

From the Pastor's Desktop

A Message from Father Charles Puthota



August 18, 2024

Dear Parishioners of St. Elizabeth,

Archdiocesan Annual Appeal (AAA) Thank-You Luncheon: Sunday August 4, we had 55 people attending the thank-you luncheon at our own Cantwell Hall. People gathered after the 10:30 a.m. Mass. There was a great spirit of friendship and gratitude. It was an occasion to celebrate our successful completion of the Archdiocesan Annual Appeal, thanks to everyone's participation, including those who donated 1.5% or more. For the fourth consecutive year we have not only reached our goal but have gone over the goal by a few thousand dollars. As you know well, all the surplus money is returned to our parish for what we need to do at the parish level. At the luncheon on August 4, I spoke to thank the generous donors for supporting the parish on a weekly basis, but also for looking beyond the parish borders to assist, through the AAA, the Archdiocese in their mission and ministry. My thanks are due to Ron Borg for saying a few inspiring words of encouragement about our AAA achievement over the past four years. I also would like to thank all those who worked to make this celebration a success, especially David Gemignani and Phil McCarthy. The office staff Sandy Mehrwein and Patti Spiteri have been diligent throughout the AAA period, processing and forwarding the donations to the Archdiocese and posting the updated names of donors in the bulletin. The raffle with gift card prizes kept everyone interested till the end. The food was delicious and enjoyable. Thank you, the AAA donors, and God bless your generosity.

My 35th Priestly Ordination Anniversary – August 19: Please see a picture on the last page from my priestly Ordination on August 19, 1989. I have now been a priest for 35 years, 13 of those as a Jesuit priest and 22 of those as a priest of the Archdiocese of San Francisco. I was not fortunate enough to have my mother Martha alive at my Ordination. My father Isaac went home to God in 2017. Please keep me and my family in your prayers. Service to God and His people continues. I'm deeply grateful for all your affection and inspiration, for your support and encouragement, your goodwill and friendship. The Opening Prayer in the Roman Missal for the Priestly Ordination Anniversary captures my sentiments joyfully and gratefully: "Holy Father, who, by no merit of my own, chose me for communion with the eternal priesthood of your Christ and for the ministry of your Church, grant that I may be an ardent yet gentle preacher of the Gospel and a faithful steward of your mysteries."

New Fence at Cantwell Hall Parking Lot Completed: After several months of the process of permits from the city, having crossed several hurdles and obstacles, with all our meticulous planning and organizing, we have finally realized the goal of having a fence installed for the parking lot in front of Cantwell Hall. The purpose of this fence is to safeguard our parish property for the parking needs of parishioners when we gather for our religious and social events. It would also prevent some people from using that space for unauthorized gatherings at night. Many parishioners have expressed happiness and satisfaction at the final result and the quality of the fence. I hope and pray that we may be able to use this new secured parking lot with a solid fence around it in a way that helps us to participate in the parish services and events. The ultimate goal, of course, is for us through all our facilities to give glory to God and build up the community of believers right within our own parish setting.

Word of God, 20th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B: In the Book of Proverbs, Wisdom spreads a banquet: "Let whoever is simple turn in here; to the one who lacks understanding, Come, eat of my food and drink of the wine I have mixed. Forsake foolishness that you may live; advance in the way of understanding." The invitation is to participate in God's wisdom and choose a way of life in consonance with God's will and purpose for us. Paul in Ephesians exhorts us to "watch carefully how you live, not as foolish persons but as wise..." In the gospel, Jesus is the wisdom of God hidden for ages but now revealed to us. Jesus speaks his wisdom about offering his own body and blood as food for eternal life. Some people cannot accept this teaching and decide to leave Jesus. Jesus wonders if his apostles are also going to go away. However, Peter declares: "Master, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and are convinced that you are the Holy One of God." Do we find in Jesus our wisdom and our food? Is he truly the bread of life for us? Are we wise enough to consider life with Christ most essential and central to us?

Quotable Quotes: 1. When it rains, look for rainbows. When it's dark, look for the stars. 2. No one is too old for fairytales. 3. Before you speak, let your words pass through three gates: Is it true? Is it necessary? Is it kind? -Rumi. 4. Be somebody who makes everybody feel like a somebody. 5. Commonsense is a flower that doesn't grow in everyone's garden. 6. It is up to you to see the beauty in everyday things. 7. Life is a journey, not a race. 8. Broken crayons still color. 9. One day or day one. You decide. 10. Appreciate good people. They are hard to come by.

Pearly Gates Humor: 1. A man walks up to the pearly gates. Saint Peter asks, "How did you get here?" The man answers, Flu." 2. A guy ends up at the pearly gates and St Peter welcomes him by congratulating him for being the first man to live to 350 years of age. The guy is confused, I think you have got the wrong guy, I never lived that long. St Peter replies, Yeah, it's you, we worked it out from your IT contracting time sheets. 3. What the lifelong atheist said when he reached the Pearly Gates: "I'll be damned!"

Your Friend and Pastor,

Father Charles Puthota