

# From the Pastor's Desktop

A Message from Father Charles Puthota

October 19, 2025



Dear Parishioners of St. Elizabeth,

**World Mission Sunday this Sunday, October 19:** This is an annual celebration in the Catholic Church dedicated to renewing the Church's commitment to mission, particularly in places where Christ is little known, where the Church is young, or where communities face persecution or hardship. The theme for 2025, as chosen by Pope Francis (who passed away on April 21, 2025), is **"Missionaries of Hope Among All Peoples."** In his message, the Pope emphasized that hope lies at the heart of Christian mission. He called all baptized persons to become "messengers and builders of hope," especially in a world where many experience despair, isolation, poverty, or injustice.

On this day, Catholics across the globe unite in prayer, reflection, and a special collection (Holy Father's **Universal Solidarity Fund**) to support missionary efforts. The funds raised go entirely to support over 1,100 mission territories in parts of Asia, Africa, the Pacific Islands, Latin America, and Europe — helping to build churches, train clergy and catechists, support pastoral formation, and provide essential services in communities in need. In 2025's Jubilee Year context, the celebration is an invitation for every believer and community to share in Christ's mission, especially through closeness, solidarity, and concrete acts of generosity and hope.

**Five Concrete Things to Do in Light of World Mission Sunday:** 1. **Pray daily for missionaries** — especially those serving in difficult or dangerous places. 2. **Support the Pontifical Mission Societies** through the annual collection or monthly giving, helping build churches, schools, and clinics in mission territories. 3. **Learn about global missions** by reading stories of missionaries and reflecting on how the Gospel is lived in diverse cultures. 4. **Witness to faith locally** — by kindness, forgiveness, and integrity in daily life, becoming "missionaries of hope" in workplaces and families. 5. **Encourage vocations** to priesthood, religious life, and lay mission service, reminding others that all baptized are called to share Christ's love.

**Word of God: 29<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C:** Theme: **Persistent Prayer:** The readings remind us of the power and necessity of persistent prayer. In the first reading, Moses keeps his hands raised in prayer as Israel battles Amalek. When his hands grow weary, Aaron and Hur support him — showing that prayer is not a solitary act but a community effort sustained by faith and love. In the Gospel, Jesus tells the parable of the persistent widow who refuses to give up until the unjust judge grants her justice. Through her perseverance, Jesus teaches us that faith must be tenacious and prayer must be constant. God is not like the unjust judge; he listens with compassion and mercy. Yet Jesus asks a sobering question: "When the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?" Our persistence in prayer reveals the depth of our trust in God's goodness, even when answers are delayed.

In our busy, anxious world, we are invited to pray with faith and perseverance – for justice, for peace, for healing, and for conversion. Let us support one another, as Moses was supported, and never lose heart, knowing that prayer changes us and draws us ever closer to the heart of God who always hears his people.

**From the Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church:** Why must the Church proclaim the Gospel to the whole world? The Church must do so because Christ has given the command: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (*Matthew* 28:19). This missionary mandate of the Lord has its origin in the eternal love of God who has sent his Son and the Holy Spirit because “he desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (*1 Timothy* 2:4).

**Feast of Saint John Paul II, Wednesday, October 22:** Saint John Paul II (1920–2005), born Karol Józef Wojtyła in Wadowice, Poland, was one of the most influential popes of the 20th century. Ordained a priest in 1946, he became Archbishop of Kraków and was appointed cardinal in 1967. Elected pope in 1978, he was the first non-Italian pope in over 450 years. His papacy emphasized human dignity, the sanctity of life, and the universal call to holiness. He played a crucial role in the fall of communism in Eastern Europe, especially in his native Poland. John Paul II tirelessly traveled the world, visiting 129 countries to bring Christ’s message of hope. He wrote extensively on faith, reason, and the family, inspiring millions. Despite suffering from Parkinson’s disease, he remained steadfast in prayer and witness. Canonized in 2014, he is remembered as a missionary pope, philosopher, and saint of courage and compassion.

**Pope Leo XIV’s First Apostolic Exhortation:** It is entitled *Dilexi Te* (“I Have Loved You”), signed October 4, 2025 by the Holy Father and published on October 9, places the poor at the center of the Gospel. It takes up draft work begun under Pope Francis and completed by Pope Leo builds upon the theme of divine love to call Christians to solidarity, justice, and service. It warns that one cannot serve God and money, urging the Church to cast off self-interest and be a “church for the poor.”

**A Wisdom Story:** A monk asked his master, “What must I do to find peace?” The master pointed to a river and said, “See how it flows? It doesn’t fight the rocks; it flows around them.” The monk understood: peace is not the absence of obstacles, but the grace to flow through them.

**Religious Humor:** 1. The Ten Commandments were given to us in tablet form, and by following their direction, we could save a lot of other tablets from being used. 2. An African-American preacher began his sermon by saying, “Brethren and sisters, here you is coming to pray for rain. I’d like to ask you just one question --- where is yo’ umbrellas?”

Your Friend and Pastor,

Father Charles Puthota