

From the Pastor's Desktop

A Message from Father Charles Puthota

August 27, 2023



Dear Parishioners of St. Elizabeth,

In the recent weeks/months, our parish has incurred these big expense items as we take care of the maintenance of our buildings. In the spirit of transparent communication with you, I'm letting you know of the following details.

New Sound System: We have spent \$39,984.81 on the brand new sound system, installed by PCD Sound company. It's hoped that the new sound system has improved on the quality of sound inside our church. Some of you have expressed happiness that it sounds much better now in the church. There is still the problem of the echo. When the time comes, we might install some low-cost acoustic panels to absorb the sound and reduce the echo effect. Let's see!

Annual Property and Liability Insurance for parish properties: As you know, every year, we need to pay for Property and Liability insurance for four of our parish property buildings, which are the Church, the Alta Vista School, the Parish Office & Rectory, and the Convent Building. This year this amount is \$86,642.00.

New Roof for Some Parts of the Church: We recently paid \$95,468.00 for the new roof on our Church building. There is some more work that needs to be done because of leakages. The roof parts over the confessionals and St. Mary's Chapel (the old baptistry area) need to be done. The estimates for this additional work have been sought.

Alta Vista School Classroom Wall: This cost us \$25,854.87. As the "landlords" of Alta Vista School, our parish had the responsibility of paying for an old wall that was collapsing in one of the classrooms.

Fence Proposal in Front of Cantwell Hall: This project will be completed in the next few weeks/months at a cost of \$105,575.00. As you know, for decades, this area has become a tricky space because of the way non-parishioners have grown accustomed to parking there, with the result that our parish had lost control over this parking space. After consultations, including with the Archdiocese, I have finally decided to move forward with this project of securing this space for our parish use. Hopefully, we'll be able to use it well in the future as we see fit for our various parish needs. The fence all around the area in front of Cantwell Hall will have a height of six feet with a one-inch space between the vertical bars.

Mass: Five Things To Keep in Mind: As we participate in the daily or weekend Masses, let's always keep in our hearts the significance of this most important thing that we do in our parish life: 1. Mass is commemoration of Jesus' Death and Resurrection with the implications for us for our everyday lives and for the long haul. 2. It's a time of Prayer for union with God in Jesus and the Holy Spirit. 3. It's a time of listening to God's Word attentively and applying it to our lives. 4. In Communion, being united with Jesus the Bread of Life, for us to be able to live in the Spirit of Christ. 5. Being united with one another spiritually to form the Body of Christ with implications for loving, serving, and caring for one another, to make the world a better place, to further the Kingdom of God.

The Word of God: This 21st Sunday in Ordinary Time, Jesus poses the fundamental Christian question: "Who do you say that I am?" Our authentic answers to Jesus' question can spring only from the Heavenly Father's revelation. Only through God's wisdom and knowledge, His inscrutable and unsearchable ways, which Paul celebrates in Romans, do we come to know His Son. We cannot define Jesus purely from culture and society, our wants and needs. There is a grave danger of domesticating Jesus to suit our needs and ideologies. True, he is incarnate in our times, culture, and the world as the Word-made-Flesh, but he is also counter-cultural, calling the world to conversion and judgment. He is the Son of God, our Savior, for all times and cultures. He is "the Christ, the Son of the living God," calling us to repentance and offering us eternal life. We cannot fabricate Jesus for our convenience; we cannot fashion our own idols of Jesus. Our personal experience of Jesus has to be rooted and grounded in the revelation of our Father. Letting Jesus be who he is, we discern his vital role in our lives and for the world.

As Peter is called to shepherd the Church, as Eliakim is appointed master of the house in Isaiah, we are sent out on mission in the wake of our personal experience of Jesus. With Jesus we will collaborate to let the Church shine and dispel the darkness of evil in the world. Who is Jesus to us? This question we cannot ignore as Christians. The answer---not merely in words, but in the way we live---will bind us together with Jesus and his Father, energizing us to heal the world, the world God cherishes with an everlasting love.

Quotable Quotes: "Act as if what you do makes a difference. It does." ~ William James. "The only real mistake is the one from which we learn nothing." ~ Henry Ford. "Positive anything is better than negative nothing." ~ Elbert Hubbard. "Limit your 'always' and your 'nevers'." ~ Amy Poehler. "Creativity is intelligence having fun." ~ Albert Einstein "If you tell the truth you don't have to remember anything." ~ Mark Twain. "There is no substitute for hard work." ~ Thomas Edison

A Story to Think About: The Master's expansive mood emboldened his disciples to say, "Tell us what you got from Enlightenment. Did you become divine?" "No." "Did you become a saint?" "No." "Then what did you become?" "Awake."

Church Humor: The pastor of a small church exhorted his flock to give generously when the collection plate was passed. "Give," he pleaded, "as though it were going right back into your own pocket." After the service, the pastor chided one of the members: "George, I noticed that you let the collection basket go right by you in spite of my appeal." "Well, Reverend," the man replied, "I figured as long as the money was going back into my pocket anyway, it didn't need no round trip."

Your Friend and Pastor,

Father Charles Puthota