

From the Pastor's Desktop

A Message from Father Charles Puthota

April 28, 2024



Dear Parishioners of St. Elizabeth,

Easter Season: Eastering Jesus: Are you enjoying the closeness and beauty of the Risen Christ this season of Easter? The British Jesuit poet Gerard Manley Hopkins in his poem "The Wreck of the Deutschland" says: "Let him easter in us, be a dayspring to the dimness of us, be a crimson-cresseted east." Hopkins is convinced that the meaning of Easter is that the risen Christ keeps doing his "eastering" in our lives. Easter, therefore, could be viewed as a verb rather than a noun. Easter is not so much a one-day event but a continuous process of what the risen Christ can do in our lives. He can give us healing and forgiving love. Again and again, when he enters the locked doors, he does not criticize or reprove the disciples for having abandoned or denied or betrayed him, but all he offers is: "Peace be with you." That is how Jesus easters in us. His Easter presence is intimate and transformative. He uplifts and gives hope. We can turn away from fear to courage; from sinfulness to grace; from anxiety to peace. Jesus wants to easter in us this Easter season. Shall we have the love and faith to let him do just that?

Word of God, Fifth Sunday of Easter: I am the vine, you are the branches: The Risen Christ walks and talks with us. This mystery we treasure in a special way during the Easter season. He is not in the tomb, but is truly risen. His presence is real, his power is in us, his light is shining brightly this season. As he did in his lifetime on earth, he continues to insert himself into the thick of our human enterprise and endeavor. He reveals himself and shepherds us gently and forgivingly. His invitation is for us to "remain in him as he remains in us." Being connected with him and becoming fruitful for the glory of his father and the service of one another is his special invitation. Again and again, we come to the deeper realization that Christianity is all about Christ at the center of our life and the history of the world. Being connected with Jesus is the way for us to be purposeful and meaningful. As the branches are connected with the vine, we are united with Jesus and through him connected with the Father and with all other branches. The spiritual and social implications of such interconnectedness is awesome and amazing. This is the surest way for us to be the community capable of modeling for the whole world what it means to be and become the Kingdom of God, where God reigns supreme in Jesus through his Spirit and where we are all the sisters and brothers united in love and service. Let the life-giving sap of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ flow through our lives and fill us with the happiness and fulfillment and make us abundantly fruitful.

Month of May, Dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary: Memorare Prayer: Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thy intercession, was left unaided. Inspired by this confidence I fly unto thee, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother. To thee do I come, before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in thy mercy hear and answer me. Amen.

Inspiration: You don't have to actually answer the questions. Just read this straight through, and you'll get the point. 1. Name the five wealthiest people in the world. 2. Name the last five Heisman trophy winners. 3. Name the last five winners of the Miss America. 4. Name ten people who have won the Nobel or Pulitzer Prize. 5. Name the last half dozen Academy Award winners for best actor and actress. 6. Name the last decade's worth of World Series winners. How did you do?

The point is, none of us remember the headliners of yesterday. These are no second-rate achievers. They are the best in their fields. But the applause dies. Awards tarnish. Achievements are forgotten. Accolades and certificates are buried with their owners.

Here's another quiz. See how you do on this one: 1. List a few teachers who aided your journey through school. 2. Name three friends who have helped you through a difficult time. 3. Name five people who have taught you something worthwhile. 4. Think of a few people who have made you feel appreciated and special. 5. Think of five people you enjoy spending time with. Easier?

The lesson: The people who make a difference in your life are not the ones with the most credentials, the most money, or the most awards. They are the ones that care.

Easter Quote: "A man who was completely innocent, offered himself as a sacrifice for the good of others, including his enemies, and became the ransom of the world. It was a perfect act." --- Mahatma Gandhi.

Easter Humor: Conversation between Joseph of Arimathea and a friend: Friend: "Joseph, I don't understand. You're the richest man in the region; you have made this brand new tomb for yourself and your family; and, you're going to give it away to bury Jesus?" Joseph: "It's just for the weekend!"

Let's continue to luxuriate in the warmth and intimacy of the Risen Christ this season of Easter,

Your Friend and Pastor,

Father Charles Puthota