

From the Pastor's Desktop

A Message from Father Charles Puthota

December 14, 2025



Dear Parishioners of St. Elizabeth

Advent: We are at the Third Sunday of Advent. The joyful and mournful song “O Come, O Come Emmanuel...” expressing the deep desire of expectation for the Lord is the theme of the season. Jesus is the reason for the season. This season of Advent is also a semi-penitential season as we wait for Christmas. Through prayer and penance, we shall wait for the joy of God becoming one with us. This is a time of our waiting for Jesus as we long for him to enter our lives again so we can start all over again. It is yet another chance for us to get it right. Shall we renew our hearts and minds for his presence and love? He came, he will come, but now he comes. This is also a hectic time of external preparations and commerce. In the midst of it all, we still have to keep our hearts fixed on Jesus, the holy baby to be born. The question we could ask is: Do we really feel deep down that we need Jesus in our lives? It is that deeply felt need for Jesus that will make this season of Advent meaningful and purposeful. If we think we can manage our lives without Jesus, all the preparations for Christmas would purely be a social and cultural observance and not a spiritual experience of Jesus. It would all be external---and nothing to do with the internal purification and renewal. It is Jesus who can truly bring peace and joy to us.

Word of God, Third Sunday of Advent, Year A: The Third Sunday of Advent invites us to *rejoice*, for the Lord is near. Known as **Gaudete Sunday**, it shifts the tone of the season from quiet waiting to joyful anticipation. The rose candle glows with hope, reminding us that God’s promises are already unfolding. In the Gospel, Jesus points to the signs of the Kingdom: the blind see, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the poor hear good news. These are not merely ancient miracles; they reveal how God continues to enter our world with healing and compassion.

John the Baptist, imprisoned and burdened with uncertainty, sends his disciples to ask Jesus if He is truly the Messiah. Jesus’ response reassures not only John but us as well: God is indeed at work, often quietly, steadily, and tenderly. Advent teaches us to recognize God’s presence in places we might overlook—small acts of kindness, words of encouragement, and moments of unexpected grace. As we move closer to Christmas, we are called to become witnesses of Christ’s joy in a weary world. Let us rejoice, not because all our problems are solved, but because God walks with us. His nearness transforms waiting into hope and hope into joy.

Simbang Gabi Masses: At the regular 8:30 a.m. Masses from December 16 through 24, Simbang Gabi tradition will be followed. Do come join! As we will be busy with the external preparations such as gift-buying, decorations, food, etc., it would be highly beneficial to prepare ourselves internally, spiritually, for the Birth of Christ at Christmas. To support, actively participate, sponsor, please contact: Gloria Trinidad, May Devera, and Beth Pasco.

Christmas Mass Schedule: Christmas Eve, Wednesday, December 24 Mass at 4:30 p.m. Christmas Day, Thursday, December 25 Masses at 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

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

January 1, New Year, A Holy Day of Obligation, Mass Schedule: Like last year, there will be only one Mass at 9.00 a.m.

A Wisdom Story: Two seeds lay side by side in the warm spring soil. The first seed said, “I want to grow! I want to send my roots deep into the earth, push my sprouts through the soil, and feel the sun on my leaves.” And so it grew—strong and green. The second seed said, “I’m afraid. What if my roots go too deep? What if my sprouts are crushed? I’d better wait until it’s safe.” So it waited. A hungry bird, searching the ground, soon found the second seed and ate it. **Wisdom:** Those who risk growth discover life. Those who fear to begin may lose the very chance they hoped to protect.

An Advent Quote: “At this Christmas when Christ comes, will He find a warm heart? Mark the season of Advent by loving and serving the others with God’s own love and concern.” – Mother Teresa, Love: A Fruit Always in Season.

Advent / Christmas Humor: A little girl was pushing the limits of her mother’s very last nerve. Mom was nearing the end of a hectic season of cooking, cleaning, shopping, wrapping and church stuff. She was also nearing the breaking point with her little preschooler. Finally, the little girl was bathed and ready for bed. As she knelt to say her prayers, Mom listened as her sweet three-year-old theologian “customized” her evening prayer, “... And forgive us our Christmases, as we forgive those who Christmas against us!”

Humorous Church Signs: 1. “Get in touch with God by knee mail.” 2. “Whoever stole our AC units keep one. It’s hot where you’re going.” 3. “Be the kind of person your pet thinks you are.” 4. “Honk if you love Jesus. Text while driving if you want to meet him.” 5. “God prefers kind atheists over hateful Christians.” 6. “Catch up with Jesus. Lettuce praise & Relish him. ‘Cuz he loves me from my head to-ma-toes.” 7. “Forgive your enemies ---It Messes with their heads.” 8. God expects spiritual fruit, not religious nuts.” 9. “Tweet others as you would like to be tweeted.” 10. “Having trouble sleeping? Try one of our sermons.”

Hope you are having a happy, holy, and fun-filled Advent Season with family and friends, looking eagerly forward to the birth of Christ in our minds and hearts,

Your Friend and Pastor,

Father Charles Puthota