

# From the Pastor's Desktop

## A Message from Father Charles Puthota



November 20, 2022

### Dear Parishioners of St. Elizabeth,

**Christ the King:** This Sunday is the feast of the majestic King, Christ our Lord. It's the last Sunday of the liturgical year. It's our belief that at the end of the world, Christ the King will tie up all the loose ends and bring the whole creation to an end and present it to his heavenly Father. Meanwhile, he is King of our lives today. He rules over us not with power and glamor, but through love and humility, through selflessness and self-effacement. He is the King who washes our feet and dies for us so that we can have life and have it abundantly. His Kingdom fills the whole world. His Kingdom values are often contrary to what the world cherishes. But the deepest longings and desires of our hearts can be found in the values of this universal King, Christ our Lord. Our dreams for love and intimacy, peace and justice, health and happiness – all these are the values of Christ the King as well. We can open our hearts and minds more fully to this King who will dwell in our lives and make us shine with truth and integrity. Long live Christ the King!

**Advent: Coming up next Sunday:** With the feast of Christ the King, we turn our attention next Sunday to the beginning of the season of Advent. What a beautiful season of longing and waiting for the Lord to be born all over again in our lives! Let's get ready psychologically and spiritually for this intimate and semi-penitential season of Advent which will lead us to the new-born King at Christmas.

**Happy Thanksgiving:** The fabulous, heartwarming, all-American festival of Thanksgiving is round the corner, on Thursday, November 24. It's turkey time! People all over the nation are getting ready to travel back home to be with family. Love is in the air everywhere. According to AAA, 54.6 million people will travel 50 miles or more from home this Thanksgiving, up 1.5% from 2022. This year is also projected to be the third-busiest Thanksgiving since AAA started tracking it in 2000. Thanksgiving travel period is a five-day period from Wednesday Nov. 23 to Sunday Nov. 27. All that travel and trouble is to meet family and friends---and give thanks to God and one another. We have much to be thankful for. Gratitude makes us better human beings and Christians. Gratitude makes explicit our human condition and our dependence on God and one another. It helps us appreciate the fact that we are not self-sufficient and that we are interdependent. It energizes us to go out of ourselves to others and think about others' needs. With our love and service, we can create better families and communities and transform the human family. JFK rightly said: "As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them." Happy Thanksgiving!

**Word Population at 8 Billion!:** Last Tuesday the world population reached 8 billion people. According to the United Nations, the world added 1 billion people in the last 12 years. "This unprecedented growth is due to the gradual increase in human lifespan owing to improvements in public health, nutrition, personal hygiene and medicine. It is also the result of high and persistent levels of fertility in some countries," the UN statement said. This reality puts more pressure on nature as people compete with wildlife for water, food, and space. Also, rapid population growth combined with climate change is likely to cause mass migration and conflict in coming decades.

**Climate Change, the Reality and Faith-Action:** You may be aware of COP27 which means the 27<sup>th</sup> "Conference of Parties" to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. This Conference took place in Egypt from Nov. 6 through 18, ended just last week. The key goal is to limit temperature rises, to prevent further global warming. In 2015, nations agreed to pursue efforts to limit global temperature rises to 1.5 degree Celsius (2.7 degree Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial levels. Average temperatures are now 1.1 degree Celsius above pre-industrial levels and that increase has already caused major climate disasters. If the global average temperatures were to rise above 1.5 degree Celsius, the UN says, it would expose millions more people to potentially devastating climate impacts. We Catholics need to look at all these developments with alarm and hope. Pope Francis in his papal encyclical "Laudato Si" (which means "Praised Be to you," my Lord, from a prayer of St. Francis of Assisi) declared that the science of climate change is clear and that the Catholic Church views climate change as a moral issue that must be addressed in order to protect the earth, our Common Home, and everyone on it. The seven goals of Laudato Si are: the Cry of the Earth, the Cry of the Poor, Ecological Economics, Simple Lifestyles, Ecological Education, Ecological Spirituality, and Community Participation.

### **Thanksgiving Humor:**

1. Grandfather Turkey: Just before Thanksgiving, the holding pen was abuzz as Mother Turkey scolded her younger birds. "You turkeys are always into mischief," she gobbled. "If your grandfather could see the things you do, he'd turn over in his gravy."
2. Hatched?: This guy goes to his doctor. "Doctor, help me! I can't stop acting like a turkey!" "I see," said the doctor. "How long have you had this problem?" "Let me think a second. Mom laid the egg in 1954....."
3. Baby Bruno was sitting in his grandmother's kitchen, watching her prepare the Thanksgiving meal. "What are you doing?" Bruno asked. "Oh, I'm just stuffing the turkey," his grandmother replied. "That's cool!" Bruno said. "Are you going to hang it next to the deer?"
4. A lady was picking through the frozen turkeys at the grocery store, but couldn't find one big enough for her family. She asked the stock boy, "Do these turkeys get any bigger?" The stock boy answered, "No ma'am, they're dead."

### **With Thanksgiving Day wishes and blessings,**

Your Friend and Pastor,

Father Charles Puthota