

From the Pastor's Desktop

A Message from Father Charles Puthota

November 19, 2023



Dear Parishioners of St. Elizabeth,

Happy Thanksgiving: Yet another Thanksgiving is around the corner, on Thursday, November 23. This is a fabulous, heartwarming, all-American festival of Thanksgiving. It's turkey time! People all over the nation are getting ready to travel back home to be with family. The spirit of family is in the air everywhere. According to AAA, 55.4 million people will travel 50 miles or more from home this Thanksgiving, with 49.1 million driving, 4.7 million flying and 1.55 million traveling by bus, train or cruise ship. The air travel is expected to be up by 6.6% over last year. This year is also projected to be the busiest air travel in nearly two decades as travel continues to rebound after the pandemic. Thanksgiving travel period is a five-day period from Wednesday Nov. 22 to Sunday Nov. 26. All that travel and trouble millions of people are prepared to undertake because they would like to be with family and friends--and give thanks to God and one another. We have much to be thankful for. 1. Gratitude makes us better human beings and Christians. 2. Gratitude makes explicit our human condition and our dependence on God and one another. It helps us be deeply aware that we are not self-sufficient and that we are interdependent. 3. It energizes us to go out of ourselves to others and think about others' needs. 4. Gratitude also helps us to look at the positive things in life and attain a sense of contentment without complaining about things that we do not have. 5. Thanksgiving consists in doing things rather than in saying things. With our love and service, we can create better families and communities and transform the human family. JFK rightly said: "As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them." Happy Thanksgiving!

Collection on Thanksgiving Day Mass at 9:00 a.m. will go to Catholic Extension: "Catholic Extension: is a Catholic non-profit organization that helps ensure that all American Catholics can practice their faith within vibrant faith communities. They help build up these communities in America's poorest regions and help connect poor and remote Catholic communities with essential financial support, educational partnerships, and infrastructure. Catholic Extension stands in solidarity with people of faith in poor and remote areas across the United States. They help develop leaders, build churches, strengthen ministries, reach out to the poor and vulnerable, educate seminarians, and engage the young people. For more information, go to catholicextension.org

November, a Month to Cherish the Dear Departed: We are still in the month of November, as we remember all those who have died, especially from among our family and friends. Keeping death in the midst of life is one of the greatest insights and practices because it would lead us to have perspective on all that we are, all that we have, and all that we do. Jesus himself during his public ministry kept death close to him. His ministry took on a perspective, depth, and urgency because of his profound awareness of his own impending death. Jesus' autobiographical parable was: "Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit" (Jn. 12:24). In other parables, such as the rich fool (Lk 12:16-21), Jesus invites

us to make present-day choices in view of the inevitability of death. "You cannot take it with you" is the well-known saying. You'll never see a U-Haul behind a hearse! Pope Francis has said that his grandmother would say that a burial shroud doesn't have pockets.

A Poem to honor death and celebrate life: "Death" by Rainer Maria Rilke: "Before us great Death stands/ Our fate held close within his quiet hands./ When with proud joy we lift Life's red wine / To drink deep of the mystic shining cup / And ecstasy through all our being leaps— / Death bows his head and weeps."

From the Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church: What is the unity that exists between the Old and the New Testaments? Scripture is one insofar as the Word of God is one. God's plan of salvation is one, and the divine inspiration of both Testaments is one. The Old Testament prepares for the New and the New Testament fulfills the Old; the two shed light on each other. **What role does Sacred Scripture play in the life of the Church?** Sacred Scripture gives support and vigor to the life of the Church. For the children of the Church, it is a confirmation of the faith, food for the soul and the fount of the spiritual life. Sacred Scripture is the soul of theology and of pastoral preaching. The Psalmist says that it is "a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" (*Psalm 119:105*). The Church, therefore, exhorts all to read Sacred Scripture frequently because "ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ" (Saint Jerome).

The Word of God---33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time: The Gospel is about the parable of the Talents. God has given us everything. He has endowed each of us with unique gifts and talents. We can't bury them. We receive them gratefully from God, grow them joyfully over a lifetime by investing in them, and generously put them at the service of others. This is simply stewardship. There is an old saying: "What I am is God's gift to me. What I become is my gift to God."

Next Sunday, November 26 is Christ the King: Let Christ the King rule over our lives supremely.

Sunday December 3 is First Sunday of Advent: Let's get psychologically and spiritually ready for this beautiful season leading up to Christmas.

Think About It: "I long to find some solid ground, some firm foundation for my life." "Look at it like this," said the Master. "What is the solid ground of the bird migrating across continents? What is the firm foundation of the fish carried by the river to the sea?"

Thanksgiving Humor: 1. Just before Thanksgiving, the holding pen was abuzz as Mother Turkey scolded her younger birds. "You turkeys are always into mischief," she gobbled. "If your grandfather could see the things you do, he'd turn over in his gravy." 2. Hatched?: This guy goes to his doctor. "Doctor, help me! I can't stop acting like a turkey!" "I see," said the doctor. "How long have you had this problem?" "Let me think a second. Mom laid the egg in 1954....." 3. Knock, knock! Who is there? Arthur. Arthur who? Arthur any Thanksgiving leftovers?

Happy Thanksgiving! God bless America! From sea to shining sea!

Your Friend and Pastor,

Father Charles Puthota