

Fr. Charles Puthota's Blog

March 13, 2022

From the Pastor's Desktop



Dear Parishioners of St. Elizabeth,

Some Thoughts on Lent: As we begin the second week of Lent, it would be fruitful for us and our families to continue reflecting on the meaning of Lent. Jesus lived in the desert for forty days, prayed to his Father, felt guided by the Spirit, did penance, overcame temptation, reflected on his life, drew up plans for his public ministry, and opened his mind and heart to the possibility of opposition and suffering leading up to his crucifixion. Jesus felt the need for this desert experience. We look upon Jesus and realize that we too need the “desert” experience---to think about what is going on in our lives and reorient ourselves towards God, family, and faith. Lent is that desert experience, a time for repentance and awareness of our mortality. Our fasting, abstinence, and devotions remind us of this season and the need for some practical decisions we need to make. For example, is my life rooted in love or selfishness? Is my life marked by giving or hoarding? Is my life guided by the Spirit of God or by my own desires and passions? Do I feel connected to Jesus or not? What are the values of Jesus that I practice or don't follow? Am I humble like Jesus or do I put myself at the center of the universe in adoration of myself? Do I understand that love means respect, kindness, forgiveness, and sharing?

Expanding the Meaning of Fasting in Lent: “Fast from judging others; Feast on Christ dwelling in them. Fast from fear of illness; Feast on the healing power of God. Fast from words that pollute; Feast on speech that purifies. Fast from discontent; Feast on gratitude. Fast from anger; Feast on patience. Fast from pessimism; Feast on hope. Fast from negatives; Feast on encouragement. Fast from bitterness; Feast on forgiveness. Fast from self-concern; Feast on compassion. Fast from suspicion; Feast on truth. Fast from gossip; Feast on purposeful silence. Fast from problems that overwhelm; Feast on prayer that sustains. Fast from anxiety; Feast on faith.” - Author Unknown

Archdiocesan Annual Appeal (AAA): Our goal is \$30,500. See the names of donors in the bulletin. Please give whatever you can so we can make this goal quickly. **Can you consider giving 1% which is \$305.00?** I'll be inviting the 1% and More donors to a luncheon, as I did last year. Through AAA, we support the Archdiocesan mission and we in turn are recipients of the Archdiocesan services and ministries.

Word of God: Transfiguration: This Sunday the Gospel is about the mystery of Transfiguration of Jesus narrated by Luke the evangelist. This is one of the Luminous Mysteries of the Rosary. The Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches the following about Transfiguration: “**What is the meaning of the Transfiguration?** Above all the Transfiguration shows forth the Trinity: “the Father in the voice, the Son in the man Jesus, the Spirit in the shining cloud” (Saint Thomas Aquinas). Speaking with Moses and Elijah about his “departure” (*Luke 9:31*), Jesus reveals that his glory comes by way of the cross and he anticipates his resurrection and his glorious coming “which will change our lowly body to be like his glorious body” (*Philippians 3:21*).” “*You were transfigured on the mountain and your disciples, as much as they were capable of it, beheld your glory, O Christ our God, so that when they should see you crucified they would understand that your passion was voluntary, and proclaim to the world that you truly are the splendor of the Father.*” (Byzantine Liturgy)

Quote on Lent: "As Lent is the time for greater love, listen to Jesus' thirst...He knows your weakness. He wants only your love, wants only the chance to love you."---St. Teresa of Calcutta

Pilgrimage to Jordan & the Holy Land: October 05 - 17, 2022: I'll be spiritual director of this pilgrimage. If you are interested in joining, you are most welcome. Check out www.pilgrimages/frputhota. For a brochure, please call the parish office. You may also call 206 Tours (pilgrimage company) at 800-206-8687.

Pray for Ukraine: As we ponder the horrific violence, death, and destruction unleashed on Ukraine, as the world is watching helplessly unable to stop the carnage, let's keep praying for peace to return to this land of brave people and patriots. It is shocking that in the 21st century such wars would still take place. Haven't we learned anything at all from all the previous wars? Pope Francis has been active in urging for peace and asking us all to use our spiritual power of prayer. Pope Francis spoke by phone with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Feb. 26, expressing "profound sorrow at the tragic events that are happening" in the country and, the president Zelenskyy said that the Holy Father "prayed for peace in Ukraine and a ceasefire. The Ukrainian people feel the spiritual support of His Holiness."

A Story to Ponder: An elephant broke loose from the herd and charged across a little wooden structure that stretched across a ravine. The worn-out bridge shivered and groaned, barely able to support the elephant's weight. Once it had gone safely to the other side, a flea that had lodged itself in the elephant's ear exclaimed in mighty satisfaction, "Boy, did we shake that bridge!"

Humor: Church Bulletin Bloopers: 1. The third verse of "Blessed Assurance" will be sung without musical accomplishment. 2. The low self-esteem group will meet Wednesday from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Please use the back door. 3. Reverend Cookingham spoke briefly, much to the delight of the audience. 4. The Harris family will attend the funeral of Becky's former husband, who died in Denver, Colorado, tomorrow. 5. The annual potluck supper is next Sunday. Prayer and medication will follow afterward. 6. Don't let worry kill you off. Let the church help. 7. Tonight's sermon will begin at 6 p.m.

May the Season of Lent be a new Season of the Heart, a Season of Awareness, a Season of Closeness to God and people,

Your Friend & Pastor,

Fr. Charles Puthota