

# From the Pastor's Desktop

A Message from Father Charles Puthota

November 17, 2024



Dear Parishioners of St. Elizabeth,

**Eternal Rest Grant Unto Them, O Lord...**: November is a tender and emotional month when we think of our dear ones gone to the Lord and pray for them. They loved us; we loved them. What prevents us from continuing to love them? Nothing! Love lives on beyond death. Nothing can separate us from them, not even death. November a month of sadness and memories, but it's also a time of awareness about life beyond our earthly existence when God in Jesus will fulfill our deepest longings for immortality and everlasting life. We are made for eternity and God himself has placed that desire in us. We realize the brevity of our life on earth and rearrange our preoccupations to gain a perspective on things. In view of the end of our journey in this world, we develop a sense of what matters and what does not. We pray for all those going through a purification process, like gold in the fire, that they may attain their final destiny of being with God forever. *Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. Amen. May they rest in peace. Amen. May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace. Amen*

**The Word of God, 33<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B:** This is the penultimate Sunday of the liturgical year before Advent begins on December 1. Next Sunday is the last Sunday, the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe. As we come closer to the end of the year, spiritually and metaphorically, the end times are given to us for reflection, couched in apocalyptic language. In the first reading, Daniel looks to the end of the world, "a time unsurpassed in distress," but the Archangel Michael will protect God's people. In the Gospel, Mark seems to have Daniel's prophecy in mind as he gives Jesus' teaching on the end of the world. Cataclysmic signs will appear and the Son of Man will come in great power and glory, but no one will know the exact day or hour. In view of the end of everything, we are to be alert, alive, watchful and ready. We are to persevere in faith because God is faithful. God will fulfill the world and bring everything to a final conclusion.

**Advent Retreat, Saturday December 07, 2024:** The Retreat starts with 8:30 a.m. Mass followed by a light breakfast. I will be giving three talks with 20-minute breaks. The theme is: "The Church We Love and Cherish." It will be a reflection on some aspects of ecclesiology. We will have singing before and after each session. There will be plenty of time to socialize and renew friendships. It will be a joyful, upbeat time as we prepare for the coming of Christ into our lives all over again. After the sessions are over, we will have lunch. Do come join, if you are able to. Please register! Registration fee: \$15. The forms are available in the church and in the parish office.

**Thanksgiving Day Thursday, November 28 Mass Collection for the Maryknoll Society:**

Thanksgiving Day Mass will be, as is the tradition in our parish, at 9:00 a.m. Instead of the donation of canned and other food items, we will be taking up a regular collection. Each year, we send this amount to a different Catholic charitable organization. This year, let us send the amount to the "Maryknoll Priests and Brothers," a Catholic foreign Mission Society of America, who for over 100 years have been doing outstanding missionary work, proclaiming the Gospel and working in support of peace and justice, especially for the poor and marginalized in more than 20 countries around the globe.

**Simbang Gabi 2024:** At 8:30 a.m. daily Mass from Dec. 16 through Dec. 24. Please do give the organizing team Gloria Trinidad, Beth Pasco, and May Devera all the help and support they deserve. Also, plan on attending this nine-day novena Masses to prepare spiritually for Christmas.

**COP29---U.N. Climate Change Conference:** This is taking place now in Baku, Azerbaijan, November 11-22, 2024. COP, which stands for Conference of Parties, is the series of formal meetings, where governments assess global efforts to advance the Paris Climate Agreement. It seeks to limit global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels as informed by the latest science. At COPs, world leaders come together to measure progress and negotiate the best ways to address climate change. There are now 198 Parties (197 countries plus the European Union) to the Convention, constituting near universal membership. Pope Francis has said: "I hope that COP29 in Baku will result in the signing of an ambitious agreement that fosters truly inclusive development...The available scientific data no longer allow for delays and clearly show that the preservation of creation is one of the most urgent issues of our time. We must also recognize that this is closely tied to the protection of peace."

**A Story to Ponder:** The old rabbi had become blind and could neither read nor look at the faces of those who came to visit him. A faith healer said to him, "Entrust yourself to my care and I will heal your blindness." "There will be no need for that," replied the rabbi. "I can see everything that I need to." *Not everyone whose eyes are closed is asleep. And not everyone with open eyes can see.*

**Pearly Gates Humor:** A very wealthy man decided to prove the quote, "You can't take it with you", wrong. Before he died, he requested that his gold be buried with him. Sure enough, after his death he found himself in heaven along with his gold. He was so excited that he had actually taken it with him. He went up to St. Peter to enter the gates and exclaimed "Look at this, you can take it with you." Peter looked at the gold in the man's hand and asked "Why would you want to bring pavement with you? Don't you know Heaven is paved with gold?"

Your Friend and Pastor,

Father Charles Puthota