

# Fr. Charles Puthota's Blog

February 6, 2022

From the Pastor's Desktop



## **Dear Parishioners of St. Elizabeth,**

**Archdiocesan Annual Appeal (AAA):** I'm giving you a heads-up on the letter I'm putting in the mail on February 07 for each parishioner of St. Elizabeth about this year's concerted campaign to raise \$30,500 in support of the Archdiocesan ministries. Next weekend, February 12-13, at Masses I'll be speaking about AAA and officially launching our annual drive. I humbly seek your support in making this drive successful as quickly as possible. Thank you for supporting it whole heartedly last year and I'm hoping this year too you will support it with the same enthusiasm and fervor.

**Parish Lenten Retreat on March 12:** As you know, Lent starts with Ash Wednesday on March 02. As part of our Lenten practices and observances, I'll be giving a retreat for half a day on Saturday March 12. It will start with the 8:30 a.m. Mass, followed by coffee and donuts in Cantwell Hall. Then there will be three sessions with intervals in between. It will end with lunch about 1:00 p.m. Registration fee: \$15. Since food will be served indoors, vaccination proof will be required as per the City and Archdiocesan Covid protocols. Registration forms will be made available next week.

**A Survey related to the Synod:** The survey is underway at our parish. Please do fill out the forms and return them as promptly as possible. You may also go online at [www.sfarch.org/synod](http://www.sfarch.org/synod) to take this survey. The deadline of February 15 is fast approaching.

**For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, and Mission:** Please visit our parish website for resources on the Synod. The Synod is a convention of bishops to discuss matters of the church and seek advice from the Pope. Pope Francis formally opened the Synod of Bishops on Oct. 10, 2021 with a solemn Mass in St Peter's Basilica.

The Synod, generally speaking, can be defined as an assembly of bishops representing the Catholic episcopate, having the task of helping the Pope in the governing of the universal Church by rendering their counsel.

The Synod on Synodality is a two-year process of listening and dialogue beginning with a solemn opening in Rome on October 9 and 10, 2021 with each individual diocese and church participating in the preparations. The synodal process will conclude in 2023.

Pope Francis invites the entire Church to reflect on a theme that is decisive for its life and mission: "It is precisely this path of synodality which God expects of the Church of the third millennium." This journey, which follows in the wake of the Church's "renewal" proposed by the Second Vatican Council, is both a gift and a task: by journeying together and reflecting together on the journey that has been made, the Church will be able to learn through Her experience which processes can help Her to live communion, to achieve participation, to open Herself to mission.

**Lunar New Year of the Tiger:** February 01 was the Lunar New Year, the Year of the Tiger, celebrated by China, South and North Korea, Vietnam, Thailand, Singapore, and some other South East Asian countries. Immigrants from these countries are among us and particularly in the Bay Area. New Year wishes to all those who celebrated this New Year and God's abundant blessings.

**A Zen-like Story to Ponder:** A monk was walking in the monastery grounds one day when he heard a bird sing. He listened, spellbound. It seemed to him that never before had he heard, but really heard, the song of a bird. When the singing stopped he returned to the monastery and discovered, to his dismay, that he was a stranger to his fellow monks, and they to him. It was only gradually that they and he discovered that he was returning after centuries. Because his listening was total, time had stopped and he had slipped into eternity. **Reflection:** Prayer is made perfect when the timeless is discovered. The timeless is discovered through clarity of perception. Perception is made clear when it is disengaged from preconceptions and from all consideration of personal loss or gain. Then the miraculous is seen and the heart is filled with wonder. (ADM)

**A Beautiful Prayer:** "I asked God for health that I might do great things, but I was given infirmity that I might do better things. I asked for riches that I might be happy, but I was given poverty that I might be wise. I asked for power that I might have the praise of people, but I was given weakness that I might feel the need of God. I got nothing I asked for, but everything I had hoped for. Almost despite myself, my unspoken prayers were answered. I am, among all people, most richly blessed."

**Food for Thought:** A disciple confessed his bad habit of repeating gossip. Said the Spiritual Master mischievously, "Repeating it wouldn't be so bad if you did not improve on it."

**Humor:** 1. A heavy snowstorm closed the schools in one town. When the children returned to school a few days later, one grade-school teacher asked her students whether they had used the time away from school constructively. "I sure did, teacher," one girl replied. "I just prayed for more snow." 2. While in church, a father whispered to his daughter that she should be quiet because they were in God's house. The girl looked all around the church, and asked her father, "Which door will God be coming in?"

**Wishing you love, peace, joy, faith, health, success, friendship, generosity, kindness, freedom---the blessings only God's can give,**

**Your Friend & Pastor,**

**Fr. Charles Puthota**