

Phenomenon of the Light

All who attended the Funeral Mass of Father Julian Krusling did so in a blinding winter rainstorm that began early in the morning and reached its height in Cincinnati as our cars arrived in Price Hill where St. Laurence Church is located.

Winds were blowing at a high rate of speed. Day seemed turned to night. It was as if the sun had never risen, so black were the skies.

All the electric lights in St. Laurence Church were on, but one could scarcely see the print in the mass booklets. As the Archbishop, Karl J. Alter elevated the sacred Host at the Elevation of the Mass and as he uttered the solemn words so often uttered by Father Julian during his short years in the priesthood: "Hoc est enim Corpus Meum"- a shaft of light so brilliant - that the whole congregation audibly drew in their breath. A silent shock seemed to grip all present - the Archbishop himself, Father Lawrence Krusling, brother of Father Julian who was assisting the Archbishop together with several concelebrating clergy, as well as many priest friends who occupied pews in the body of the church will testify to having witnessed this "phenomenon." Family, relatives and friends as well as the faculty and student body of Fenwick High School were equally awe-struck by the sudden appearance and disappearance of "the light". It had rested on the sacred Host as the Archbishop pronounced the words of Consecration and remained there until the Archbishop genuflected - then it disappeared.

The congregation was visibly and audibly shaken a second time when, following the Mass, the Archbishop came down to the casket to bless the body of Father Julian. The darkness still permeated the Church, despite full electric power. As the Archbishop uttered the first words of the blessing, the same unaccountable brilliant shaft of light stood over the casket. Again - the spontaneous intake of breath from everyone present. Again the light disappeared as suddenly as it had come.

Most of the faculty and student body were not to attend the burial services at the cemetery so they were not present for the third recurrence of "the light". Father Lawrence told us about it when he came to Fenwick a few days after the burial.

He said, "The wind was blowing so hard as he stood at the gravesite, that his stole blew straight out in front of him - and it was so dark that he could scarcely see the print of the burial service that he was reading. As the body of Father Julian was being lowered into the grave, that same brilliant light for the third time, broke through the leaden sky and rested for a moment or two on the closed casket".

Do you wonder that we all felt Father Julian was sending us a message from heaven? "I will still be with you all in spirit in the Old South Building!" That was another thing that gave us all the courage to face the future.

... Sister Charles Regina, S.C., 1981