

Fr. Charles Puthota's Blog

March 6, 2022

From the Pastor's Desktop



Dear Parishioners of St. Elizabeth,

Archdiocesan Annual Appeal (AAA): Goal ---\$30,500. We are in the fourth week of our campaign. Please give early and generously. If we make our goal soon, we don't have to talk about it for the rest of the year. The purpose of AAA is to accompany the Archdiocese in their mission of Christ with the resources they need. As you know well, our own parish is the recipient of their ministries. Let's celebrate our inseparable connection with the mystical body of Christ, which is not only our parish but our Archdiocese and the universal Church. Also, please keep in mind the One Percent Club which means that you are invited to **give one percent of the amount of \$30,500, which is \$305.** Please give what you can generously and wholeheartedly

Lent --- A Season of Decisions for Love: We are in the first week of Lent. We began with a bang on Ash Wednesday by having our foreheads marked with ashes with the haunting words spoken: "Remember that you are dust and to dust you will return." These words give us perspective on who we are and what we need to do. Lent sometimes is mistakenly viewed as a time of doom and gloom. On the contrary, I see it as a time of joy and newness. It's a time for decisions about love. Shall we learn to love ourselves as God loves us --- with gentleness and delight? This would also mean taking care of our bodies with the proper food, sleep, rest, nourishment, exercise, etc. Shall we learn to love others again, knowing how precious and beautiful they are? Shall we especially renew our love for those who are suffering and in need? God loves the poor and those in need with a special love; so should we. Shall we again learn to love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength? Are we ready to let God work the magic of love and grace in our lives? Lent is a propitious time for love. Let's keep the fire of love going strong and steady. Let it light up the whole sky!

Lenten Retreat on Saturday March 12: Please Register: Theme: Prayer. Starts at 8:30 a.m. Mass. Registration Fee: \$15. Please ask for Registration forms in the Church.

Three Pillars of Lent: Prayer, Fasting, Almsgiving. How can we practice these three important components of Lent? These three are related to God, ourselves, and others. Shall we make concrete plans this Lent about the practice of these three pillars.

Word of God: Temptations: The gospel from Luke this Sunday gives an account of the three temptations of Jesus. Perhaps we are so dazzled by Jesus' divinity that we don't even want to think that Jesus was tempted. So human was he. Is there anyone among us who has not been tempted? Someone has said: "Opportunity may knock only once, but temptation leans on the doorbell." The real challenge for us is to keep choosing the better things over the good things. Jesus could have easily done the things he was tempted to do because they were not necessarily bad things, but he chose to do better things for God, for himself, and others. It's interesting that in this temptation story, Jesus combats temptations armed with the Word of God. Maybe for us a good place to dwell as we examine our lives is the Word of God. Lent again is a good time to read, reflect, meditate on the Word of God. I know a friend of mine who reads the Word of God daily and faithfully. She tells me that she finds in it the strength and light she needs. Maybe, we could all cultivate the habit of reading the Word of God daily, as a Lenten practice.

Stations of the Cross on Fridays in Lent: Immediately following the 8:30 a.m. Mass, the Stations of the Cross will be prayed. Please do join.

Attend Daily Mass in Lent: Would it be possible to join the daily Mass as something you could do as different from the other seasons? Think about it! I know a whole lot of people choose to go to daily Mass in the whole of Lent.

Divine Office at 8:00 a.m.: Also, if you could, join the Divine Office, the Morning Prayer, prayed in our Church of St. Elizabeth every day at 8:00 a.m.

Read Prayerfully Luke's Gospel in Lent as a Parish Spiritual Project: Shall each one of us take up the Gospel of Luke and read its 24 chapters? This we could do as a whole parish.

Fast and Abstinence: These are good for us physically and spiritually, reminding us of the poor and the hungry and helping us in self-control: Abstinence: Everyone 14 years of age and older is bound to abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday, each Friday of Lent, and Good Friday. **Fasting:** Those 18-60 years of age are to fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. On these two days the law of fasting allows only one full meal a day, but does not prohibit taking some food during the day, as long as this does not constitute another full meal. Drinking liquids during the day is permitted. Do not neglect your medications, though. If possible, the fast and abstinence on Good Friday could be continued into Holy Saturday until the Easter Vigil as a way of honoring the suffering and death of the Lord and to prepare ourselves for the Feast of Easter.

Lenten Quote: "O lord, make this Lenten season different from the other ones. Let me find you again. Amen."---Henri Nouwen.

Pray for Ukraine: As Pope Francis has invited us, let's keep praying for peace in Ukraine! Let the leaders never resort to war and violence! Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me!

Your Friend & Pastor,

Fr. Charles Puthota