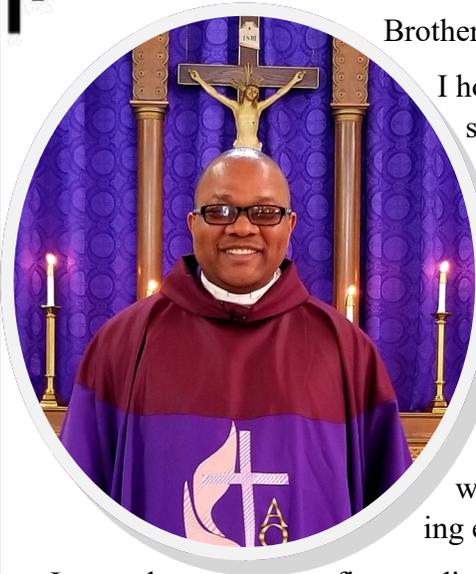


FROM THE DESK OF

Fr. Julius

Brothers and Sisters in Christ; Grace and peace!



I hope we all had a Thanksgiving celebration last week! Advent seasons are generally a time of joy for so many people, especially with the anticipation of family reunions and of special occasions. Anticipations, in all likelihood for some, produce more pleasure than the actual event. For us as a parish, we are looking at our approaching parish communal plans for Advent and Christmas, especially with the joint celebrations of our Christmas party with the Our Lady of Guadalupe with our Hispanic community and our long-awaited family reunion. These can carry great expectations that may sometimes fail to deliver. Unless we center our lives on an appropriate relationship with God, nothing else can totally fulfill.

In the first reading, the prophet Jeremiah assures the house of Israel and Judah of God's promise that he will one day raise up a righteous one who will be an example to all others. No doubt, this prophecy was pointing to the birth of Our Lord Jesus.

Advent is the Church's New Year, and I have to admit that I sometimes wish the Gospel readings were more upbeat, comforting, raising our hopes. Instead, we hear; *"There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken."*

These apocalyptic expressions are not intended to scare us as I said two weeks ago, so much as to make us aware of what we have and need in our lives as we prepare to embrace the mystery of the incarnation. At the Feast of Christ the King, we celebrated the King who comes to us with words of comfort and hope, not words of intimidation and fear. Fr. Alfred Delp (martyr to the Nazis) in his collected Advent writings from prison suggests that we concern ourselves with 'simple acts of honest humility, readiness to serve and the praise of God.'

Therefore, as we await the birth of our savior, let us not be too preoccupied with our shopping and wish lists. Let us develop a disposition that reflects Jesus who is love by emphasizing our joy-filled hope in the coming of Christ in less than four weeks. Even this vision is sufficient for radiant happiness. Let us knock down the fears being created by the world around us, stay awake, and keep our eye on the prize – Jesus himself!

Advent penance service will be on the eve of Immaculate Conception, December 7;00 at 7pm

Happy Advent