

# Fr. Charles Puthota's Blog

September 5, 2021

## A Spiritual Reflection

From the Pastor's Desktop



Dear Parishioners of St. Elizabeth,

### O Great Spirit!

*“O Great Spirit, whose voice I hear in the winds, and whose breath gives life to all the world, hear me!*

*I am small and weak. I need your strength and wisdom.*

*Let me walk in beauty, and make my eyes ever behold the red and purple sunset.*

*Make my hands respect the things you have made and my ears sharp to hear your voice.*

*Make me wise so that I may understand the things you have taught my people.*

*Let me learn the lessons you have hidden in every leaf and rock.*

*I seek strength not to be greater than my brother, but to fight my greatest enemy---myself.*

*Make me always ready to come to you with clean hands and straight eyes.*

*So when life fades, as the fading sunset, my spirit may come to you without shame.”*

Author Unknown

**Reflection:** This Native American prayer invites us, as do fundamental teachings in all religions, to wake up to the mystery of God by perceiving the insignificance as well the significance of our lives.

On the one hand, we are to view our lives against the backdrop of the cosmic dimensions of the universe. In the post-Hubble era, says Dennis Hamm, some astronomers and astrophysicists have postulated, by considering the age of the chemical elements, of star clusters, and of the oldest white dwarf stars (collapsed stars), that the universe is between 12 and 20 billion years old and that it may be around for 200 trillion more years! This calculation is framed by theories of the Big Bang and the Big Crunch.

What a speck human history is! How vast the universe is! When we focus on the human race, as the wise man says, “one generation goes, and another generation comes, the earth abides forever” (Ecclesiastes 1:4). Within the vastness of human history itself, our individual lives are not even a drop in the ocean. Most of us may not even know the names of our great grandparents and their parents are lost forever in the misty past. When we stand on the seashore gazing at the vast ocean or on a mountain surrounded by other mountains under the vast blue sky or on a cloudless starry night, we cannot but be struck by the majesty of the universe and the smallness of our individual life. Our lives are mere footprints on the sands forever being washed away by the waves.

On the other hand, our individual lives are precious and significant because of the love we have for one another. We forge relationships from the moment of our conception and strive to find meaning in our place in the universe. We are proud of our identity and develop a strong sense of belonging to family, community, organizations, and social groups, through which we realize our potential and find fulfillment. Most importantly, we are precious in the eyes of our God in Jesus Christ, who has remembered each one of us in a unique way and brought us into existence, giving us a purpose and role so that we can understand the significance of our existence in the vastness of the universe and the panorama of time. In other words, even though we are insignificant and lost in the grandeur of time, we are made for eternity. We came from God and are destined toward God. Eternity is written into our very genes. The universe is sanctified by the mystery of the incarnation and the glory of the resurrection. We are small and weak, but God has made us for glory and grandeur. We are God’s own children, bearing His image and likeness.

**Action:** Because of your insignificance, set aside your illusion that you are the center of the universe. In your relationship with God, people, and the universe, strive to bring them into the center of your life; become selfless and self-effacing. Let humility become your way of life. Because of your significance, however, act in ways that your life is worthwhile. Rise to the calling God has given you. Wake up to the reality and mystery of God. Spend your time in love and service. You can make a difference; you can help the situation; you can light a candle instead of cursing darkness. You can help change the world for the better by changing yourself. With God you can re-create the world. With Jesus you can co-redeem the world. Are you ready? Are you adventurous? Are you generous?

Your Friend & Pastor,

Fr. Charles Puthota