

FROM THE DESK OF **Fr. Julius**



Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We had a worthy celebration of All Saints and commemoration of all our faithful departed last week. Attendance at both Masses was very impressive. The Church teaches us throughout this month to continue to extend our rosaries and prayers for all our loved ones in purgatory on the way to our eternal home. “Lead all souls to heaven, especially those in most need of thy mercy.” This especially applies to the widowed, which we experience today in our Liturgy of the Word.

On behalf of the faith community of St. Joseph the Worker, I warmly thank all of you as you share your precious time and treasures with your faith community. We wish to encourage parishioners to stop by the office anytime you are inspired to join in harmony with your community, with this expression of faith. Our liturgy this weekend reinforces this total com-

mitment to God’s service and, like the poor widows, we should openly give with humble and generous hearts.

In the First Book of Kings, we meet a destitute widow with barely enough food for herself and her son, yet she welcomes the prophet Elijah as a man of God and willingly shares her food with him, subsequently receiving reward in the form of a renewed supply of sustenance. In the Gospel, our Lord contrasts the external signs of honor sought by the scribes against the sacrificial offering of a poor widow, declaring that the poor widow indeed gave the best and found favor with God. In giving all that they owned, both widows met with great favor from God. The Second Reading talks about an even greater type of submission: how Jesus, High Priest of the New Testament, surrenders His life to God totally and unconditionally as a sacrificial offering for our sins.

Some Bible scholars believe that Jesus was especially solicitous toward widows because of His own widowed mother and the depth of sacrifice she would make. The liturgy therefore draws out greater understanding toward widows and widowers within and around us. Often, in addition to the isolation and grief suffered after the death of loved ones, many still face economic loss and even the burden of rearing a family alone. They deserve our love, support, and even those invitations on holidays and anniversaries, which never goes unnoticed before the Father. At the same time, we also recall within the Communion of Saints the many widows who sanctified the lives around them with prayer and hospitality. There are even the windows of opportunity to pray ardently for the deceased spouse as well as a growing experience lived in companionship with Jesus, something they might not have realized prior to becoming widowed.

Our capacity for giving can change according to life and death experiences. Perhaps you may want to discuss with your family what the Lord may be asking of you in your own ‘widow’s mite’ that we can freely share without fear, within our own spiritual walk, for “God loves a cheerful giver” (2Cor:9:7).

Sts. Monica, Jane of Chantal, Rita of Cascia, Bridget of Sweden, Elizabeth Seton, pray for us!

— Blessed Sunday