

From the Pastor's Desktop

A Message from Father Charles Puthota

June 7, 2026



Dear Parishioners of St. Elizabeth,

Feast of Corpus Christi: Just a few weeks ago, we celebrated the First Communion of seven of our Faith Formation children at our parish. If we could recover a measure of their excitement, faith, zeal, eagerness, devotion, desire, and their sense of awe about the Eucharist, it would indeed be a great blessing.

This Sunday is the Feast of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. For over twenty centuries the Church has been coming together to break the bread and share the cup. This is my body, Jesus had said. This is my blood, Jesus had said. And he added, whenever you do this, remember me. So we commemorate the sacred act of Jesus giving himself as food. The sacrament of the Eucharist is the sacrament of the sacraments. It is the "source and summit of Christian life." It is in this sacrament, the church comes together again and again, drawing upon the new life Jesus gives us as we share his body and blood.

In the Eucharist, Jesus is truly, really, and substantially present. As we partake of the Eucharist, we become closely united with Christ. Jesus remains in us, we remain in Jesus. We together remain in the Father. We don't live any longer, Christ lives in us. That is why we call this sacrament "communion." Because we individually become united with Christ, we are all united with each other and in Christ. We all become the body of Christ because we share the Body of Christ. This is mystical indeed! This is a divine mystery! The vitality of Christian life is centered on the Eucharist. Our identity as Christians is tied up with the Eucharist. Faith is at the heart of our conviction that Jesus gives us his own body and blood in the Eucharist. Even like a mother giving her body and blood to her baby in her womb, Jesus gives us his body and blood in total self-gift and as a sign of his inseparable union with us.

Eucharist: From the Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church: What does the Eucharist represent in the life of the Church? It is the source and summit of all Christian life. In the Eucharist, the sanctifying action of God in our regard and our worship of him reach their high point. It contains the whole spiritual good of the Church, Christ himself, our Pasch. Communion with divine life and the unity of the People of God are both expressed and effected by the Eucharist. Through the eucharistic celebration we are united already with the liturgy of heaven and we have a foretaste of eternal life. **What are the names for this sacrament?** The unfathomable richness of this sacrament is expressed in different names which evoke its various aspects. The most common names are: the Eucharist, Holy Mass, the Lord's Supper, the Breaking of the Bread, the Eucharistic Celebration, the Memorial of the passion, death and Resurrection of the Lord, the Holy Sacrifice, the Holy and Divine Liturgy, the Sacred Mysteries, the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar, and Holy Communion.

Countdown: 23 Days to My Retirement: Upon reaching the age of 70 on June 11 and having served for 6 years as pastor of St. Elizabeth Church and 24 years in the Archdiocese of San Francisco, I'll be retiring from active ministry, effective July 1, 2026. Thank you for all the blessings of God you have brought into my life.

Archdiocesan Annual Appeal (AAA) 2026 Thank-You Luncheon: Last Sunday after the 10:30 a.m. Mass, I hosted a thank-you luncheon for those who donated 1.5% (\$500 or more) toward this year's AAA. It was attended by 55 people. This is the last time I have led this campaign for AAA, and I am deeply grateful for all those who have donated generously in support of the ministries of the Archdiocese.

Pope Leo XIV's First Encyclical: *Magnifica Humanitas*: In his first encyclical, *Magnifica Humanitas* ("Magnificent Humanity"), Pope Leo XIV addresses one of the defining challenges of our age: artificial intelligence. Echoing Pope Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum*, which responded to the Industrial Revolution, Pope Leo seeks to provide a Christian response to the AI revolution. The encyclical affirms that technology is a gift that can improve human life, but warns that it must never replace human dignity, moral responsibility, freedom, or authentic relationships. Pope Leo cautions against the concentration of technological power in the hands of a few corporations, the displacement of workers, the use of AI in warfare, and new forms of "digital slavery." He calls for ethical oversight, international cooperation, and laws that ensure technology serves the common good. At its heart, the encyclical proclaims that human beings are created in the image of God and possess a dignity that no machine can replicate. The Pope urges the world to build a civilization rooted in truth, justice, solidarity, and love, ensuring that AI remains a servant of humanity rather than its master.

Wisdom Stories: 1. The Echo: A boy shouted into a valley, "I hate you!" The echo came back, "I hate you!" Frightened, he told his mother. She said, "Go back and say, 'I love you.'" He did, and the valley replied, "I love you." Wisdom: Life often gives back what we send out. 2. The Stone in the Road: A king placed a large stone in the road. Many people complained and walked around it. One farmer stopped, moved the stone, and found a bag of gold underneath. Wisdom: Opportunities are often hidden inside difficulties.

Humor: 1. The seven ages of a man are spills, drills, thrills, bills, ills, pills, and wills. 2. A truck driver stopped to help a lady change a tire in a downpour. As he finished the job, soaked to the skin, he banged the hubcap into place. "Shh," said the woman. "You'll wake my husband. He's asleep in the backseat." 3. There are three stages to man---the first 30 years he learns, the next 30 years he earns, and the next 30 years he yearns.

Your Friend and Pastor,

Father Charles Puthota