

FROM THE DESK OF **Fr. Julius**

Brothers and Sisters in Christ; Grace and peace!



Following the Nativity of our Lord, Holy Mother Church points us immediately to The Feast of the Holy Family during this Christmastide. As we honor Jesus, Mary, and Joseph we are encouraged to invite them to bless our family, entrusting ourselves to them. We know their struggles and sacrifices, so God willing we can derive from them holy courage and confidence.

For your faithful attendance as a church family, especially during this busy liturgical week, may you all continue to be abundantly blessed through each Holy Mass and liturgical event. *You* have become my **home away from-home family; thank you. I want all of you to know** your prayers, cards and gifts are humbly appreciated.

In the first reading, the First Book of Samuel describes how Elkanah and Hannah presented their child Samuel in the Temple, consecrating him to the service of the Lord as a perpetual Nazarite, leaving him in the Temple under the care of Eli, the priest. In the second reading, John reminds us that as children of God the Father, we are members of God's own family, and as such we are expected to obey the great commandment of God: "Love one another," indeed so that we can remain in Him.

In today's feast, the Church encourages all Christian families to look to this model family wherein both parents labored hard, supported one another and acknowledged one another as gifts from God. As parents, they raised their son in human and divine wisdom. The Catechism of the Catholic Church reminds parents that they have a grave responsibility to give good example to their children as the Holy Family did, by creating a home where tenderness, forgiveness, respect, and fidelity are the rule (CCC #2223). Let us pray for the grace of valuing one another in our own families, making Christ the center of family and individual life. In this fragile time for families in our culture, pray that we can focus our prayers and deeds on the importance of fortifying the hearts of our family, while encouraging other parents to do likewise.

The Venerable Fulton Sheen would inscribe any communication with 'JMJ.' Bringing honor to the Holy Family in this way venerates Jesus, Mary, and Joseph in our lives. Even starting or ending an email to a friend or family member with JMJ is spiritually uplifting for all of us. We are a family, one in Christ. If we can be of any help to any member of our faith community, do not hesitate to ask us.

Joyful Feast of the Holy Family!

JMJ