

Fr. Charles Puthota's Blog

November 28, 2021

From the Pastor's Desktop



Dear Parishioners of St. Elizabeth,

Advent: We have arrived at this spiritual season of Advent. The First Sunday of Advent ushers us into the time of waiting for Christ at Christmas. The hauntingly melodious and meaningful hymn "O come, O come, Emmanuel and ransom captive Israel that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel" captures the spirit of longing and sadness --- and an expectation of joy. We'll be very busy this season of Advent with many external preparations for the upcoming Christmas. Amidst all the hectic activities, the Church invites us to prepare the heart and mind for the Lord's coming. The focus is Christ and his coming into our lives and the world. All that we do this season should really be related to welcoming Jesus into our hearts and families. Remember there was no room in the inn some 2000 years ago? Is it possible that there is no room in the inn for Christ in our times? Christianity is Christ and the intimate connection with him and one another. Advent brings us to the center of Christianity: Christ. Our prayer this season will be: "Come, Lord Jesus." The season of Advent is also a semi-penitential time. An indication of this is the violet colors and the muted decoration in the church and the non-singing of Gloria. These are reminders --- liturgical hints --- that we are to be engaged in a penitential preparation for the coming of Christ, so that when he does come at Christmas, purified of our selfishness and sinfulness, our hearts will burst with joy.

Advent Quotes: "Each of us is an innkeeper who decides if there is room for Jesus." --- Neal A. Maxwell. "Hope sees the invisible, feels the intangible, achieves the impossible." "Advent: Arrival, Start, Beginning, Dawn, Initiation, Introduction." "Advent: Close your eyes and open your mind." "Advent: the time to listen for footsteps --- you can't hear footsteps when you're running yourself." --- Bill McKibben. "The season of Advent means there is something on the horizon the likes of which we have never seen before. So stay. Sit. Linger. Tarry. Ponder. Wait. Behold. Wonder. There will be time enough for running." ---Jan Richardson. "Advent, like its cousin Lent, is a season for prayer and reformation of our hearts."--- Edward Hays.

Over 50 Group's Thanksgiving Luncheon: Last Thursday Nov. 18, Thanksgiving luncheon was held at Cantwell Hall by Over 50 Group. Over 70 people attended it. The luncheon was preceded by a game of Bingo. The food was delicious and the company was gregarious. I'd like to thank the organizers (Emma, Elsa, Florence, and their team) for making meticulous arrangements for the success of this event. If anyone would like to join this group that meets on Thursdays, you are most welcome to do so. Please contact Emma or the parish office.

Our Parish Participation in the Process for Synod of Bishops: As I have announced to you earlier, Pope Francis has convoked a synod for the Universal Church. The theme is: "Communion, Participation, and Mission." The purpose is to consult and dialog with the whole Church to receive feedback and initiate renewal of the Church. Our Archdiocesan component of the consultation will run from Advent 2021 through April 2022. All parishes will participate in this process on one of 25 synod engagement sessions in 2022. I have nominated Richard John, Antonia and Carol Velasco, and Richard & Maricon Padua as our primary contact persons. Please keep this process in your prayers and when the time comes, I'd invite everyone to participate in the process recommended by the Archdiocese.

Simbang Gabi Masses: These Masses will be held December 16 through 24 at the regular 8:30 a.m. Masses. On Sunday Dec. 19, it will be at the 9:30 a.m. Mass. Coordinator of these Masses is Gloria Trinidad. If you'd like to sponsor or participate in any way, please do contact her. Let's make our Simbang Gabi this year special, even though we are still in the shadows of the pandemic.

Pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 2022: Anyone would like to go with me on a pilgrimage to Jordan and the Holy Land next year October 05- 17, 2022? It's 11 months from now! You can put it on your calendar and plan ahead, if you'd like! If you are interested, call 206 Tours at 1-800-206-8687. Or for detailed itinerary and other information, check out the webpage: <http://www.pilgrimages.com/frputhota/>

A Couple of Stories to Ponder: 1. An American tourist was travelling abroad for the first time. On arrival at his first foreign airport, he was faced with a choice between two passageways, one of which was marked CITIZENS and the other ALIENS. He promptly headed for the first one. When told later that he would have to stand in the other line, he protested, "But I'm no alien. I'm an American!"

2. When the English playwright Oscar Wilde arrived at his club late at night after witnessing the first presentation of a play that had been a complete failure, someone asked, "How did your play go tonight, Oscar?" "Oh," said Wilde, "the play was a great success. The audience was a failure."

Joke: Johnny had been misbehaving and was sent to his room. After a while he emerged and informed his mother that he had thought it over and then said a prayer. "Fine," said the pleased mother. "If you ask God to help you not misbehave, He will help you." "Oh, I didn't ask Him to help me not misbehave," said Johnny. "I asked Him to help you put up with me."

Wishing you a hope-filled Season of Advent,

Your Friend & Pastor,

Fr. Charles Puthota