

Fr. Charles Puthota's Blog

April 11, 2021

From the Pastor's Desktop



Dear Parishioners of St. Elizabeth,

Easter Season: Hope you are enjoying the spiritual blessings and graces of the Easter season. Jesus Christ is alive and active in our lives. That is what Easter simply means. It's true he was killed in a horrible way---crucified on a cross. But on the third day, even as he had promised, he rose from the dead. His Father who had let his own son suffer and die, did not abandon him, but raised him to new life. Our lives are understood in the light of the resurrection of Christ. All our predicaments and perils do not have the power to destroy us, even though it might at times appear that way. Thanks to the risen Christ, we shall overcome. We shall have hope. We shall receive the power and strength. We can experience the process of dying and rising to a new life. The whole of the Bible and all that God has done throughout the history of the human race can be viewed from the most efficacious vantage point of the resurrection of Jesus. As someone has said: "The gospels do not explain the resurrection of Jesus; the resurrection explains the gospels." If we can keep dying to self and to our unreasonable and uncharitable convictions, prejudices, preconceived notions, and conditioned-predetermined ways of living our lives---and keep rising to loving, selfless ways, then the dynamics of Easter are really at work in our lives. We are an Easter people! Let the spirit of Easter make a difference in our lives.

Divine Mercy Sunday: Three years ago, I visited in Poland the shrines connected with the Divine Mercy devotion and celebrated Masses at those holy places. This Sunday is Divine Mercy Sunday. God is merciful. To be merciful is God's identity and his constant preoccupation. In Jesus Christ God's mercy has been given to us in astonishing and incredible ways. We are created for love. How can we go against the way of love and mercy? May God have mercy on us all so that we can all together practice mercy toward one another.

Archdiocesan Annual Appeal (AAA): Our goal is to raise \$40,000. We are making good progress. Please see your names on the last page of the parish bulletin. So far you have donated \$30,754. I would like to thank you all for your kind and generous donations. Some of you have given 1% and more, which is \$400 and more. Those of you who have not given so far, please would you be kind enough to make this offering to AAA as early as possible and consider keeping AAA as one of your important annual donations meant for furthering God's work in our Archdiocese?

New Parish Website: Please check out our new parish website at <http://stelizabethsf.org> Or you may simply google St. Elizabeth Church, San Francisco, and click on the website. It's user-friendly and easy to navigate. I would like to thank Rayna Garibaldi who has been the webmaster. Gary DeMartini will now be our webmaster. Some of the information on the website is still being uploaded. If you have any suggestions for our website, please do pass them on to our parish office.

New Sound System in our Church: Next time you are in our church, please check out our new sound system. Many of you have told me that you can now hear clearly. I would like to thank Tony Belo who has installed this system and will be finetuning it over a period of time to give us the optimum sound quality. This is obviously a big help for us to pray better, to hear God's word better, and to hear each other better as we gather for our liturgical celebrations.

500 Years of Christianity in the Philippines Celebration: Our parish will celebrate this milestone on Sunday May 16 at the 11:30 a.m. Mass with our Archbishop presiding. Save the date! "It was 500 years ago, in 1521, that the Portuguese explorer Ferdinand Magellan, representing the Spanish Empire, arrived in the Visayan region of the Philippines. Thus began the process of European colonization, which eventually led to the establishment of Christianity. To this day, the Philippines remains the only major predominantly Catholic nation in Asia" says Fr. Ricky Manalo. Congratulations to the Filipinos in our parish and the Archdiocese who are marking this 500th anniversary with joy and gratitude! Your faith, kindness, and hospitality are an inspiration to others!

Thank You: Our Easter celebrations went very well. Thank you to all those who attended our services. To all the volunteers who worked together to make the celebrations beautiful and prayerful, my deep gratitude. All those who decorated, all those who cleaned the church for sanitization, all those who set up everything, all those who donated the Easter lilies, all those who ensured safety and security for everyone---to all of you my thanks on behalf of the whole parish community. As I have said before, the quality of volunteers at our parish is amazing and impressive. Thank you!

Catholic Joke: It was Palm Sunday but because of a sore throat, 5-year-old Johnny stayed home from church with a sitter. When the family returned home, they were carrying several palm fronds. Johnny asked them what they were for. "People held them over Jesus' head as he walked by," his father told him. "Wouldn't you know it," Johnny fumed, "the one Sunday I don't go and he shows up."

Your Friend & Pastor,

Fr. Charles Puthota