

# From the Pastor's Desktop

A Message from Father Charles Puthota

July 7, 2024



Dear Parishioners of St. Elizabeth,

Hope your Independence Day celebrations went well! God Bless America! May America be--- and become---a blessing to the whole world! Every nation in the world looks up to America for truth, justice, peace, respect, dignity, and for the highest values of democracy! May this nation fulfill its destiny by being a light to the nations and by sharing generously its blessings with all nations, especially those in most need!

Word of God, 14<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time---Listening to Jesus the Prophet: The gospel today is about how the prophet is rejected in his own town, by his own people. Jesus goes back to Nazareth and preaches at the synagogue. They are astonished, but at the same time, they take offense at him. That he is one of his own kith and kin prevents them from being open to the astonishing and liberating message that Jesus was sharing with them. Jesus says to them: "A prophet is not without honor except in his native place and among his own kin and in his own house." Jesus was "amazed at their lack of faith." Could we learn to open our minds and hearts to Jesus, setting aside our biases, prejudices, and preconceived notions? Is it possible that some of our beliefs about politics and economics may be in the way of our listening to Jesus with courage and openness? Is it possible that if we take Jesus seriously, we may have to change our entrenched views on some things in life? Jesus does not speak an agreeable message but a prophetic message. His message is often countercultural. Jesus challenges our cherished notions and hardened beliefs about the nation and the world, about life and love. Also, there is an invitation in the gospel that we need to listen to the prophets in our own homes, communities, parishes, and the world. Their messages may not be palatable, but God is speaking through them to renew, to reform, to rethink, and to remake ourselves and the world.

News from the Vatican: Pope Francis will take his usual July break from most of his activities, according to the Prefecture of the Papal Household. As he has for years, the audiences, as well as most activities and other meetings, during July to allow for a period of rest.... However, as he has always done in the past, the Pope will continue to pray the Angelus on Sunday at noon with the faithful in St. Peter's Square.... The Pope's General Audiences will resume on Wednesday, August 7. The General Audiences in August are often held in the Vatican's Paul VI Hall due to the intense Roman heat.

The following month, the Holy Father is scheduled to make two Apostolic Journeys, the first being to Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Timor-Leste, and Singapore on September 2-13, and the next being later in the month, to Belgium and Luxembourg, on September 26-29.

The Holy Father has appointed His Eminence Cardinal Luis Antonio G. Tagle, Pro-Prefect of the Dicastery for the Evangelization, as his Special Envoy to the National Eucharistic Congress in the United States of America. The Congress will be celebrated in Indianapolis from 17 July to 21 July 2024.

**From the Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church:** What does it mean in practice for a person to believe in God? It means to adhere to God himself, entrusting oneself to him and giving assent to all the truths which God has revealed because God is Truth. It means to believe in one God in three Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. What are the characteristics of faith? Faith is the supernatural virtue which is *necessary* for salvation. It is a *free gift* of God and is accessible to all who humbly seek it. The act of faith is a *human act*, that is, an act of the intellect of a person - prompted by the will moved by God - who freely assents to divine truth. Faith is also *certain* because it is founded on the Word of God; it *works* "through charity" (*Galatians 5:6*); and it *continually grows* through listening to the Word of God and through prayer. It is, even now, a *foretaste* of the joys of heaven.

**A Story to Ponder:** There was once a man who was busy building a home for himself. He wanted it to be the nicest, warmest, coziest home in the world. Someone came to him to ask for help because the world was on fire. But it was his home he was interested in, not the world. When he finally built his home, he found he did not have a planet to put it in.

**Quotable Quotes:** "The power of imagination makes us infinite" --- John Muir. "The best way out is always through" --- Robert Frost. "The whole problem with the world is that fools and fanatics are always so certain of themselves, and wiser people so full of doubts." --- Bertrand Russell. "The difference between ordinary and extraordinary is that little extra" --- Jimmy Johnson. "Don't count the days, make the days count" --- Muhammad Ali. "Believe and act as if it were impossible to fail" --- Charles Kettering. "The best dreams happen when you are awake" --- Cherie Gilderbloom.

**Humor:** 1. Q: Why did Moses wander in the desert for 40 years? A: Even then men wouldn't ask for directions! 2. Doctor: "Your recovery was a miracle!" Patient: "PRAISE GOD. Now I don't have to pay you!" 3. Delivering a speech at a banquet on the night of his arrival in a large city, a visiting priest told several anecdotes he expected to repeat at meetings the next day. Because he wanted to use the jokes again, he requested the reporters to omit them from any accounts they might turn into their newspapers. A cub reporter, in commenting on the speech, ended his piece with the following: "The priest told a number of stories that cannot be published."

Your Friend and Pastor,

Fr. Charles Puthota