

# From the Pastor's Desktop

## A Message from Father Charles Puthota



July 14, 2024

Dear Parishioners of St. Elizabeth,

**Word of God: 15<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time:** In the gospel from Mark, we reflect on Jesus sending his apostles out to preach the good news and to do all sorts of good deeds. They are to preach, drive out demons, and anoint people with oil to heal them. There are two things that we could treasure. One, that Jesus is calling us today. We are his apostles today. We are “summoned” by Jesus and sent out. Can we hear the call of Jesus in our current circumstances of family, work, joys, sorrows, our successes, and failures? No matter how holy or not so holy we are, Jesus still needs us. We cannot find an easy excuse by saying, “oh, I’m not at all worthy” or “I’m not at all holy,” or “I’m sinful and imperfect.” Jesus needs precisely these imperfect, sinful people to become his apostles. Jesus will give us the grace. It is in going out to help and share the new life of Christ that our own lives will take on a new significance and purpose. In the first reading from Amos, the prophet calls himself “a shepherd and a dresser of sycamores. The Lord took me from following the flock, and said to me, ‘Go, prophesy to my people Israel.’” Amos realized he was unworthy and reluctant, yet called and graced to do God’s work.

The second important insight here is that we share in Jesus’ own mission and ministry. It was Jesus who went about preaching, healing, and expelling the evil powers. When he sends us out to do the same good deeds, we are collaborators in his work. We become like Jesus. We then are participating in the Father’s mission of loving this world and making this world a place of goodness and love for all human beings, no matter how poor or sinful or disadvantaged. Together with Christ, in being called and sent, we shall help, heal, and transform this world. The planet earth needs healing, doesn’t it? Are you ready and willing to be called and sent today?

**From the *Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church*: Why does Sacred Scripture teach the truth?** Because God himself is the author of Sacred Scripture. For this reason, it is said to be inspired and to teach without error those truths which are necessary for our salvation. The Holy Spirit inspired the human authors who wrote what he wanted to teach us. The Christian faith, however, is not a “religion of the Book”, but of the Word of God – “not a written and mute word, but incarnate and living” (Saint Bernard of Clairvaux). **How is Sacred Scripture to be read?** Sacred Scripture must be read and interpreted with the help of the Holy Spirit and under the guidance of the Magisterium of the Church according to three criteria: 1) it must be read with attention to the content and unity of the whole of Scripture; 2) it must be read within the living Tradition of the Church; 3) it must be read with attention to the analogy of faith, that is, the inner harmony which exists among the truths of the faith themselves. **What is the Canon of Scripture?** The *Canon* of Scripture is the complete list of the sacred writings which the Church has come to recognize through Apostolic Tradition. The *Canon* consists of 46 books of the Old Testament and 27 of the New.

**Daily Morning Prayer at 8:00 a.m. and Daily Morning Mass at 8:30 a.m.:** Please do come join the daily prayer (Divine Office; Prayer of the Church) and Mass at our St. Elizabeth Church. For those who are still working, the daily Mass is a source of daily light and strength. If you are retired, putting the daily Mass on your daily schedule might be highly beneficial. As I have said before, attending daily Mass has many advantages spiritually, physically, psychologically, and socially. To top it all, research shows that those who attend religious services regularly live longer. So, come join! We'd love to have you!

**A Story to Ponder:** The old rabbi had become blind and could neither read nor look at the faces of those who came to visit him. A faith healer said to him, "Entrust yourself to my care and I will heal your blindness." "There will be no need for that," replied the rabbi. "I can see everything that I need to." *Not everyone whose eyes are closed is asleep. And not everyone with open eyes can see.*

**A Poem:** "I'm nobody! Who are you? / Are you nobody, too? / Then there's a pair of us - don't tell! / They'd advertise - you know! / How dreary to be somebody! / How public like a frog / To tell one's name the livelong day / To an admiring bog!" --- Emily Dickinson.

**Insightful Quotes:** 1. "Happiness is when what you think, what you say, and what you do are in harmony." — Mahatma Gandhi. 2. You are a child of the universe, no less than the trees and the stars: you have a right to be here. — Max Ehrmann, American writer and poet. 3. Love recognizes no barriers. It jumps hurdles, leaps fences, penetrates walls to arrive at its destination full of hope.-- Maya Angelou, African-American poet and writer. 4. Zen people often talk about "accepting the moment as it is." That's okay, but what we like even better is "caring for the moment" with the same lavish tenderness you'd bestow on a new-born. — Perle Besserman and Manfred Steger in *Grassroots Zen*.

**Humor about Gossip:** 1. A gossip is one who talks to you about other people. A bore is one who talks to you about himself. A brilliant conversationalist is one who talks to you about yourself. 2. "Did you hear the one about the little old lady from church? She doesn't repeat gossip --- so you'd better listen the first time!" 3. "Live so that you wouldn't be ashamed to sell the family parrot to the town gossip." --- Will Rogers.

Your Friend and Pastor,

Father Charles Puthota.