

Thirteenth Sunday In Ordinary Time

Independence Day Edition

What really is Independence [Day]?

A reflection from Brian Wigger, Pastoral Associate

Next Thursday is July 4th - our nation will celebrate Independence Day. This celebration was officially declared a federal holiday in the United States in 1941.

But the tradition of celebrating "independence" dates back to the ratification of the Declaration of Independence on July 4th, 1776. 250 years later, this historic date reminds us still when the Declaration of Independence was approved by the Continental Congress. The written declaration stated that the American colonies were tired of being ruled by Great Britain. They wanted to become their own country.

And here we are, two-and-a-half centuries later since America's birth and we celebrate memorial services, fireworks, parades and picnics - all done up in red, white and blue - all of this is to remind us to be grateful for the freedoms we enjoy in America. Most every American can appreciate our freedoms even more since the experiences of the pandemic four years ago. Closures of schools, churches and businesses, shortage of items like toilet paper, cleaning supplies should remind us that we are blessed to live in a country which still is recovering from the devastating losses of the four years and be grateful for all our blessings.

Some days, independence means the ability to brush one's teeth or sit up unassisted on a couch without slouching over or even living sober one day at a time. Other days it means creating art, playing games, praying and singing songs and traveling. Needs and abilities are innate in each individual. This pursuit of life, liberty and happiness means different things to all of us and that is independence worthy of respect and celebration.