

From the Pastor's Desktop

A Message from Father Charles Puthota

February 19, 2023



Dear Parishioners of St. Elizabeth,

Archdiocesan Annual Appeal (AAA): Goal to reach: \$37,462. 1.33% is \$500. Please see names of donors in the bulletin. This weekend we are starting the third week of the month-long AAA campaign, which we started the weekend of February 04-05. I urge and encourage everyone to give as generously as possible. If possible, do give 1.33%, which is \$500. The facts are simple and direct. We need to raise \$37,462 as our commitment toward the Archdiocese this year. We do not consider it a burden but a privilege, not a problem but an opportunity. The purpose is for the Archdiocese to do God's work that they are called to do, and, as you know, much of that work is to support the ministries and services in the parishes including our own. Even as our parish runs because of the offerings you give from the pews weekend after weekend, the Archdiocese runs from the offerings that come from all the parishes in the Archdiocese through the AAA. We do this campaign in our parish for one month. If everyone participates, this will be a success quickly. We are making some progress, but we need more people to come onboard and help. Please see the names in the bulletin of all donors so far to AAA 2023. While I thank all those who have donated, I request everyone else to give soon. Last weekend at the two weekend Masses, Ron Borg spoke persuasively about AAA and the need for our participation. I thank him for his service to our community. Please consider AAA 2023 prayerfully in the spirit of Lent which is almost upon us.

Quotes on Giving: "We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give." — Winston Churchill. "No one is useless in this world who lightens the burdens of another." — Charles Dickens. "You can give without loving, but you cannot love without giving." — Amy Carmichael. "For it is in giving that we receive." — Francis of Assisi. "Love only grows by sharing. You can only have more for yourself by giving it away to others." — Brian Tracy. "There is no better exercise for your heart than reaching down and helping to lift someone up." — Bernard Meltzer. "What we spend, we lose. What we keep will be left for others. What we give away will be ours forever." — David McGee.

Ash Wednesday: February 22. Mass times: 8:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Abstinence: Everyone 14 years of age and older is required 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. Please do not neglect to take your medications.

Word of God: This Sunday before we begin Lent we are invited by God to seek holiness: "Be holy, for the Lord, your God, am holy....You shall not bear hatred for your brother or sister in your heart...You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Holiness is connected here in this first reading from Leviticus with love of neighbor. The more we love, the closer we are to being holy. In the second reading, we are reminded that we are the temples of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in us. We have been anointed by the Spirit and so we need to seek holiness and strive to be wise in the way God looks at everything, not in the way the world thinks of wisdom. "The wisdom of the world is foolishness in the eyes of God." The call for holiness in the Gospel reading is reinforced by the last two antitheses of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount, where he gives us a new interpretation of the Mosaic law. No eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, but we are to repay evil with good. Also, no hating our enemies. We are to be like the heavenly father who lets sunshine and rain fall on the good and the bad. Indiscriminate loving of everyone is at the heart of Christian holiness because we are made by love for love. That is the way to be authentic followers of Christ. So, shall we rethink and rearrange our lives according to the mind and heart of Jesus Christ?

A Story to Think About: Holiness, like greatness, is unselfconscious: For thirty-five years Paul Cezanne lived in obscurity producing masterpieces that he gave away to unsuspecting neighbors. So great was his love for his work that he never gave a thought to achieving recognition nor did he suspect that some day he would be looked upon as the father of modern painting. He owes his fame to a Paris dealer who chanced upon some of his paintings, put some of them together and presented the world of art with the first Cezanne exhibition. The world was astonished to discover the presence of a master. The master was just as astonished. He arrived at the art gallery leaning on the arm of his son and could not contain his amazement when he saw his paintings on display. Turning to his son he said. "Look, they have framed them!" (TSOTB, ADM)

Religious Humor: 1. Adam and Eve: The Faith Formation teacher told the children in the class the story of Adam and Eve. The children were asked to draw pictures to illustrate the story in their own way. Little Tommy drew a picture of a car with three people in it. In the front seat was a man. In the back seat were a man and a woman. The teacher asked the boy to explain the drawing. The little boy said: "Why, this is God driving Adam and Eve out of the garden." 2. A boy asks his father to use the car and the father replies, "No, not until you cut your hair!" The boy says, "But father....Jesus had long hair!" The father replies, "Yeah, but Jesus walked everywhere."

Your Friend and Pastor

Fr. Charles Puthota