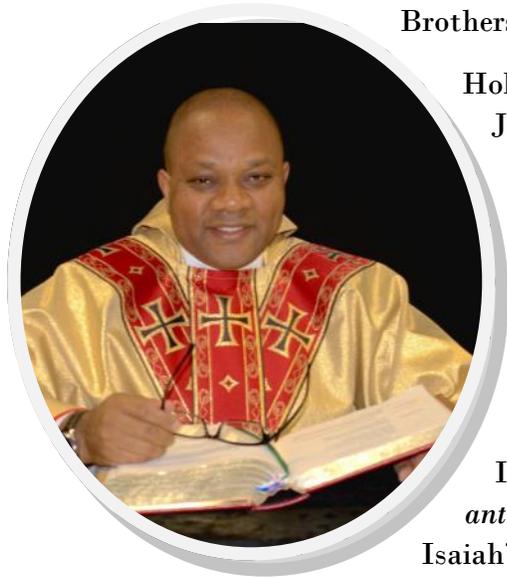


## FROM THE DESK OF **Fr. Julius**



Brothers and sisters in Christ,

Holy Week begins today with the processional entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem. The Church sings *Hosanna filio David: Benedictus qui venit in nome Domini*. ('Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord'). In union with the whole Church, as we process, may we remember the suffering and death of Our Lord that leads to his glorious resurrection. I enjoin all of you to make every effort to participate in all the liturgies this Holy Week!

In today's first liturgical reading, one of Isaiah's four *servant* poems, the prophet foreshadows Jesus' life and passion. Isaiah's detailed imagery physically thrusts us into experiencing the terrible strikes against our Lord's sacred head, drawing us even deeper into this time of Passiontide. In the second reading, St. Paul's celebrated hymn represents an ancient Christian understanding that the Church has always reflected on, sung and considered nearly a creed.

In today's Gospel, we all play a role in the unfolding of Jesus' royal reception into Jerusalem, as his admirers process the two miles with him from the Mount of Olives. In the second part, we are confronted with examining our own lives in the light of some of the characters in the story: consider Peter who *denies* Jesus, Judas who *betrays* Jesus, Pilate who acts against his conscience and *condemns* Jesus to death on the cross, Herod who *ridicules* Jesus and the elitist leaders of the people who protect their positions by *destroying* Jesus. Although the drama progresses rapidly, each little barb from the characters pulls at our hearts.

The beginning of Holy Week is a time to wait in simple silence, to reflect over those actions of ours that may have denied, betrayed, condemned, ridiculed and even destroyed our dear Lord. Is Jesus weeping as a result of my sinful way of life as he wept over Jerusalem in the beginning of his Palm Sunday procession? Am I a barren and useless fig tree producing no sweet fruit, but the bitter harvest of impurity, injustice, pride, racism, jealousy and selfishness? Let us repent now, so that Jesus may welcome us at his Resurrection. This Holy Week will become more meaningful when we become like the humble donkey that carried Jesus, a lowly beast of burden entering with humility, bringing peace, Amen! Together as a faith community, we welcome Archbishop Protase Rugambwa who is coming from the Vatican City to celebrate this year's sacred season of Good Friday, Holy Saturday and the Easter Sunday with us in our parish.

**A Blessed and prayerful Holy Week!**