I can celebrate this Holy Mass for the inauguration of my Petrine ministry on the solemnity of Saint Joseph, the spouse of the Virgin Mary and the patron of the universal Church. It is a significant coincidence, and it is also the