

**Homily Outline for Mass Celebrating the Tenth Anniversary of the  
Installation of Bishop Thomas John Paprocki as the  
Ninth Bishop of Springfield in Illinois**

**Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception  
Memorial of Saints Thomas More and John Fisher  
June 22, 2020**

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

I. *Omnia in bonum.*

A. As my Latin teacher, Father Reginald Foster, taught: it is not enough to get the general sense of the translation; what does it actually say?

1. Not “all things in the good.” That would be with the ablative, *omnia in bono*. *In + ablative* = place where, would mean, “all things in the good.” That makes no sense.
2. Not “all is well.” That would be with the adverb, *omnia bene*. That would also convey a whole different meaning than that intended by this saying. We can’t really say “all is well” when we know it is not.
3. *Omnia in bonum*: note that *bonum* is in the accusative case following the preposition *in*. *In + accusative* = motion, into a destination. Thus, *Omnia in bonum* means, “All things lead to good.”

B. This is not intended as a pedantic lesson in Latin grammar, but aims at capturing a profound theological truth: “All things lead to good.”

1. Do we really believe that?
2. I admit that I struggle with this at times, at least when I cannot see or anticipate what good can come out of something bad.
3. For example, cancelling all my Confirmations and public events this Spring.

4. I did not know this at the outset, but cancelling these events cleared my schedule to write a book: *Running for a Higher Purpose: Eight Steps to Spiritual and Physical Fitness*, to be published by Ave Maria Press at Notre Dame next Spring.

## II. Today's second reading from the Office of Readings for the Memorial of Saints John Fisher and Thomas More

A. From a letter written in prison to his daughter Margaret by Saint Thomas More  
(The English Works of Sir Thomas More, London, 1557, p. 1454)

B. Writing from his prison cell in the Tower of London, Sir Thomas More wrote, "God's grace has given the king a gracious frame of mind toward me, so that as yet he has taken from me nothing but my liberty. In doing this His Majesty has done me such great good with respect to spiritual profit that I trust that among all the great benefits he has heaped so abundantly upon me I count my imprisonment the very greatest. I cannot, therefore, mistrust the grace of God."

C. Then he concluded his letter with these words to his daughter: "Finally, Margaret, I know this well: that without my fault [God] will not let me be lost. I shall, therefore, with good hope commit myself wholly to him. And if he permits me to perish for my faults, then I shall serve as praise for his justice. But in good faith, Meg, I trust that his tender pity shall keep my poor soul safe and make me commend his mercy. And, therefore, my own good daughter, do not let your mind be troubled over anything that shall happen to me in this world. Nothing can come but what God wills. And I am very sure that whatever that be, however bad it may seem, it shall indeed be the best."

D. In short, *Omnia in bonum*.

III. As I celebrate my Tenth Anniversary today of my Installation as the Ninth Bishop of Springfield in Illinois, I give thanks to Almighty God for putting me here and for graces received: *Omnia in bonum*.

- A. In my homily for Evening prayer the night before my Installation, I said that, in the week prior to my Installation, "I had I attended the Special Assembly of the Bishops of the United States, which addressed the topic, 'The Bishop as Agent of Hope for His Priests.' I hope to be such an agent of hope for the priests of the Diocese of Springfield as a father, a brother and a friend to you."
- B. I concluded that homily by singing the opening words of Psalm 115: "*Non nobis, Domine, non nobis, sed nomine tuo, da Gloriam*" - "Not to us. Lord, not to us, but to your name, give the glory."
- C. The next day, in my homily at the Mass of Installation ten years ago today, I made reference to my Episcopal motto, *Lex Cordis Caritas*, Latin for, "The Law of the Heart is Love."
1. I said, "I see my primary task as bishop is to love you, more precisely, to radiate Christ's love with the help of God's grace throughout the twenty-eight counties of central Illinois that comprise the State of Illinois. I come to our state capital not as a sort of Catholic lobbyist, but as a shepherd of souls. But for me to radiate Christ's love also means to proclaim His truth, since if we seek to love as He did, then we must do our best to act as He did and do everything we can to make sure that our deeds conform to His divine will to love."
  2. To reinforce that message, I had the congregation sing with me a song called "Jesus Loves You." I said that "this sums up my whole message as a bishop."
  3. I won't ask you to sing that again now, for I hope that my ministry for the past ten years has communicated to you in no small way that, as the Vicar of Christ in this diocese, I love you very much. And in this way, I hope you know in the depths of your heart that Jesus loves you with the abundant streams of grace and love that pour forth from His Most Sacred Heart.

May God give us this grace. Amen.