

From the Pastor's Desktop

A Message from Father Charles Puthota

February 11, 2024



Dear Parishioners of St. Elizabeth,

Archdiocesan Annual Appeal (AAA) 2024: Please give early and generously: This is the second week of a month-long campaign. See names of donors in the bulletin. The amount to raise is \$32,089. 1.5% Donation is \$500. Please see in the bulletin the names of those who have donated so far to AAA 2024. The asterisk indicates the 1.5% donors. Last weekend (February 03-04) we launched this annual appeal, a monthlong drive. I preached at the three weekend Masses, connecting the Word of God about the Mission of Jesus Christ and that of St. Paul with the mission of what we do at our parish and in the Archdiocese. The reason for this campaign is simple: the Archdiocese is entrusted with the mission to preach the good news and to provide all necessary ministries and services to the parishes within the Archdiocese. Without our assistance, at the Archdiocesan level they could not be doing what they are called to do. So we feel privileged to help and collaborate in their work. Also, let us keep in mind that we are not apart from the Archdiocese. We, our parish and all other parishes, make up the Archdiocese. When we strengthen the Archdiocese, we are actually strengthening our own St. Elizabeth Parish.

So please give generously and early so that we can complete this campaign within a month. Would it be possible for you to belong to "1.5% Circle" by donating \$500 or more toward AAA? Some of you have given in the past way more than 1.5%. Your spirit of stewardship and generous donations are much appreciated. Please would you keep St. Elizabeth Parish and the Archdiocese as your Number One charity to support because we are an integral and inseparable part of these faith-based, nonprofit communities that stand for God's blessings now and for eternity.

Season of Lent: Ash Wednesday is on February 14. We could start the anticipation of this holy, penitential season by thinking about our plans for prayer and penance. We could actually think about the three aspects of our existence: Body, Mind, and Spirit. What is it that the Lord is calling us to be? What are the things we could do to nourish and protect the health of our body, mind, and spirit?

Ash Wednesday and Stations of the Cross in Lent: Ash Wednesday, February 14th, Masses will be at 8:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Starting on February 16, on Fridays, immediately following the 8:30 a.m. Mass, there will be Stations of the Cross. Please do come join these spiritual devotions. If possible, catch a daily Mass during the Lenten season. It may be inconvenient, but that's the whole point: we would do well to do some inconvenient things during Lent in order for us to reflect and pray more deeply about such things as life, love, faith, and health.

March 02, Saturday: Lenten Retreat, starts with 8:30 a.m. Mass: I'll be preaching a half-a-day retreat with reflections on "spirituality and some practices," a kind of Part Two to the Advent retreat I gave. Please do sign up for registration and come to 8:30 a.m. Mass on March 02, followed by some light food and three sessions of reflections and lunch.

St. Paul of the Shipwreck Event: Last Sunday at the 10:30 a.m. Mass, the Maltese Society gathered together. In my homily, I spoke about the mission of St. Paul as central to the expansion of the early church beyond the Jewish borders to spread into the gentile world. Also, about how St. Paul who was shipwrecked on the Maltese island brought the Christian faith to the nation. After the Mass, there was a nice reception downstairs in the parish hall which was attended by about 150 people. I would like to thank the organizers of the Maltese Society, especially Jeanette Santos, Emmanuel Micallef, Emma Magarrell, and their team for the successful event.

First Reconciliation of Five Children: Last Saturday five of our Faith Formation children made their first Reconciliation. Please see the picture on the last page of the bulletin. Congratulations to the children and their families! There was a nice get together for them in the parish hall after the Reconciliation. We shall now look forward to their First Communion on Sunday, May 05 at the 10:30 a.m. Mass.

The Word of God this Sunday: In the Gospel, there is a consoling story of the leper being healed by Jesus. The urgency with which Jesus heals this man indicates that Jesus makes haste to bring God's blessings to us. Love is urgent for everyone, and Jesus cannot wait for us to experience wellness and wholeness. The healed man, it is said, "began to publicize the whole matter. He spread the report abroad..." In other words, he began to proclaim the good news to others immediately. We are wounded healers, healed healers. We are called, too, to be the messengers of the good news to our family, friends, and the whole world. This can be done with words, but more through our values and deeds of service and compassion to others.

Quotable Quote: "Everything you can imagine is real." --- Pablo Picasso.

Valentine's Day Humor: 1. Q. Did Adam and Eve ever have a date? A. No, they had an apple! 2. How did the telephone propose to its girlfriend? He gave her a ring. 3. You are like dandruff because I just cannot get you out of my head no matter how hard I try. 4. "What did the stamp say to the envelope on Valentine's Day?" "I'm stuck on you!" 5. "I thought I won the argument with my wife as to how to arrange the dining room furniture. But when I got home the tables were turned." 6. I once fell in love with someone who only knew 4 vowels. They didn't know I existed." 7. What did the calculator say to the pencil?" "You can count on me." 8. "What did the light bulb say to the other light bulb?" "You light my world up." 9. "How can you get arrested on Valentine's Day?" "For stealing someone's heart." 10. "What did one cat say to the other cat on Valentine's Day?" "You're purr-fect for me."

Wishing you a holy and blessed Season of Lent,

Your Friend and Pastor,

Father Charles Puthota