

FROM THE DESK OF **Fr. Julius**



Brothers and Sisters in Christ; Grace and peace!

Our world today hungers for brilliant leaders who speak with integrity and authority, like our Lord Jesus in today's Gospel. Christians are therefore called to be people of integrity after the Master. Accordingly, this weekend's collective readings are centered on the keys of Divine Authority both within the Old Testament and through the early Church life and ministry of Our Lord.

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to the Gentiles sent to re-educate the people in Corinth that marriage is indeed a holy state ordained by God between a man and a woman and that it is a life-long partnership according to the teaching of the Lord.

In our First Mosaic Reading this weekend from Deuteronomy, "*a prophet like me*" is understood in a messianic sense, one who would come for the peoples' deliverance. New Testament scholars believe this passage is chosen for today's first reading because it refers to Jesus, the "preacher with authority." We also observe in the Second Reading how St. Paul exercises his God-given authority as the *Apostle*

In our Gospel, Mark describes one model Sabbath day in Jesus' early public life. We see our Lord enter the Synagogue as a practicing Jew yet with wondrous teaching authority. He drives out an evil spirit and with this exorcism displays an influence over the invisible world as much as over the visible one. People immediately notice Jesus' divine command as he explains the scriptures with ease and confidence, using his authority to motivate, liberate, and heal. As we too are in awe of Jesus' authority especially in these days, can we approach him with trusting faith, recognizing him as ruler of our lives?

We can and must inwardly look to Him so that He may free us from those "*unclean spirits*" that keep us from praying, loving, and sharing. Perhaps we need to identify the destructive evils of intolerance, lack of forgiveness and discrimination: jealousy, addictions, selfishness, anger, resentment, arrogance, and hostility. May we turn to the power and teaching authority of Jesus in faith and humbly ask him to set us free from the imprisonment that renders us deaf, dumb, blind, lame, and paralyzed, physically and spiritually. Amen. This weekend's liturgy thus invite us to a self examination of conscience and at the same time a self presentation of our inner self to Our Lord for a deep cleansing.

Joyous Weekend!