

From the Pastor's Desktop

A Message from Father Charles Puthota

November 09, 2025



Dear Parishioners of St. Elizabeth,

This Sunday, the Feast of the Dedication of the Lateran Basilica: This feast celebrated on November 9 falls this year on this Sunday. It commemorates the consecration of the Archbasilica of the Most Holy Savior, St. John the Baptist, and St. John the Evangelist in Rome. Built by Emperor Constantine in the 4th century, it is the oldest and highest-ranking church in Christendom, the “mother and head of all churches.” As the Pope’s cathedral, the Lateran symbolizes the unity of the universal Church gathered around the Bishop of Rome.

This feast reminds us that the Church is not merely a building but the living Body of Christ, built of “living stones” — the faithful. The Lateran Basilica’s enduring history, surviving fires, earthquakes, and wars, mirrors the resilience of the Church through centuries of trials. In our time, when faith often contends with secularism and division, the feast calls believers to renew their dedication to Christ and to the unity of his Church. It invites us to recognize every church as a sacred space where heaven touches earth, and every heart as a temple of God’s presence. The celebration of this ancient basilica’s dedication is, ultimately, a celebration of the living, enduring Church that continues to bear witness to Christ in the world.

Word of God: The Lateran Basilica — the mother church of all churches, symbolizes the unity of the faithful with the Bishop of Rome and the universal Church. In the readings, Ezekiel’s vision of the life-giving river flowing from the temple reminds us that God’s presence brings healing and renewal wherever it flows. St. Paul tells us, “You are God’s building... the temple of the Holy Spirit,” reminding us that holiness begins within. And in the Gospel, Jesus cleanses the temple, calling us to purify our hearts from sin and distraction. This feast is not just about an ancient building in Rome, but about our own dedication as living temples of God. Shall we let his Spirit flow through us — renewing our families, parishes, and world with faith, love, and unity? The Lateran Basilica stands as a sign that we, too, are God’s dwelling place on earth.

Eternal Rest Grant Unto them, O Lord: As you know well, the month of November for Catholics is a time to think about life and death and to hold sacred the memory of those who have died from their families and communities. Last Sunday November 02nd was the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed. As we cherish the memory of the dear departed with love, honor, and sadness, we pray for them that the good Lord may grant them eternal life and rest from all their labors. As we mourn the departed and renew our faith in their new life because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, we hope to acquire a perspective on our present life. How we live, how we love, what we do with our time, how we pay attention to those things that really matter in the long haul, how we share authentic Christian virtues and human values to others, especially our children and grandchildren --- these are things to ponder as we think of death and everlasting life. Knowing that we are all made for the grandeur of eternity and immortality is what will give us purpose and perspective on what we have to do today and all the various choices we have to make on a daily basis.

Quote on Death and Everlasting Life: “The immortality of the soul is a matter which is of so great consequence to us and which touches us so profoundly that we must have lost all feeling to be indifferent about it.” --- Blaise Pascal.

St. John Henry Newman is Doctor of the Church: On 1 November 2025 (the Feast of All Saints), St. John Henry Newman was formally proclaimed the 38th “Doctor of the Church” by Pope Leo XIV, recognizing his eminent scholarship, holiness, and profound influence on Catholic theology and education. Newman (1801–1890), originally an Anglican priest and leading figure of the Oxford Movement, converted to Catholicism in 1845, became a cardinal in 1879, and was canonized in 2019. His intellectual journey, especially his works on the development of doctrine and the primacy of conscience, along with his deep spiritual life encapsulated by his motto *Cor ad cor loquitur* (“Heart speaks to heart”), made him a model for the Church’s mission in education and modern thought. As Doctor of the Church, he joins the select company of saints whose writings and lives continue to shape Catholic teaching and spirituality across generations.

Thanksgiving Day Mass and Collection: Thursday, November 27, Thanksgiving Day, Mass will be at 9:00 a.m. The collection we will take up at that Mass this year will be sent to “Gift of Love,” which is a hospice care in Pacifica run by the Missionaries of Charity (Mother Teresa Sisters).

Insightful Stories to Ponder: 1. Said a disappointed visitor, “Why has my stay here yielded no fruit?” “Could it be because you lacked the courage to shake the tree?” said the Spiritual Master benignly. 2. The disciple couldn't wait to tell the Spiritual Master the rumor he had heard in the marketplace. “Wait a minute,” said the Master. “What you plan to tell us, is it true?” “I don’t think it is.” “Is it useful?” “No, it isn’t.” “Is it funny?” “No.” “Then why should we be hearing it?”

Humor: 1. A rich old aunt who was paying her nephew’s college expenses was once asked by her pastor how expensive was education. “Well,” said the aunt, “some of the languages run pretty high. My check this month covered \$200 for English, \$300 for Latin, and \$500 for *Scotch*.” 2. A priest’s sermon concerned the relationship between the fact and faith. “That you are sitting before me in this church,” he said, “is fact.” That I am standing, speaking from this pulpit, is fact. But it is, only faith that makes me believe anyone is listening.”

Your Friend and Pastor,

Father Charles Puthota