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Retreat Ministry • Parish Missions

"Come away by yourselves to a quiet place and rest awhile!..." Mark 6:31
Are you ready to accept the invitation?

The Fourth of July

July 18, 2016

We declare our independence; we pledge our allegiance; we treasure our freedom. These mark our identity as Americans, and we reflect on that identity with pride. And, as people who also believe in God, we pause especially on this day to give thanks for those precious and hard-fought gifts.

But as we do, we also become aware of another set of standards.

As citizens, we declare our independence – but as those baptized into Christ, we declare our deeper dependence upon God. To insist on our own independence is to repeat the same mistake that humanity has been making ever since the Garden of Eden. We pledge allegiance to a flag – but we pledge our ultimate allegiance, not to any flag or country, but to the Reign of God. “My country, right or wrong” is not a statement of patriotism; rather, it is a statement of idolatry. We treasure our freedom – but because of our baptism, we have promised to subject our free will to God’s will, which may not always be what you or I would prefer.

We are caught in the tension between these conflicting standards; and not to feel that tension means that we are not paying attention to the full message of Jesus.

Something to consider, as we celebrate living in this land of the free and home of the brave.

Patrick Foley