



## THE CITY OF SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

MAYOR DOMENIC J. SARNO

*HOME OF THE BASKETBALL HALL OF FAME*

### **Fourth Inaugural Address**

**Domenic J. Sarno**

**Fifty Fourth Mayor of the City of Springfield, Massachusetts**

**January 4, 2016**

Thank you, Cynthia, for that very kind introduction.

Bishop Rozanski, reverend clergy of many faiths, Congressman Neal, Sheriff Ashe, distinguished members of the Springfield City Council, School Committee, elected and appointed officials, my fellow citizens, welcome to our historic and beautiful Old First Church.

Of special note, this is the last inauguration event for two outstanding public servants: Sheriff Mike Ashe (unless you're coming back!) and City Clerk/Attorney Wayman Lee (I know you're not coming back!). Please let's give them a rousing round of applause and thanks.

First of all, please let me thank and honor my lovely wife Carla and daughters Cassandra and Chiara for standing by me, not only during the triumphs, but more importantly, during the trials and tribulations – love you all. By the way, happy Sweet 16 Birthday Chiara, and she hit her first three-point shot the other night too!

To my mom and dad, Clara and Alfonso Sarno, Italian immigrants, who in their childhood days survived underground during the Nazi occupation of World War II- thank you for instilling in me the value of respect and hard work ethic- love you, and by the way, dad, Happy 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday! He's still cutting hair – how's mine look today!?

Today, it is my high honor and great privilege to take the oath of office as Mayor of the City of Springfield for the fourth time.

I am humbled by the trust and confidence that has been placed in me as I continue my stewardship of this great city.

Rest assured, I am energized and eager to engage the challenges that will arise over the next four years. I pledge to lead us ever forward with a steady hand as we strive to achieve our full potential as a community.

I am more committed to this mission than I have ever been. And I am more optimistic about our collective future than I have ever been.

On this inauguration day, it is entirely appropriate that we take stock of where we stand and where we're going.

First, let's remember how far we have come. We have put the most serious financial crisis in our city's history far behind us. By any objective measure, the City of Springfield is financially stronger than ever.

We have carefully and strategically generated substantial and broad-based positive momentum that will sustain us long into the future.

Today, I have every confidence that Springfield stands on the dawn of an unprecedented renaissance.

We're in the midst of a five year program involving over \$2.7 billion that's "billion" with a "b," in private and public investment. This investment will re-make the very face of this city and position us for the future.

Our downtown is being reinvented with two mega-projects under construction: a revitalized Union Station and a world-class MGM resort casino. Other key projects involve growing institutions of higher education, an exciting new state-of-the-art innovation center, and much-needed market-rate housing all in the core of our central business district.

Our manufacturing base, the historical competitive advantage of this city, is now on the rebound with the new CRRC rail car manufacturing facility being built in East Springfield. We fully expect that this plant will create more spinoff manufacturing by Springfield-based entrepreneurs in the years to come.

Our neighborhoods are going through a resurgence with new and rehabilitated housing under construction throughout the city and our parks, libraries and museums system is second to none.

Our crime rate is down. But let's be candid, we still have a long way to go in controlling crime. Drug dealers and criminals be forewarned, we are coming after you – all of you – in a relentless way. But, we can't do it alone- I need your help.

Our public schools are on the rise and the test scores prove it. But we still need to do better for our kids, and we will.

Yes, these next four years are going to be truly exciting as many of the initiatives that we have launched will come to fruition. I look forward to celebrating with all of you as milestone after milestone is achieved.

But, this is no time for resting on our laurels. This is our moment to maximize our leverage. This is precisely the time when we should press forward with even more ambitious initiatives.

It is up to us to pull together, to take full advantage of every single opportunity that presents itself. We need to coalesce around visionary initiatives that will build on our successes and not only capitalize on our momentum, but accelerate it.

This morning, let all of us, citizens and public officials alike, re-dedicate ourselves to building an even greater City of Springfield.

I believe that, working together as a team, we can create a thriving city: where all our citizens are safe in their homes and on our streets; where all our kids can pursue quality educational opportunities from pre-school to college; where all our residents have access to employment opportunities that take full advantage of their talents and are paid a living wage; where all our neighborhoods are great places to live and to raise a family; where all our residents enjoy a downtown that is bustling as the hub of commerce, government, entertainment and the arts; where the quality of life for all of us is the equal to or better than any other medium-sized city in the United States of America.

Believe me, I am not naïve. After eight years as your Mayor, I know only too well that achieving this ambitious vision will require enormous creativity and very hard work and of course, lots of money.

But I am reminded of the words of the legendary city planner, Daniel Burnham, who advised: "Make no little plans. . . Aim high in hope and work . . . Think big."

Yes, I am absolutely convinced that working together, each and every one of us, has the potential to position this city for long term prosperity.

Our dramatic recovery from the 2011 tornado is proof positive of the character and resilience of this city. Let us harness that same grassroots community spirit as we press forward toward this noble vision.

And let me say a word or two to those few naysayers who contend that Springfield's best days are behind her. I say this notion is nonsense. The only limitations we face are the ones we put upon ourselves.

The progress we have achieved is real; the investments being made are real; and the benefits that will be realized by our citizens are real.

Now is not the time for the pessimism and doubt.

Now is the time to move boldly forward in fulfilment of the sacred oaths of office that we take today.

I am totally enthusiastic about our prospects for a very bright future. Always remember and never forget: we are one, we are strong, we are Springfield!

Now, let's get to work!

God Bless you, God bless your families, and God bless our Springfield.

Thank you so, so much.

Domenic J. Sarno  
Springfield Symphony Hall  
January 4, 2016