

From the Pastor's Desktop

A Message from Father Charles Puthota

April 23, 2023



Dear Parishioners of St. Elizabeth,

Musings on the Easter Season: We are luxuriating in the beauty and power of Easter. The Risen Christ has shown us the way that, despite all sorts of odds in our life, hope springs eternal for new life. We, too, can leave our tombs of sin and guilt, selfishness and self-centeredness, greed and self-gratification, bias and prejudice, grudges and resentment, hatred and bitterness, anger and indifference, anguish and anxiety, complacency and hopelessness, and come away. We can walk triumphant with the Risen Lord into the light of life. We are an Easter people! We are a Resurrection people! We are a people of hope and peace and joy! Let's come away from the mood of Lent and the profound sadness of the Good Friday and rejoice with the Lord. He's risen from the dead, alleluia! Because of Jesus' resurrection, we can experience transcendence in our daily lives and help, heal, comfort, console, and transform the world, one person at a time, one day at a time, one situation at a time, one relationship at a time, one issue at a time. May the Risen Christ energize us as he did 2000 years ago --- for love and service.

Inspirational Easter Quotes: "Easter tells us that life is to be interpreted not simply in terms of things but in terms of ideals." --- Charles M. Crowe. "Let the resurrection joy lift us from loneliness and weakness and despair to strength and beauty and happiness." --- Floyd W. Tomkins. "He takes men out of time and makes them feel eternity." --- Ralph Waldo Emerson. "We live and die; Christ died and lived!" --- John Stott.

Thank You! Archdiocesan Annual Appeal (AAA) 2023 Successfully Completed: We had launched 2023 AAA drive on February 4 and reached our goal of \$37,462 successfully on April 9, the Easter Sunday. That is a timeline of only 9 weeks, which is two months and a week. I would like to thank all those who have donated. Your participation is much appreciated. Please see the names of donors on the last page of the bulletin. To those who have been able to donate 1.33%, which is \$500, my special thanks. Some have donated way more than 1.33%. Thank you for making us reach the goal quickly through your generosity. As promised, I'll be inviting those who have given 1.33% or more to a luncheon in the next few months as a way of thanking them. Those who are still considering donating, please do because whatever surplus amount donated will get returned by the Archdiocese to our parish. Let's keep in mind that AAA is one important way of supporting the Archdiocesan ministries and services, of which we and all the parishes are beneficiaries. All the parishes and all the faithful make up the Archdiocese. In strengthening the Archdiocese, we are actually strengthening our own parish. In helping the Archdiocese, we are helping ourselves. Thank you!

Word of God: Jesus meeting the disciples on the way to Emmaus: The gospel today from Luke 24 is one of the most favorite ones for me in the whole Bible. The two Emmaus disciples are disillusioned and downcast that their messiah had been killed. Jesus joins them---and even pokes a little fun at them. He listens to their sad story. But he also speaks to them about himself by interpreting the scriptures. Their hearts begin to burn. He joins them at the table: Takes the bread, blesses it, breaks it, and gives it to them. They recognize him instantly, but he disappears. They are filled with energy and awe. Fired up, at that late hour they travel back to Jerusalem to proclaim to others that they had seen him. It was too good a personal experience to keep to themselves. In this story, we can put ourselves, our families, communities, and the Church in the place of these two disciples. The lives of these two disciples parallel ours. We have our disappointments and defeats. He listens to our stories attentively. Do we bother to let him know our longings and struggles? Do we speak to him lovingly and trustingly? As he speaks to us, our hearts burn. Are we even aware of our hearts burning? There are inner stirrings and invitations from the Risen Lord about the new life he is offering us. His presence and grace, his message and meaning lead us to spiritual consolation and affirmation. Do we recognize him on the road, on the main street, in the market place, in the breaking of the bread, in our waking and sleeping moments, in our eating and playing, in our comings and goings, in our entertainments and endeavors, in our work and preoccupations? We are not alone. He is with us, the Risen Christ! Can we able to discern in all our situations and circumstances the ever-present Jesus walking with us, talking with us, and revealing himself to us?

An Insightful Story to Ponder: Change the World By Changing Myself: The Sufi Bayazid says this about himself: "I was a revolutionary when I was young and all my prayer to God was: 'Lord give me the energy to change the world.' As I approached middle age and realized that half my life was gone without my changing a single soul, I changed my prayer to: 'Lord, give me the grace to change all those who come in contact with me. Just my family and friends, and I shall be content.' Now that I am an old man and my days are numbered, my one prayer is, 'Lord, give me the grace to change myself.' If I had prayed for this right from the start, I should not have wasted my life." (TSOTB, ADM)

Tax Seasonal Jokes: 1. An IRS agent to a Pastor: This is the IRS. Can you help us? I can. Do you know a Ted Jones? I do. Is he a member of your congregation? He is. Did he donate \$10,000 to the church? He will. 2. For not paying taxes, when they say I'm going to prison, I'll say, "No, prisons cost taxpayers a lot of money. You keep what it would have cost to incarcerate me, and we'll call it even." 3. The IRS suggests filing early to reduce the chances that someone will steal your identity, and file before you. Honestly, if somebody wants my identity so badly that they'll file my tax return for me, go crazy. You can mow my lawn while you're at it too.

Wishing you and your families all the choicest blessings of the Easter Season,

Your Friend and Pastor,

Father Charles Puthota