

Fr. Charles Puthota's Blog

April 3, 2022

From the Pastor's Desktop



Dear Parishioners of St. Elizabeth,

Archbishop's Annual Appeal: The goal is \$30,500. See the names of donors in the bulletin. If you are able to give 1% of the goal, which is \$305, it would be wonderful. Please donate early and generously. Once we make the goal, I shall not mention it for the rest of the year. Some of you have given far above the 1% level. Thank you for your generosity. If more could give 1% or more, we would make the goal quickly. Thank you to all those who have donated so far. Those who have not, please would you prayerfully consider donating. This is to support the Archdiocese in their mission and ministries. We receive the services and ministries in turn from the Archdiocese. When we support the Archdiocese, we are actually supporting our own parish. In the Acts of the Apostles, St. Paul takes up collections from the Church in Antioch to help the Church in Jerusalem. That would be a model for our support for the Archdiocese as well. For reference, see 1 Cor 16:1–4; 2 Cor 8:1–9:15; Rom 15:14–32.

Mass at the Ukrainian Catholic Church: Last Sunday, March 27, 18 parishioners and I joined the Mass 11:30 a.m. at the Immaculate Conception Ukrainian Catholic Church. Please see the picture in this bulletin. The purpose was to join them at Mass to pray for peace in Ukraine and express our solidarity for the distress Ukraine is subjected to on account of the invasion of Russian forces. It was our way of expressing our sadness and shock at all the senseless death and destruction inflicted on Ukraine. Pope Francis has repeatedly asked for the end of war in Ukraine and urged people to pursue peace and reconciliation. The Holy Father has also consecrated the whole humanity, especially Ukraine and Russia, to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, praying ardently for peace. The pastor of the Ukrainian parish, Very Rev. Petro Dyachok, showed amazing hospitality to our parishioners. He so kindly invited me to join the celebration of the Mass, including me in the liturgical ritual as a concelebrant. I was delighted and grateful for such kind inclusiveness. His energy and faith were evident in the way he prayed and sang. He also asked me to preach the homily. Our parishioners partook of the Communion because we all belong to the same Catholic Church under the Universal Shepherd, Pope Francis. Their liturgy, a Catholic liturgy, though in the Byzantine rite, was beautifully soulful and uplifting. It lasted about two hours. Their singing at the Mass was out of this world. Father choked up with emotion when he mentioned to his parishioners that St. Elizabeth parishioners had come to pray and support them as Ukraine was going through a crisis. I mentioned to them that St. Elizabeth Church had taken up a collection for Ukraine that weekend, as had the whole Archdiocese of San Francisco. I also gave a check from St. Elizabeth Church to their parish as a token of our love and support for their ministries. The mood throughout the celebration of Mass was one of faith and gratitude, of kindness and hospitality.

Quotes for Lent: “The disciple simply burns his boats and goes ahead. He is called out... The old life is left behind, and completely surrendered. The disciple is dragged out of his relative security into a life of absolute insecurity... out of the realm of the finite...into the realm of infinite possibilities.”---Dietrich Bonhoeffer. “God has created me to do him some definite service; he has committed some work to me which he has not committed to another. I have my mission - I may never know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next... I have a part in a great work; I am a link in a chain, a bond of connection between persons...”---- Cardinal John Henry Newman. “The saints were not superhuman. They were people who loved God in their hearts and who shared this joy with others.” --- Pope Francis. “God speaks in the silence of the heart. Listening is the beginning of prayer.” --- Mother Teresa.

Confirmation Retreat: Three of our young men, Michael, Nicholas, and Alan made the Confirmation retreat last Saturday March 26. I spoke to them, their parents, and sponsors about the meaning and purpose of the Sacrament of Confirmation they are going to receive on May 07. I joined them at lunch and got the opportunity to thank the parents for their engagement in the faith of their children. Later, they made Confession and attended the 4:30 p.m. Mass by actively participating in it. I would like to thank the Faith Formation teachers for making all the arrangements. Those who have children going to public schools, please enroll your children in our Faith Formation program. It’s part of our mission in the parish to share faith and make disciples.

Word of God: The woman caught in adultery is the Gospel reading from John’s gospel. Jesus’ way of relating to this situation captures how God our Father loves us with a merciful and everlasting love. Let the one without sin throw the first stone! No one is without the stain of sin. It is obvious, therefore, that we are all called to love one another with gentleness and forgiveness. The Heavenly Father makes the sun shine on the good and the bad and makes the rain fall on everyone indiscriminately. What did Jesus write on the ground? What he wrote, his Word, spoke to the accusers in judgment, and they fled the scene because Jesus held a mirror up to them. They saw themselves flawed and sinful and they had no business to condemn this woman.

Next Sunday is Palm Sunday: Holy Week starts on Palm Sunday. Masses will be (Vigil) at 4:30 p.m. Saturday and on Sunday the two Masses will be at 9:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. There will be a procession before the 9:30 a.m. Mass, starting from the Grotto. Please do come join the Holy Week’s liturgical celebrations.

Humor: Doctor: 1. “That pain in your leg is caused by old age.” Patient: “Don’t take me for a fool! The other leg is just as old.” 2. Judge: “What’s your age?” Convict: “Twenty-two, sir.” Judge: “That’s what you’ve been telling us for the last ten years.” Convict: “That’s right, sir. I’m not the type that says one thing today and another tomorrow.”

Your Friend & Pastor,

Fr. Charles Puthota