

FROM THE DESK OF

Fr. Julius

Brothers and Sisters in Christ; Grace and peace!



Each year in November Holy Mother Church maintains the tradition of preparing us for the new liturgical calendar. From last Sunday's glorious All Saints Feast, the Church transitions into All Souls where our prayers are directed to all of our faithful, praying for any souls remaining in purgatory be cleansed and sanctified for entry into heaven. With these liturgical events, it is no mystery that today's readings move us into preparation for end times.

Just fifty years before the coming of Christ, the writers of today's first reading from the Book of Wisdom visualized *wisdom* as a *woman*; note how faithfully it aligns with Jesus' parable in today's Gospel of the wise women. The author advises Jews in Alexandria not to envy the wisdom of the pagan philosophers, but that these Jews possess true wisdom in their Sacred Scripture, a wisdom which regulates not only this life but also the next. We learn how St. Paul offers Christian wisdom, assuring those Christians who expected Jesus' second coming in their life-time that the death and Resurrection of Jesus is powerful enough alone to save even those who die before Jesus' *second coming*.

St. Matthew's Gospel reading today is always reflective about our need for preparedness and readiness like those five wise virgins! Just as All Souls' Day prayers were exercised to usher sanctification for all into heaven, St. Matthew's reading warns us about the five foolish virgins, whose door was barred from entry. Perhaps there is a forewarning here for each of us. How do we prepare ourselves for this entry into heaven?

There is much we humans can do; in our daily ongoing decisions and ethical encounters with our neighbor, how we choose to set aside worldly behavior, opening our hearts to God's grace, seeking His guidance and pleasing Him in Adoration, overcoming tests and struggles through God's direction; these are vital ways to get ready. Mercifully, our earthly existence is not our only horizon, and we look to the upcoming Advent season where the liturgy faithfully pours enough oils into our lamps and informs us about keeping our lamps filled.

This year, because of the pandemic, the Vatican has extended the indulgences for entire month of November instead of just the first week. If one is seeking a full indulgence, one must demonstrate a decision to turn away from sin, unite with the faithful, offer one's Mass intention with specific prayers for the deceased, perform a work of mercy, visit a cemetery, go to the Sacrament of Penance, and as always, receive the Eucharist, where so much joy is released!

Blessed Sunday!