

From the Pastor's Desktop

A Message from Father Charles Puthota

June 23, 2024



Dear Parishioners of St. Elizabeth,

Word of God: Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time: Let's give thanks to God: The refrain from our responsorial psalm this Sunday is: "Give thanks to the Lord, his love is everlasting." How various and abundant are God's blessings! His most amazing blessing is love. It's everlasting and eternal. His love is absolute, radical, and unconditional. His love is constant and abundant. So let's give thanks to God. In giving thanks, we acknowledge God as God and ourselves as creatures dependent on God. In giving thanks, we learn not to take God's blessings for granted. In giving thanks, we grow in sharing his blessings with others generously. In giving thanks, we become positive and upbeat and cease to be sullen, cynical, and discontented. So let's give thanks with all our hearts and minds. As in the first reading from Job, he is the one who has created everything and set their boundaries powerfully and providentially. In the second reading from Second Corinthians, we read that the love of Christ impels us. It's God's awesome love revealed in Jesus' love that led him to sacrifice himself. In our thanksgiving, let's be impelled by the love of Christ to be good and kind. Let the old things pass away. Behold, new things have come. We are a new creation in Christ. In the gospel from Mark, Jesus calms our storms and winds so that we could feel the assurance of his presence with us always, even to the end of time, no matter how insurmountable our troubles may seem. So let's give thanks to God in Christ who loves and graces us with blessings awesome and unimaginable.

Solemnity of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist (June 24): John the Baptist's birth is celebrated on June 24 and his Martyrdom commemorated on August 29. Blessed Virgin Mary is the only other saint whose birth (September 8) and her Assumption (August 15) are both celebrated. The date of June 24 is chosen to be exactly six months before Christmas, the birth of Jesus. Jesus himself paid the greatest tribute to John the Baptist: "Amen, I say to you, among those born of women there is none greater than John the Baptist" (Matthew 11:11). Even when he was in his mother Elizabeth's womb, he leaped for joy at the presence of Jesus still in his mother Mary's womb. Thus, he represents the whole human race making the movement, the journey, the leaping, the dancing, toward Jesus throughout history. He baptized Jesus in the midst of the Trinitarian revelation. Last of the prophets of Israel, he was the first to testify to Jesus, as he prepared the way for him and pointed him out when he came, saying "Behold the lamb of God." He gave his life in witness to truth. May we too, like John the Baptist, have the wisdom to prepare the way for Jesus in our times and circumstances, point him out to one another, and stand up truth, peace, and justice.

Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul (June 29): At St. Peter's Square, huge statues of these two giants of saints are looking over the millions of visiting pilgrims who come from around the world. Peter who was given the keys of the Kingdom and Paul the mission to be the apostle to the gentiles. Peter's mission as the first pope and shepherd and Paul's ministry in propagating the risen Christ outside the borders of the Jewish lands have become the models of the Church, which is to preserve the mission and the tradition of the Church and to push constantly the frontiers of missionary activity. Peter denied Jesus three times and the tiple profession of his love for Jesus was all that Jesus asked for. Paul persecuted Jesus and his followers but he was to be transformed into the greatest promoter of Jesus and his Church. Both the saints gave their lives for Christ in witness to the fullness of life we are all called to embrace.

Poetic Quotes: "Hope is the thing with feathers, That perches in the soul, And sings the tune without the words, And never stops at all."---Emily Dickinson. "The caged bird sings / with a fearful trill / of things unknown / but longed for still /and his tune is heard / on the distant hill / for the caged bird / sings of freedom."---Maya Angelou. "Two roads diverged in a wood, and I – / I took the one less traveled by, / And that has made all the difference." ---Robert Frost. "I love thee with the breath, smiles, tears, of all my life; and, if God choose, I shall but love thee better after death."---Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

Humor: Top Ten Reasons Eve Was Created: 10. God was worried that Adam would frequently become lost in the garden because he would not ask for directions. 9. God knew that one day Adam would require someone to locate and hand him the remote. 8. God knew Adam would never go out and buy himself a new fig leaf when his wore out and would therefore need Eve to buy one for him. 7. God knew Adam would never be able to make a doctor, dentist or haircut appointment for himself. 6. God knew Adam would never remember which night to put the garbage on the curb. 5. God knew if the world was to be populated, men would never be able to handle the pain and discomfort of childbearing. 4. As the Keeper of the Garden, since he didn't have metal sheds or greenhouses, Adam would never remember where he left his tools. 3. Apparently, Adam needed someone to blame his troubles on when God caught him hiding in the garden. 2. As the Bible says, "It is not good for man to be alone!" And the #1 reason why God created Eve: 1. When God finished the creation of Adam, He stepped back, scratched His head and said, "I can do better than that!"

Wishing you a summer season filled with joy, gratitude, and faith,

Your Friend and Pastor,

Father Charles Puthota