

From the Pastor's Desktop

A Message from Father Charles Puthota

November 30, 2025



Dear Parishioners of St. Elizabeth

The Season of Advent: Some Musings: As we enter the sacred season of Advent, the Church invites us once again into a time of waiting and longing for the Lord. The familiar hymn "*O come, O come, Emmanuel*" captures Advent's spirit—its mixture of yearning, humility, and hope. Like generations before us who awaited the Messiah, we lift our hearts to Christ and ask Him to break the chains that bind us: sin, alienation, and all that leads us away from the path of life.

Advent can be compared to the months of preparation before a wedding. During that time, a couple talks deeply and tenderly about the life they soon will share. They plan the ceremony, involve their families, organize the reception, choose music, and anticipate the joys of their new beginning. Though many details require attention, all preparations flow from love's anticipation. They are part of getting ready for something beautiful and transformative.

In Scripture, Jesus reveals Himself as the Bridegroom who seeks His Bride—the Church. Advent mirrors the inner and outer preparations needed to welcome Him. It asks us to make room in our hearts and in our lives so that Christmas may become more than a date on the calendar. Instead, it can become a true source of blessing, grace, and joy.

Just as the wedding day cannot be collapsed into the time of preparation, Christmas cannot be forced into Advent. Advent has its own sacred essence: watchfulness, attentiveness, longing, silence, prayer, penance, and the reordering of priorities. It calls us to deepen relationships, widen our hearts, and become more receptive to God's presence.

If we embrace these dispositions with sincerity, Christmas will emerge with the fullness of a wedding feast—Christ the Bridegroom rejoicing over His people and drawing all creation into His love. Advent then becomes not a rushed prelude to Christmas but a holy preparation that enriches the celebration that follows.

As we enter this season, we are invited to ask ourselves whether we are willing to live Advent fully so that we might celebrate Christmas in a worthy, joyful, and grace-filled manner. And so we pray with the ancient longing of the Church: "*Come, Lord Jesus!*"

Word of God, First Sunday of Advent, Year A: The First Sunday of Advent opens a new liturgical year and invites us into a season of hopeful expectation. Today's readings call us to awaken from spiritual drowsiness and to prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ—both at the end of time and in the quiet, daily moments where grace enters our lives.

Isaiah's vision sets the tone: a future where all nations stream toward the mountain of the Lord, seeking His wisdom and peace. Swords are beaten into plowshares, and humanity learns God's ways. This prophetic dream is not a distant fantasy; it is an invitation to begin living God's peace now. Advent urges us to become people who choose compassion over conflict, forgiveness over resentment, and hope over cynicism.

St. Paul deepens this call with urgency: “It is the hour now for you to awake from sleep.” He challenges us to cast off the works of darkness and to “put on the Lord Jesus Christ.” Advent is not passive waiting—it is deliberate preparation. It means examining our priorities, mending relationships, cultivating prayer, and allowing Christ’s light to reshape our hearts. The season becomes a spiritual dawn, urging us to let God’s grace dispel whatever shadows linger within us.

In the Gospel, Jesus speaks plainly: “Stay awake, for you do not know on which day your Lord will come.” This is not meant to frighten us but to orient us. Christian vigilance is not anxiety; it is attentiveness to God’s presence in the present moment. By living with faith, generosity, and love, we are always ready for the Lord’s coming.

As Advent begins, we ask for the grace to stay awake—to notice God’s movements, to welcome Christ anew, and to walk in His light with renewed hope and joyful expectation.

Advent Quotes: “Wake up! God became man for you” —St. Augustine. “Advent is the season of the presence and expectation of the eternal” —Pope Benedict XVI. “Advent is a time of waiting, of conversion, of hope” —St. John Paul II.

Monday, December 8, Immaculate Conception, a Holy Day of Obligation, Masses at 8:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.: We love and honor Mary, our Mother, whose glory shines especially during Advent. Because Jesus was to enter the world, Mary needed to be prepared from the first moment of her existence. Conceived in her mother Anne’s womb without the stain of sin, she was preserved by God’s grace to become the Mother of His Son. This is the mystery we celebrate in the Immaculate Conception. William Wordsworth captures it beautifully in *The Virgin*: “Mother! whose virgin bosom was uncrost / With the least shade of thought to sin allied... / Our tainted nature’s solitary boast.”

Parish Advent Retreat: Saturday, December 6. It starts at the 8:30 a.m. Mass and ends about 1:00 p.m. in Cantwell Hall with lunch.

Parish Advent / Christmas Confessions: Saturday, December 20 at 10:30 a.m.

Simbang Gabi Masses: At the 8:30 a.m. Masses from December 16 through 24. Please contact Gloria Trinidad, Beth Pasco, and May Devera for your participation and collaboration.

Humor: 1. Father Time: The last time we changed from daylight saving time, a preacher friend posted, “For those who habitually show up 15 minutes late to church, allow me to remind you that tonight is the night you set your clock back 45 minutes.” 2. Hearing: “What’s wrong, Bubba?” asked the pastor. “I need you to pray for my hearing,” said Bubba. The pastor put his hands on Bubba’s ears and prayed. When he was done, he asked, “So how’s your hearing?” “I don’t know,” said Bubba. “It isn’t until next Tuesday.”

Your Friend and Pastor,

Father Charles Puthota