

## A Note from the Pastor

Dear Parishioners,

With Independence Day upon us this Wednesday, it is a good time to think about Freedom in the U.S.A.

First of all, we should thank God for Freedom and the many blessings we enjoy in this country. Not everyone has an abundance of this world's goods but, in general, living conditions are comfortable and there is always hope that things will get better. We have the freedom to pursue happiness that many other countries wish they had. While Freedom should really mean the Freedom to choose to do what is good, in our world today Freedom means the Freedom to do whatever one wants. Unfortunately, Freedom in the U.S. sometimes means we are free to choose that which can harm us or others, including the unborn. Thankfully, it is also true that we are free to help ourselves and others. Many people do just that and support good causes. Most people try to make a good life for themselves and for family. May the Lord strengthen our families.

On Independence Day, we should also thank God for all the special Freedoms we enjoy, with specific thoughts about Freedom of religion. It has always been a hallmark of the U.S. that people are free to practice the religion of their choice. As a church family, we should be extremely grateful for the way religion and religious groups are protected under the Constitution. However, there are challenges as well. With secularism and atheism gaining popularity, some people see religion as a threat or a danger to society. Those same people feel religion works against personal freedom. The Church just observed "Religious Freedom Week" to remind everyone that we have to work and pray to keep our freedoms and to help others understand that the more free we are, the less we are able to do wrong, that is, to turn against God's ways into sin and all that can harm us.

May God continue to bless our country and give us true Freedom to live in God's ways.

Sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Monsignor Giandurco". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the typed name.

P.S. Let's pray for all travelers this summer. I will be in Ireland this coming week. I appreciate your prayers and I promise mine for all of you.