

From the Pastor's Desktop

A Message from Father Charles Puthota

June 2, 2024



Dear Parishioners of St. Elizabeth,

Corpus Christi: This Sunday is the Feast of the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ. Keep in mind, it's not called the Feast of the Soul of Christ or the Spirit of Christ. It's the Body and Blood of Christ. It's the feast of the flesh and blood of Christ. We are intimately connected with the flesh and blood of Christ. Through the mystery of the Incarnation, Jesus took on our human nature, our flesh and blood. In the Eucharist, he gives us his flesh and blood. That's how close we are to him. In the Eucharist, he enters our flesh and blood, and we enter his flesh and blood. We---Jesus and us---become inseparable. As Paul says, "It's no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me." When we share the Eucharist, we become intimate with Christ and with one another. When we become one with others in the Eucharist, the social and communitarian implications for what we can do for one another are crystal clear. We will love, respect, and care for one another. We'll rearrange our relationships; we'll ensure that no one goes without food, clothing, shelter, justice, dignity, peace, and prosperity, not just in our neighborhood, but all over the world.

In John's gospel, chapter 6 is devoted to the theme of Jesus being the bread of life. We might want to go to that chapter and do a "lectio divina," prayerfully reflecting on the multiplication of loaves and Jesus' long discourse. Even as bread is essential for the survival of body, Jesus is essential for our life. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Jesus is the Bread for the world as well. We can do that by sharing our blessings with others. As Julius Nyerere, the late President of Tanzania and an ardent Catholic, said: "It's not that we do not have enough for everyone; it's that we do not have people who share." Ultimately, as Jesus shares his own life with others in the Eucharist, we are called to share our lives, all that we are and do, with others. Eucharist is also Thanksgiving; it's the memory of Jesus; it's the source of eternal life; it's the sign of the unity of the human family; it's what transforms us into the Body of Christ, the community of believers. If the Eucharist is all this multi-dimensional reality and mystery, with what kind of reverence and anticipation should we be approaching it, knowing that in the Eucharist there's the assurance of our being united irrevocably with Christ and with all others?

Eucharist: From the Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church: What does the Eucharist represent in the life of the Church? It is the source and summit of all Christian life. In the Eucharist, the sanctifying action of God in our regard and our worship of him reach their high point. It contains the whole spiritual good of the Church, Christ himself, our Pasch. Communion with divine life and the unity of the People of God are both expressed and effected by the Eucharist. Through the eucharistic celebration we are united already with the liturgy of heaven and we have a foretaste of eternal life. What are the names for this sacrament? The unfathomable richness of this sacrament is expressed in different names which evoke its various aspects. The most common names are: the Eucharist, Holy Mass, the Lord's Supper, the Breaking of the Bread, the Eucharistic Celebration, the Memorial of the passion, death and Resurrection of the Lord, the Holy Sacrifice, the Holy and Divine Liturgy, the Sacred Mysteries, the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar, and Holy Communion.

Friday, June 7: Feast of Most Sacred Heart of Jesus; Saturday, June 8: Feast of the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary: We come to the hearts of Jesus and Mary, filled with sacrificial and redemptive love for us, inviting our hearts to be on fire for God's love and love of neighbor.

Quotes on the Eucharist: 1. "If angels could be jealous of men, they would be so for one reason: Holy Communion." - St. Maximilian Kolbe. 2. "How I loved the feasts!.... I especially loved the processions in honor of the Blessed Sacrament. What a joy it was for me to throw flowers beneath the feet of God!... I was never so happy as when I saw my roses touch the sacred Monstrance..." - from St. Therese's Autobiography: Story of A Soul. 3. We cannot separate our lives from the Eucharist; the moment we do, something breaks. People ask, "Where do the sisters get the joy and energy to do what they are doing?" The Eucharist involves more than just receiving; it also involves satisfying the hunger of Christ. He says, "Come to Me." He is hungry for souls. Nowhere does the Gospel say: "Go away," but always "Come to Me. -- Mother Theresa.

Humor: 1. A pastor always used the phrase, "It might be worse," when some calamity would come his way. One day a friend said to him, "I've something to tell you, and you won't be able to use your favorite phrase. I dreamt last night that I died and went to hell." "It might be worse," said the preacher. The friend came unglued: "Man alive, how could it be worse?" To which the pastor replied: "It might be true." 2. A Sunday School teacher asked her class why Joseph and Mary took Jesus with them to Jerusalem. A small child replied: "They couldn't get a babysitter."

Wishing you and your families God's continued blessings every day, every moment of your lives,

Your Friend and Pastor,

Fr. Charles Puthota.