

Dear Brothers and Sisters

FAITH

4TH of JULY



This Saturday, July 4th, we celebrate the 244th Anniversary of the birth of our nation. The signers of the Declaration of Independence deemed it a self-evident truth that all men and women are endowed by their Creator with certain “unalienable rights.”

These rights are afforded every person, regardless of their economic status, ethnicity, religion or the color of their skin. Our unalienable rights are endowed by our God our Creator, in whose image and likeness we have all been created.

The image and likeness of God is made visible in us in our capacity to love, to be in communion with one another, and to forgive. God is a Trinity of three persons, who though distinct

from one another, experience perfect communion. The unbreakable bond between these Persons is Love. Only when we are in relationship with God, when we love Him, are we able to love one another. In love of God we discover that we are brothers and sisters. Without love for God we are divided, pitted against one another: black against white, Antifa against cops, looters against property owners. Take God out of the equation and things soon devolve to victimhood, anarchy, violence.

Our nation is founded on unalienable rights. What does that mean? They are not alienable –they cannot be alienated or taken away; they are not transferable; they are innate.

Among these unalienable rights are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness.

Life is a gift from God, and it is holy, from conception to natural death. Our life is very short, and is a preparation for life after death, which will last for all eternity. Our life is an expression of God’s love for us. The way we live eternity will be determined by how we live now.

Liberty. Freedom. Contrary to mainstream belief, Freedom does not mean to do what I want when I want. Freedom does not mean to self determine my own identity. Our freedom, our Liberty can never be subjective, according to what pleases me, but is always linked to God the Creator and to others. All liberty, all freedom is tied to responsibility. Our responsibility is to acknowledge that God is the giver of life, and thus one’s thoughts, actions and choices are informed by the relationship one has with Him.

The Pursuit of Happiness. Happiness is not a given, it needs to be pursued! Our every action is either a move in pursuit of real happiness, or a step away from it. Although beaches may be closed this year, and I’m not sure if there will be fireworks displays or parades, July 4th usually expresses happiness in these ways –no work, parades, hotdogs, baseball games and fireworks- all as a foretaste of the real happiness promised in the Gospel; that which will no longer be pursued but experienced in its fullness in heaven. As we celebrate Independence Day, may each of experience that heaven can begin here on earth, and be grateful for the Life, Liberty and Happiness we have.

Fr. Sean