

From the Pastor's Desktop

A Message from Father Charles Puthota

January 05, 2025



Dear Parishioners of St. Elizabeth,

The Epiphany of the Lord, Sunday January 5: Guided by the star, we come on a pilgrimage to the manger, bearing our own “gifts,” like the three wise men and look upon the divine baby. Epiphany, as you know, means manifestation, revelation. The feast recognizes that Jesus is savior not just for one nation but for the whole world. The three wise men, having adored the holy baby, will take with them the astounding news of the mysterious birth of the savior to their nations and thus help spread the good news to the ends of the earth. Therefore, at the heart of this event, there is the message for us to make Christ the new-born King known to the world through our love and faith. What could I say and do to make Jesus known? What are the values I need to live by to make Jesus be born spiritually in the world now? There are certain things we could explore as inspiration from the mystery of the Epiphany. Are we ready to make the journey to the new-born baby? It would involve getting out of our familiar “places,” our own positions, our rigid ways of thinking and acting---and undertaking a journey of adventure. Can we see the “star” that is sent to guide and lead us? What is that star in our lives today? In what form and shape do we see that star? How does God speak and guide us in our current circumstances? Does he use our own family members and friends to send those messages of guidance and protection? Do we miss God’s signs of love and grace? God is speaking to us through the signs of the times. May we have the courage and discernment to make the journey to Christ our Lord, to recognize him in people and circumstances, and having adored him, let’s go by another way back to where we came from, so that our lives could take on a whole new meaning, urgency, and purpose.

Christmas lingers: I hope your Christmas has been a blessed and heartwarming one, bringing you closer to the One who is closer to us than we are to ourselves. The beauty and glory of Christmas continues, not just for a day or a few days, but through each day and throughout our lives. The heart of Christmas is the mystery of the Incarnation: that of God becoming one with us, entering our history, our flesh and blood, our human family, and all that we are engaged in life, love, and growth, our pains and joys, our triumphs and travails, our ambiguities and anomalies. Jesus lives inside of our lives. He is Emmanuel, God who is with us, every moment of our lives. So, long live the mystery and majesty of Christmas, and well into the New Year 2025!

Jubilee Year 2025: The Catholic Jubilee Year, established in 1300 by Pope Boniface VIII, is rooted in the Jewish tradition of releasing prisoners, forgiving debts, and restoring harmony every 50 years. During the Jubilee, Catholics can receive plenary indulgences, which remove the temporal punishment for sins already forgiven. These indulgences can also be offered by the living for the relief of souls in purgatory. (America Magazine)

The Universal Church looks toward the Jubilee Year 2025 (the 2,025th anniversary of the Incarnation of our Lord), which is an **"event of great spiritual, ecclesial, and social significance in the life of the Church."** Pope Francis stated in his February 2022 letter announcing the Jubilee 2025: "We must fan the flame of hope that has been given us and help everyone to gain new strength and certainty by looking to the future with an open spirit, a trusting heart and far-sighted vision. The forthcoming Jubilee can contribute greatly to restoring a climate of hope and trust as a prelude to the renewal and rebirth that we so urgently desire..." (USCCB)

The Moveable Feasts of 2025: Around this time in the Liturgical Year, the Church follows an ancient custom of announcing the dates of movable Feasts for the coming year. This proclamation has been used in connection with the blessing and distribution of calendars. We are reminded of these movable Feasts in the new year as a way of looking forward to celebrating these divine mysteries. In the new year 2025, Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, March 05. After five Sundays of Lent, Palm Sunday falls on April 13. Easter is on April 20. After six Sundays of Easter, the Ascension of the Lord is on June 01. Pentecost Sunday is on June 08. Holy Trinity is on June 15. The Body and Blood of Christ is on June 22. Christ the King is on November 23. The First Sunday of Advent is on November 30.

Quotes on the New Year: "Ring out the false, ring in the true." — *Alfred Lord Tennyson*. "And now we welcome the new year, full of things that have never been." -- *Rainer Maria Rilke* "What the New Year brings to you will depend a great deal on what you bring to the New Year."-- *Vern McLellan*. "I have the opportunity, once more to right some wrongs, to pray for peace, to plant some trees, and sing more joyful songs." - *William Arthur Ward*

Short Humor: 1. What kind of exercise do lazy people do? Diddly-squats. 2. What did the Buddhist say to the hot dog vendor? Make me one with everything. 3. What did the pirate say when he turned 80? Aye matey. 4. Why can't you explain puns to kleptomaniacs? They always take things literally. 5. A man tells his doctor, "Doc, help me. I'm addicted to Twitter!" The doctor replies, "Sorry, I don't follow you..."

An Irish Blessing for the New Year: "May God give you, for every storm, a rainbow; for every tear, a smile; for every care, a promise; a blessing in each trial; for every problem life sends, a faithful friend to share; for every sigh, a sweet song; and an answer for each prayer. Amen."

Happy New Year! Thinking of you with affection and sending you warm wishes for the Christmas blessings to follow you each day of 2025.

Your Friend and Pastor,

Father Charles Puthota