

From the Pastor's Desktop

A Message from Father Charles Puthota

November 16, 2025



Dear Parishioners of St. Elizabeth,

Word of God: 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C: As we approach the end of the liturgical year, today's readings turn our attention to the end times – not to fill us with fear, but with hope and perseverance. The prophet Malachi warns of a coming day that will burn away evil but bring healing and light to those who revere God's name. The end, then, is not destruction for the faithful, but purification and renewal. St. Paul reminds the Thessalonians to remain steadfast in daily responsibilities. Some believers, expecting the Lord's imminent return, had grown idle. Paul insists that authentic faith is not escapism but engagement: to work, to serve, to build God's kingdom in the present moment. Holiness is found not in speculation about the future, but in fidelity today.

In the Gospel, Jesus foretells the destruction of the Temple and the trials his followers will face. Yet he reassures them: "Not a hair of your head will be destroyed. By your perseverance you will secure your lives." The Christian response to turmoil and uncertainty is not panic, but trust in God's providence. Our world, too, trembles with wars, disasters, and moral confusion. Christ calls us to stand firm, to witness with courage and compassion, confident that God's justice and mercy will triumph. The final word is not fear but hope: "The sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its rays." Persevering in faith, we await that glorious dawn.

The World Day of the Poor, 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time: The World Day of the Poor was established by Pope Francis in 2016 at the conclusion of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy. It is celebrated annually on the 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time. The pope instituted it to urge Christians to encounter, listen to, and serve the poor in practical and heartfelt ways. He called it a day "to encourage believers to react against a culture of indifference and waste." The World Day of the Poor reminds the Church that the face of Christ is reflected in the suffering and needy, and true discipleship demands solidarity and compassionate action.

Advent Retreat: Saturday, December 6, is parish Advent retreat. Please see sign-up forms in the church or in the parish office.

Simbang Gabi, for 9 Days before Christmas: December 16 through 24 at the 8:30 a.m. Mass. Please be in touch with the organizers of Simbang Gabi: Gloria Trinidad, May Devera, and Beth Pasco. Please do contact them for your active participation and sponsorship.

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 go to Gift of Love, a hospice house for homeless and poor men with no families or resources, run by Missionaries of Charity, (Mother Teresa sisters).

Mary's Titles in the Vatican's 2025 Document *Mater Populi Fidelis*: The Vatican's new doctrinal note *Mater Populi Fidelis* (Nov. 4, 2025) offers guidance on the proper understanding of Mary's titles. The document discourages calling Mary "Co-Redemptrix," explaining that Christ alone is Redeemer of humanity. It also limits the use of "Mediatrix of All Graces" if it implies equality with Christ's mediation. Titles such as "Mediatrix" and "Advocate" are acceptable when understood as expressions of Mary's maternal intercession within the one mediation of Christ. The Church encourages renewed use of titles emphasizing her faith and motherhood: *Mother of the Faithful People of God*, *Mother of Believers*, *Spiritual Mother*, and *Mother of the Church*. Mary remains the model disciple – humble "Handmaid of the Lord" – whose example strengthens the Church's faith and unity.

Tuesday, November 18, Feast of the Dedication of the Basilicas of Saints Peter and Paul: This feast honors the two great pillars of our faith. Peter, the rock upon whom Christ built His Church, and Paul, the fearless apostle to the nations, remind us that the Church stands firm on faith and mission. These basilicas in Rome are not only monuments of stone but symbols of living faith built on Christ Himself. As we honor Peter's steadfastness and Paul's zeal, we are reminded to renew our own commitment to be strong witnesses, proclaiming the Gospel with courage and love in our world today.

Friday Feast of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary November 21: This feast, recalling the traditional view that Mary, as a young girl, was dedicated to God in the temple, symbolizes her total openness to God's will and her lifelong readiness to serve. Chosen to be the Mother of the Savior, Mary's early consecration prepared her for her "yes" at the Annunciation. Her example invites us to offer ourselves completely to God, trusting His plan with humble faith. In Mary's purity, obedience, and devotion, we find the model of true discipleship and the perfect response to God's love and calling.

Feast of St. Cecelia, Saturday November 22, 2025: Saint Cecilia, virgin and martyr, is the patroness of sacred music. Though forced into marriage, she remained faithful to Christ and sang to God even as she faced death. Her courage and joy in suffering reveal a heart completely attuned to divine love. Saint Cecilia reminds us that every life can become a song of praise when lived for God. Like her, we can also raise our voices and hearts to glorify the Lord in our words and deeds.

Pearly Gates Humor: 1. What the lifelong atheist said when he reached the Pearly Gates. I'll be damned! 2. A man walks up to the pearly gates. Saint Peter asks, "How did you get here?" The man answers, "Flu." 3. A guy ends up at the pearly gates and St Peter welcomes him by congratulating him for being the first man to live to 350 years of age. The guy is confused, I think you have got the wrong guy, I never lived that long. St Peter replies, Yeah it's you, we worked it out from your IT contracting time sheets.

Your Friend and Pastor,

Father Charles Puthota