

Fr. Charles Puthota's Blog

August 21, 2022

From the Pastor's Desktop



Dear Parishioners of St. Elizabeth,

Mass and Reception with Archbishop José Cabantan from the Philippines: On August 15, the Feast of the Assumption of the BVM, we were delighted to have with us Most Reverend José Cabantan, Archbishop of Cagayan de Oro, Mindanao, Philippines, who celebrated the Mass. It was also to mark the conclusion of the celebrations of the 500 Years of Christianity in the Philippines, which we had started at our parish in May 2021. Archbishop Cabantan spoke eloquently about the role of “Mama Mary” in the history of salvation and the faith journey of the Philippines. After the Mass, we had an enjoyable breakfast-reception in Cantwell Hall. It was beautifully organized and served. Special thanks to Sr. Olga for being instrumental in putting this event together. Thanks also to Hermie, Sharon, Phil, Dave, Richard, Beth, the choir, and others who helped make a success of this event. I’m edified and impressed by our parish social events which are the outcome of so many people collaborating in a great spirit of teamwork. I would like to thank everyone for this enjoyable spiritual and social event of the parish. Let’s have more such events in order to bring people together and enjoy our relationship with God and one another.

Archdiocesan Annual Appeal (AAA) Gratitude Dinner: This will be held on Sunday September 11 in the evening in Cantwell Hall for the One Percent and More Circle. Thank you for your generous donation to AAA. Please RSVP immediately to my letter sent to you weeks ago, if you haven’t done so already. This event reminds us of our close relationship to the Archdiocese and our call to support the ministries undertaken at the Archdiocesan level. It also provides us an opportunity for us as a parish to work on projects collaboratively and make a success of them.

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion Training: This will take place on Saturday September 24 at our parish. Those who would like to attend, please register with Sharon Soares. Those attending will be expected to join the 8:30 a.m. Mass followed by the training sessions until lunch time.

Word of God, 21st Sunday in Ordinary Time: All nations and cultures and peoples are called to the Kingdom of God. It’s up to individuals to respond to God’s grace. Jews and gentiles alike are invited to share in God’s plan for the human family to find their happiness and fulfillment. God has given the free will to everyone. In Isaiah, there is a promise that “they shall bring all your brothers and sisters from all the nations as an offering to the Lord...to Jerusalem, my holy mountain...” The responsorial psalm affirms the call to “go out to all the world and tell the good news.” In the Gospel from Luke, Jesus affirms that “people will come from the east and the west and from the north and the south and will recline at table in the kingdom of God.” However, we have to “strive to enter through the narrow gate...” There is always resistance from various forces in life to the call to be the disciples of Jesus. Everything and anything goes cannot be the way to fullness of life. We need to pick and choose those things that are truly helpful for the life with Jesus and avoid those things that are contrary to the values of Jesus. For example, following the beatitudes in the Sermon on the Mount is not easy, and yet we are called to embrace those “attitudes-to-be.” In that sense, we need to enter through the narrow gate. The messianic call to the universal salvation that Jesus offers to all nations is urgent, and we as Christians are to make that a reality for all peoples through our witnessing to Jesus in the way that we live, love, and serve.

A Story to Think About: A guru (holy man) asked his disciples how they could tell when the night had ended and the day begun. One said, "When you see an animal in the distance and can tell whether it is a cow or a horse "No." said the guru. "When you look at a tree in the distance and can tell if it is a neem tree or a mango tree." "Wrong again." said the guru. " Well then, what is it?" asked the disciples. " When you look into the face of any man and recognize your brother in him; when you look into the face of any woman and recognize in her your sister. If you cannot do this, no matter what time it is by the sun it is still night."

Prayer for America: Dear God, we thank you for the bountiful blessings you have bestowed on us. Guide us in being good stewards of these gifts. Let us care for all of your bountiful creation, from the redwood forests to the gulf stream waters. Make us instruments of your peace in order to put an end to rockets' red glare and the bombs bursting in air. Help us to love and care for all of our neighbors --- locally and globally --- so that we might be truly crowned with brotherhood and sisterhood from sea to shining sea. Amen. (Franciscan Mission Service)

Humor:

1. One day St. Peter saw a street gang walking up to the Pearly Gates. St. Peter ran to God and said, "God, there are some low-life, thieving street gang members at the Gates. What do I do?" God replied, "Just do what you normally do with that type; redirect them." St. Peter went back to carry out the order, and all of a sudden he went running back yelling, "God, God, they're gone - they're gone!!!" "Who, the street gang?" "No, the Pearly Gates!"

2. A young author once told Mark Twain that he was losing confidence in his ability to write. "Did you ever get that feeling yourself?" he asked. "Yes," said Twain. "Once, after I had been writing for nearly fifteen years, it suddenly struck me that I did not possess the slightest talent for writing." "What did you do then? Did you give up writing?" "How could I? By then I was already famous."

Your Friend and Pastor,
Father Charles Puthota