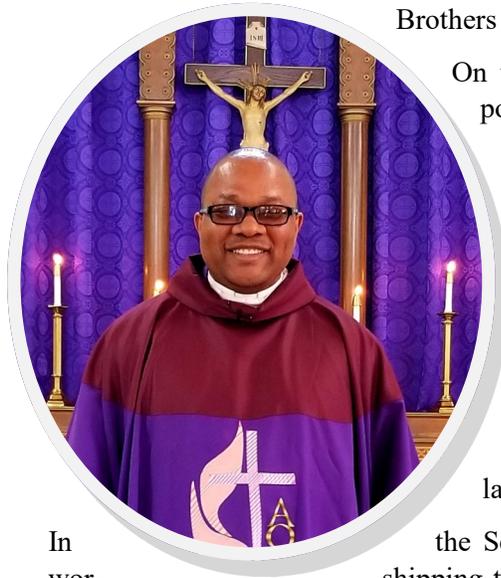


FROM THE DESK OF **Fr. Julius**

Brothers and Sisters in Christ; Grace and Peace!



On this Second Sunday of Lent, all four of our liturgical readings point to Transfiguration! Directing our petitions towards the Holy Spirit, present today in the form of a cloud. It is my earnest prayer that our lives be transformed during this Lenten renewal, that we may radiate the glory and grace of the transfigured Lord!

In our First Reading from the book of Genesis, under the night sky God takes Abram and promises that his descendants shall be countless as the stars. However, Abram boldly asks God for *proof* of His promise! This is the dramatic backdrop for the smoke and fire that heralds that first covenant the Lord made with Abram, one of the high-water marks of Old Testament revelation.

In wor- the Second Reading, St. Paul urges the Philippian Christians to stop shipping the ‘God of their stomach’ and stay focused on Jesus, who ‘will change our lowly body to conform with his glorified body.’ During this Lenten period, this becomes even more penetrating as we make choices about abstaining from our assorted and excessive hungers. St. Paul’s Letter is pivotal to our Gospel passage, since Paul is imploring the Philippians to go against the conventions they were brought up on to become a follower of Jesus.

During Jesus’ spiritual retreat with His Father in this Transfiguration phenomenon, Jesus is revealed as a glorious figure, surpassing the Old Testament representatives, Moses and Elijah. The text does not say what they were discussing. Some scholars allude to the Exodus; others infer that it was a time to consult with God the Father to clarify His plan for His Son’s Passion and Resurrection. An additional objective could have been to make his inner circle of apostles aware of his divine glory. Therein, this mountain experience allowed the disciples to see a reality ordinarily veiled by the material. From such an event, I share the conviction that we shall see our loved ones again and recognize them, just as the apostles were able to recognize the Old Testament figures they had never met or seen. One can presume that the mystical divinity manifested by Christ at that moment is one way that we fallen humans can share in His Glory as we comprehend Him in the Eucharist, in our baptism, confirmation and reconciliation.

As we become fortified by those consoling words, "This is my beloved Son" so can we delight in understanding Jesus as the final fulfillment of God’s people. "The Christian life" consists in continuously scaling the mountain to meet God and then coming back down, bearing the love and strength drawn from him, so as to serve our brothers and sisters with God’s own love" quoted by Benedict XVI, his last year as Pope.

On Thursday, March 17th, is the commemoration of St. Patrick, may we implore the special intervention of St. Patrick on the Universal Church and most especially on the vulnerable nation of Ireland.

Happy St. Patrick’s Day and **Happy Lenten Season!**