

Fr. Charles Puthota's Blog

December 13, 2020

From the Pastor's Desktop



Dear Parishioners of St. Elizabeth,

Sunday Outdoor Mass Schedule: Please keep in mind on Sundays, Mass will be at 10:00 a.m. in school parking lot. Weekday Masses are suspended until further notice.

Christmas Outdoor Mass Schedule: Christmas Eve 3:00 p.m. Christmas Day 9:30 and 11:00 a.m. In the school parking lot.

Dress for cold weather on Sunday and Christmas Masses: A timely reminder about dressing up for possible cold, windy weather. Please do come in layers of warm clothes, as you deem necessary, when you come to attend the outdoor Masses.

Spiritual Reflection on Advent: We are journeying through the spiritual season of Advent. The hauntingly melodious and meaningful hymn "O come, O come, Emmanuel and ransom captive Israel that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel" captures the spirit of longing and sadness --- and an expectation of joy. We'll be very busy this season of Advent with many external preparations for the upcoming Christmas. The pandemic has altered our activities and preoccupations. Amidst all the hectic activities, the Church invites us to prepare the heart and mind for the Lord's coming. The focus is Christ and his coming into our lives and the world. All that we do this season should really be related to welcoming Jesus into our hearts and families. Remember there was no room in the inn some 2000 years ago? Is it possible that there is no room in the inn for Christ in our times? Christianity is Christ and the intimate connection with him and one another. Advent brings us to the center of Christianity: Christ. Our prayer this season will be: "Come, Lord Jesus." The season of Advent is also a semi-penitential time. An indication of this is the violet colors and the muted decoration in the church and the non-singing of Gloria. These are reminders -- liturgical hints --- that we are to be engaged in a penitential preparation for the coming of Christ, so that when he does come at Christmas, purified of our selfishness and sinfulness, our hearts will burst with joy.

Advent Quotes: "Each of us is an innkeeper who decides if there is room for Jesus." --- Neal A. Maxwell. "Hope sees the invisible, feels the intangible, achieves the impossible." "Advent: Arrival, Start, Beginning, Dawn, Initiation, Introduction." "Advent: Close your eyes and open your mind." "Advent: the time to listen for footsteps --- you can't hear footsteps when you're running yourself." --- Bill McKibben.

Word of God this Rejoice (Gaudete) Sunday: This Sunday, the third Sunday of Advent, is called Gaudete (Rejoice!) Sunday. As we draw closer to Christmas, the Church invites us to rejoice at the soon awaited birth of the Savior of the world. In Isaiah we read, "The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring glad tidings to the poor...I rejoice heartily in the LORD, in my God is the joy of my soul." Are we ready to rejoice at the presence of Christ who is going to turn his abiding presence into a "coming" in our lives this holy season? What does joy mean in the time of the pandemic?

Praying for those affected by Covid: There are glimmers of hope as first vaccines are being rolled out in U.K. Soon our own country and the rest of the world will be receiving vaccines. Pope Francis has rightly expressed his concerns that the poor people in poor countries should not be left out of the access to the vaccine. Let's keep all those who have died, all those who are ill, all those who have lost their jobs, all those who are going through so much anxiety and uncertainty, all those working on the frontlines---may everyone be blessed with peace and health. Let's keep collaborating with everyone by doing our mite in keeping others and ourselves safe by

following the safety protocols like face-masking, distancing, hand-washing, avoiding occasions of exposure, etc.

Quotes To Ponder in the time of the Pandemic: 1. "Praise and blame, gain and loss, pleasure and sorrow come and go like the wind." 2. This too shall pass. 3. "Everything will be okay in the end. If it's not okay, it's not the end." 4. "I shall pass this way but once; any good that I can do or any kindness I can show to any human being; let me do it now." 5. "Life will give you whatever experience is most helpful for the evolution of your consciousness."

Humor: 1. A devout, church-going father was trying to teach his son that lying is a sin and that he shouldn't lie about fishing and other things. "Do you know what happens to fishermen who lie when they die?" he asked. The son quickly replied, "They lie still!"

Thinking of you, thanking for you, and wishing you and your families this Advent season God's blessings of health and happiness,

Your Friend & Pastor,

Father Charles Puthota