

From the Pastor's Desktop

A Message from Father Charles Puthota

March 19, 2023



Dear Parishioners of St. Elizabeth,

Archdiocesan Annual Appeal (AAA): Archdiocesan Annual Appeal 2023 (AAA): Our goal: \$37,462. Amount reached as of March 15: \$25,315. Amount needed to reach goal: \$12,147. Please see the names of donors in the bulletin. We started the AAA 2023 campaign on the weekend of February 4-5, 2023. We have completed six weeks now since we started the campaign. Please see the names of the AAA 2023 donors in the bulletin. There is an asterisk for those who have donated \$500 or more, our 1.33% Circle. Thank you for your generosity and good will toward St. Elizabeth Church and the ministries and services of the Archdiocese. Your donations go toward supporting and strengthening the work the Archdiocese. The Church is called to do these tasks: proclaiming the Kingdom and bearing witness to Christ; working toward a human family of love, justice, peace, dignity, and respect; to help create a world where God's blessings are shared and cherished by everyone; and for the Church to be a Mother welcoming anyone and everyone into her arms of goodness, kindness, compassion, and forgiveness. Please give whatever you can give to help further the mission of Christ in our own Archdiocese. To those who have not given so far: would you please prayerfully consider supporting AAA? Please give early and generously.

Lent: Fourth Sunday of Lent: Laetare Sunday: This Sunday in Lent is called Laetare Sunday, which means Rejoice Sunday. As we go through the penitential and ascetical practices of Lent, journeying toward the sufferings and death of Jesus in the Holy Week, we are given a hint, a hope, of the joyful anticipation of the victory of Jesus at Easter. The name comes from the first words of the Entrance Antiphon for Mass, "Laetare Jerusalem" ("Rejoice, O Jerusalem"). This Sunday we stand at about the half-way point of the Lenten season. The altar may be decorated with flowers this Sunday. The liturgical color of the vestments is rose.

Ten Practical Things You Can Do in Lent: As you know well, Lent is a time set aside for slowing down and thinking about how we live and love, how our faith journey is, how our family life is, how we relate to larger community, what we do to help those in need, etc. Shall I make 10 practical suggestions for this holy season? 1. Make sure to attend the weekend Mass. 2. If possible, catch a daily Mass either before you go to work or at lunch break near where you work. 3. Read reflectively a chapter each day from one or two of the gospels. 4. Go to confession before Easter. 5. Become more kind toward and respectful of others, starting with your family. 6. Do one thing at least which will connect you with someone sad, poor or in need. 7. Read online some of the sayings and actions of Pope Francis as a way of being inspired. 8. Do one thing by way of faith or service to connect you deeply with the Catholic Church. 9. Do one thing by way of service to connect you with the town/city/world. 10. Appreciate people more readily, generously, and gratefully.

Word of God: Blindness and Sight: You may be aware that the RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) program. It's for the adults seeking to become Catholics. They go through a long process of preparation: Inquiry, the Catechumenate, Purification and Enlightenment, and Mystagogy. The Readings at the Mass we read this year, Year A, are related specifically to the catechumens journeying toward baptism at Easter. Not only for RCIA catechumens, but the process of faith and growth is for everyone. Last Sunday, the theme was the living water, as RCIA candidates as well as all of us thirst for the life in Christ, and that living water is the Spirit of Christ poured into our hearts. This fourth Sunday it is about the new vision that we are all called to acquire. Seeing is believing. To be able to see, as the man born blind does, is to be on the way to new life with Christ. What are our various versions of blindness that Jesus is waiting to heal? What are the things that block our vision for God and the world? How can we see as Jesus sees everything? Let's See, Judge, Act!

Pope Francis' Lenten Quotes: "Each of us has a vision of good and of evil. We have to encourage people to move towards what they think is good ... Everyone has his own idea of good and evil and must choose to follow the good and fight evil as he conceives them. That would be enough to make the world a better place." "A little bit of mercy makes the world less cold and more just." "Wretched are those who are vindictive and spiteful." "The confessional is not a torture chamber, but the place in which the Lord's mercy motivates us to do better." "We all have the duty to do good."

Tech Jokes: 1. Son to his father as they watch television: "Dad, tell me again how when you were a kid you had to walk all the way across the room to change the channel." 2. "My sister gave birth in a state-of-the-art delivery room," said one man to another. "It was so high-tech that the baby came our cordless." 3. Department store automatic answering machine: "If you are calling to order or send money, press 5. If you are calling to register a complaint, press 6 4 5 9 8 3 4 8 2 2 9 5 5 3 9 2. Have a good day."

Wishing you a season of Lent marked by our closeness to God,

Your Friend and Pastor,

Fr. Charles Puthota