

From the Pastor's Desktop

A Message from Father Charles Puthota

July 2, 2023



Dear Parishioners of St. Elizabeth,

Independence Day: "America was not built on fear. America was built on courage, on imagination, and an unbeatable determination to do the job at hand" --- Harry S. Truman. "Remember, remember always, that all of us, and you and I especially, are descended from immigrants and revolutionists" --- Franklin D. Roosevelt. "America is great because she is good. If America ceases to be good, America will cease to be great. ... America is a land of wonders, in which everything is in constant motion and every change seems an improvement" --- Alexis de Tocqueville. "From every mountain side, let freedom ring" --- Samuel F. Smith. "This country will not be a good place for any of us to live in unless we make it a good place for all of us to live in" --- Theodore Roosevelt

Happy Independence Day! God bless America!

As we celebrate our nation's Independence Day on Fourth of July and enjoy the weekend with barbecues, parades, and parties, let's be filled with happiness and pride. Each year, around Independence Day, thousands of new citizens are added to the United States. When I became a citizen years ago, I saw for myself how all these people from over 100 different countries were all excited and eager to become American citizens. There was a great sense of elation and jubilation in everyone. Before the oath was administered, people in the hall were asked to stand country by country and introduced to everyone else. People exhibited great pride in belonging to their respective countries. But they were at the same time eager and excited to become the citizens of this nation, the land of the free and the home of the brave. When the oath was administered, all these people from different corners of the world were merged into the heart and soul of this nation. The joy of these new citizens was deep and intense. They were waving the American flags boisterously; many were shedding tears. It was a sight to behold. It was a powerful demonstration of what the United States stands for: life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

There is something beautiful and powerful that this nation has to offer to people from all over the world. What is it that makes this nation so attractive to other nations? What is this thing that we call the "American Dream"? What is the "Spirit of America"? Obviously, it's not just the material prosperity. This country offers everyone possibilities and opportunities to strive, progress, and excel. This Independence Day, we could all resolve---those born here and the naturalized citizens---not to take the blessings of this nation for granted. There's so much more to do in terms of protecting the institutions of democracy, forming a more perfect union, taking care of those who are in need, ensuring blessings based on liberty and justice for all, promoting peace around the world, and caring for the planet earth, our common home. Let's join the 332 million others (as of 2021) in the U.S. as we sing and pray: "America! America! God shed His grace on thee, and crown thy good with brotherhood from sea to shining sea!... America! America! God mend thine ev'ry flaw, confirm thy soul in self-control, thy liberty in law!... America! America! May God thy gold refine till all success be nobleness, and ev'ry gain divine!"

Parish Consultors Meeting (PCM): On Tuesday June 27, I had called for this meeting, attended by 28 people from various organizations of the parish. The purpose of the meeting was to share about each group/organization's work in the parish and thus inform and encourage one another. I too as pastor communicated to the group about the various happenings in our parish, such as the spiritual, liturgical, and pastoral, social activities. Also, regarding the various infra-structure, maintenance related matters. The meeting was followed by a delicious catered luncheon. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the volunteers and employees of the parish for your dedicated service to God and to God's people. Thank you! Salamat! Gracias! Grazie! Grazi! Our next meeting will be on Tuesday November 28.

Word of God: This 13th Sunday in Ordinary Time, the Word of God invites us to themes of cost of discipleship, carrying of the cross, and hospitality. In the first reading from 2 Kings, a woman of influence at Shunem gives hospitality to prophet Elisha by feeding him and setting up a room on the roof for the prophet to stay on his visits. The woman was childless and the prophet now promises that "you will be fondling a baby son this time next year." Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew highlights hospitality: "Whoever received you receives me...." Hospitality is a virtue that is needed desperately in the church and the world---to make everyone feel welcome and cared for. Jesus also speaks of clarifying our priorities in discipleship. In our love for Jesus and our following of him, everything is relativized. All our relationships and loyalties are to be pursued in such a way that our following of Jesus is only nourished and promoted.

A Slice of St. Elizabeth Parish History: On March 17, 1907, St. Elizabeth parish was established as a mission church. In 1912, St. Elizabeth Church was officially established as a parish. As the population of the faithful continued to grow, a larger church was built on the corner of Berlin and Wayland Streets. The new church could seat 400 people and cost \$6,000 to build. At the start of World War I (1914-1918), Berlin Street was renamed Brussels Street. On June 7, 1914, the church was formally dedicated by Archbishop Edward Hanna.

Humor: 1. Golfer: "What's your handicap?" Second golfer: "Honesty." 2. "Don't worry," a patient told his psychiatrist. "I'll pay every cent I owe or my name isn't Alexander the Great!" 3. Q. Why is psychoanalysis a lot quicker for men than for women? A. When it's time to go back to their childhood, they're already there. 4. Psychiatrist to patient: "You have nothing to worry about--- anyone who can pay my bills is certainly not a failure." 5. John, having completed a course of analysis with his psychiatrist, to friend: "I always thought I was indecisive." Friend: "And now?" John: "I'm not sure."

Your Friend and Pastor,

Father Charles Puthota