

From the Pastor's Desktop

A Message from Father Charles Puthota

October 20, 2024



Dear Parishioners of St. Elizabeth,

World Mission Sunday this Sunday, October 20: World Mission Sunday joins all Catholics of the world into one community of faith. At Mass that Sunday, we recommit ourselves to our common vocation, through Baptism, to be missionaries, through prayer, participation in the Eucharist, and by giving generously to the collection for the Society for the Propagation of the Faith. Pope Francis' message for World Mission Sunday this year focuses on the theme: "You shall be my witnesses" (Acts 1:8). He reminds us that, "every Christian is called to be a missionary and witness to Christ. And the Church, the community of Christ's disciples, has no other mission than that of bringing the Gospel to the entire world by bearing witness to Christ. To evangelize is the very identity of the Church.." On World Mission Sunday, we join our Holy Father in supporting his missions. Together, through our prayers and financial support, we bring the Lord's mercy and concrete help to the most vulnerable communities in the Pope's missions. In a world where so much divides us, World Mission Sunday rejoices in our unity as missionaries by our Baptism, as it offers each one of us an opportunity to support the life-giving presence of the Church among the poor and marginalized in more than 1,150 mission dioceses.

October, month of the Rosary: Let's seek our Blessed Mother's intercession and love and affection as we pray the Rosary, especially this month of October. Two images are striking for me: One, Michaelangelo's sculpture "Pieta" is most poignant for me. The dead body of Jesus placed in the lap of his mother is most moving. This image is profoundly inspirational and brings us close to the affection and love of our dear Mother Mary. May we always be close to her as she leads us to her son Jesus Christ.

Word of God, 29th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B: In the Gospel this Sunday, James and John are jockeying for power and position, but Jesus says, "Whoever wishes to be great among you will be your servant; whoever wishes to be first among you will be the slave of all. For the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many." This is the paradox of Christian life. We are to be the servants if we would like to be the first. Jesus himself became one among us, serving us and washing our feet. "The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve." The followers of Jesus are called to be like him, humble and self-effacing, ready to give and share, to be the last and the servant of all, willing to sacrifice everything. Let's always keep in mind that the one whom we follow gave his life away so that we could have life and have it abundantly.

From the Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCCC): What is the

Eucharist? The Eucharist is the very sacrifice of the Body and Blood of the Lord Jesus which he instituted to perpetuate the sacrifice of the cross throughout the ages until his return in glory. Thus he entrusted to his Church this memorial of his death and Resurrection. It is a sign of unity, a bond of charity, a paschal banquet, in which Christ is consumed, the mind is filled with grace, and a pledge of future glory is given to us. **When did Jesus Christ institute the Eucharist?** Jesus instituted the Eucharist on Holy Thursday “the night on which he was betrayed” (1 Corinthians 11:23), as he celebrated the Last Supper with his apostles.

Tuesday, October 22: Feast of Saint John Paul II: Saint John Paul II, born Karol Józef Wojtyła, on May 18, 1920, in Poland, became Pope in 1978, serving until his death in 2005. His papacy was one of the longest in history and marked by significant global impact. He was the first non-Italian pope in over 400 years and played a crucial role in the fall of communism in Eastern Europe, particularly in his native Poland. Known for his charisma and deep spirituality, he traveled extensively, visiting 129 countries and addressing global issues such as human rights, social justice, and the sanctity of life.

John Paul II was a strong advocate for interfaith dialogue, forging relationships with leaders of other religions and addressing the need for reconciliation and understanding. His teachings, including the encyclicals, *Evangelium Vitae* (1995), continue to influence Catholic doctrine. He also focused on the dignity of the human person and the importance of youth, emphasizing the need for a renewal of faith in the modern world. Beatified in 2011 and canonized in 2014, his legacy endures in his contributions to the Church and his impact on global politics and society.

A story to Ponder: The devil, transformed into an angel of light, appeared to one of the holy Fathers of the Desert and said, “I am the Angel Gabriel and I have been sent to thee by the Almighty.” The monk replied, “Think again. You must have been sent to someone else, I have done nothing to deserve the visit of an angel.” With that the devil vanished and never again dared come anywhere near the monk.

Quote: Said a world famous violinist about his success in playing Beethoven’s Violin Concerto: “I have splendid music, a splendid violin and a splendid bow. All I need to do is bring them together and get out of the way.”

Humor: 1. A teacher was giving a lecture on modern inventions. “Can any of you mention something of importance that did not exist fifty years ago?” she asked. One bright lad in the front row raised his hand eagerly and said. “Me!” 2. Guess what the ant said to the elephant when Noah was lining up all the animals to get them into the ark. He said, “Stop pushing.”

Your Friend and Pastor,

Father Charles Puthota