

From the Pastor's Desktop

A Message from Father Charles Puthota



September 8, 2024

Dear Parishioners of St. Elizabeth,

Cantwell Hall Parking Lot: I have been hearing positive feedback from many of the parishioners about the new Cantwell Hall fence. I'm glad that finally, after decades of having lost control of that parking lot, we have it now for our exclusive parish use. The pavement of the parking lot, though, is in a rather worn-out condition. On **September 10, 11 and 12 (Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday)**, the parking lot in front of Cantwell will be repaved and striped. The parking lot, therefore, will not be available those three days as well as on the following Friday and Saturday (Sept. 13 and 14th) in order to let the new pavement settle and cure. For the weekend Masses, we do not need that parking lot anyway as the school parking lot is available. I thank you all for your patience as we get the necessary maintenance and renovation works done. The theological and pastoral vision is that all our parish facilities are to help us as a community of believers, as followers of Christ, for us to come together and celebrate our communion with Jesus and one another.

Cantwell Hall Interior Renovation Work: I have been meeting with the prospective painters and gym floor folks to get these jobs done. As you know, the interior of the hall needs much work and some of you have been letting me know about it again and again. There is a whole list of things to be done along with the painting and the resurfacing of the wooden gym floor: windows, chairs, restrooms, and kitchen. As and when these various jobs are undertaken, the use of the hall will not be available. Alta Vista School (our tenants) uses Cantwell Hall on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. The "Over 50 Club" uses it every Thursday. The parish Faith Formation program uses it Saturday mornings. Thanks again for the goodwill and collaboration.

Word of God---23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B: Last Sunday in the second reading, James had called us to be not only hearers but also doers of the Word. This Sunday he concretizes the message by asking us not to show partiality and discrimination. James asks: "Did not God choose those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom...?" To be able to treat others as we would like to be treated is the key to our relationships. Every human being is precious and beautiful, created in God's own image and likeness. Our minds and hearts have to be opened to this faith-filled way of looking at others. The gospel about Jesus opening the ears and the mouth of the deaf and mute man might be an invitation for us to examine ourselves about our ability to hear well and to speak "plainly" as the healed man did. Are we able to remove all sorts of noise and din in our minds and hearts to be able to listen to the subtle and gentle voice of the Lord? Part of our hearing well and speaking plainly would mean that we treat everyone with dignity and respect as we are all God's daughters and sons. That is integral to the love commandment of Jesus.

Pope Francis' Current Apostolic Journeys to Asia: Pope Francis, who will be turning 88 in December, is right now in Asia Pacific region, visiting Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Singapore, and Timor-Leste. During his 12-day visit to these countries (September 2 - 13), as he proclaims and preaches the Gospel, he will also be highlighting environmental concerns and the necessity of inter-religious dialogue. Let's pray for the Holy Father's successful journeys to these nations, as the numbers of Catholics and religious vocations are increasing in these regions.

A Story to Ponder: An old monk was making his way to the Himalayan mountains in the bitter cold of winter when it began to snow. An innkeeper said to him, "How will you ever get there in this kind of weather, my good man?" The old man answered cheerfully, "My heart got there first, so it's easy for the rest of me to follow" (ADM).

September 8, Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary: We do not celebrate this traditional feast this year because it falls on a Sunday, and as you know, Sunday liturgical celebrations take precedence over most of the feast days. However, we still keep the BVM close to our hearts and minds. Her birth was the preparation for the birth of her Son Jesus, the Savior of the world. Mary our mother is always on our side and pleads on our behalf. May she always look upon us with love and affection and with motherly love lead us to her Son Jesus so that we may always strive to "do whatever he asks us to do."

Monday September 9: Feast of St. Peter Claver: A Spanish Jesuit, he served in the Colombian mission in Cartagena. For 38 years he devoted to caring for African slaves, baptizing over 300,000 of them. He called himself "the slave of the slaves forever." He died on Sept. 8, 1654. He is the patron saint of Colombia and of all missions to black people. (Source: ORDO).

Saturday September 14: Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross: This feast has its origins in the discovery of the cross of Jesus by Empress Helena, mother of Emperor Constantine, and the famous churches built by him. The theological significance is the celebration of the new life Jesus brought us by dying on the cross. He has freed us from sin, death, and evil. All our human longings and desires are fulfilled by the death of Jesus on the cross. The shameful, negative sign of the cross has become in Christ the most positive sign of life and love. "O Cross erected above the world, Cross of our Savior King!"

Think About It: "I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." – *Maya Angelou.*

Humor: One beautiful Sunday morning, a preacher announced to his congregation: "My good people, I have here in my hands three sermons...a \$100 sermon that lasts five minutes, a \$50 sermon that lasts fifteen minutes, and a \$10 sermon that lasts a full hour.

"Now, we'll take the collection and see which one I'll deliver."

Your Friend and Pastor,

Father Charles Puthota