

Brothers and Sisters of Our Parish Family,

In June of 1776, Thomas Jefferson, seated in the second-floor parlor of a bricklayer's house in Philadelphia, brilliantly composed the first drafts of the Declaration of Independence. After some revision, the document was approved by Congress on July 4th, 1776.

While the Declaration would become one of the world's most significant documents, its second sentence is perhaps the most famous: *"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness."*

Liberty is intertwined with human dignity; to safeguard liberty was the reason for the colonists' war of independence.

With just a little bit of reflection, it should be easy to see the 4th of July as a "Catholic" holiday in sync with the Church and her teachings. Let's remind ourselves that the Catholic Church is the original Bible Church, and her official teachings are simply the interpretation and application of God's word.

The Church reaffirms the natural dignity of human beings because the Bible proclaims that God created all human beings in His image and likeness. In doing this, God invites every one of us to an intimate personal relationship with Himself and offers us the incredible privilege of being co-creators with Him.

But sin wants to get in the way of this by defacing God's likeness in us. Every sin is an offense against God, because it debases both the sinner and the other. God's response: He assumed our human nature in order to come to our rescue and reveal the divine dignity hiding behind the clouds of our sin.

Jesus loved the tax collectors Matthew and Zacchaeus back into their dignity. He took time to listen to the Samaritan woman with five husbands and offer her a new life.

The Second Vatican Council stressed that *all* people are called to the heights of holiness, that all of us are created in God's image and likeness, and, so, all of us are equal in dignity. The Council taught that societies must strive to bring about living conditions that correspond to human dignity.

While the teaching of the Church is beautifully expressed in councils, encyclicals, and the Catechism, it is even more powerfully expressed in the lives of those who take it to heart and live it.

The life of Mother Teresa of Calcutta in our own time is a moving testimony to the dignity of the human person. Plunging into one of the world's most disgusting slums, she recognized, honored, and befriended the image of God in people cast off by society and left to die in the gutter. And Mother Teresa spoke out in the defense of unwanted children conceived "by accident," making even presidents squirm.

We also experienced Pope John Paul's courageous witness that helped bring about the collapse of communist tyranny in Poland and the entire Soviet bloc. He was also firm in his opposition to the death penalty on grounds of human dignity. And after being seriously wounded by an assassin, this Good Shepherd even went to the prison cell of his attacker and spoke to him of his forgiveness and God's love.

In raising these two witnesses to the dignity of sainthood, the Church is reaffirming the dignity of every human person without exception. It is also reaffirming our duty to stand up for that dignity. It is insisting that *"all men are created equal and endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights"*—which means rights that no government may take away.

Peace and Blessings,  
Father Conrad

**Sat. - June 30- 13th Sunday Ordinary Time**

**4:00 PM** +Annmarie St. Pierre  
Req. Ann Bodzioch Bojack

**Sun. - July 1 - 13th Sunday Ordinary Time**

**10:00 AM** +Irene Banas  
Req. Daughter, Sharon Castro

**Mon.- July 2 - Weekday**

**7:30 AM** Benefactors of the Conventual  
Franciscan Friars

**Tues. - July 3 - St. Thomas**

**7:30 AM** +Father Edward Gilmour

**Wed. - July 4- Independence Day**

**7:30 AM** OLPH Parishioners,  
Living & Deceased

**Thurs. - July 5 - St. Elizabeth of Portugal**

**7:30 AM** +Paul Glodek

**Fri. - July 6 - St. Maria Goretti**

**7:30 AM** +Mildred Sirak

**Sat. - July 7 - Blessed Virgin Mary**

**7:30 AM** Health & God's Blessings  
Req. Armindo & Cynthia Linhares

**Sat.- July 7 - 14th Sunday Ordinary Time**

**4:00 PM** +Teddy Irzyk  
Req. Wife, Gloria

**Sun- July 8 - 14th Sunday Ordinary Time**

**10:00 AM** +Edward & +Flora Gonet  
Req. Bourque Family

**OUR POLISH FEST** is just two weeks away—  
July 14th and 15th.

Our Parish needs every able-bodied member to help in whatever way you can best share your God-given talents.

Many enthusiastic volunteers will be needed to help set up beforehand, lend a hand in the kitchen or tend a booth for a few hours, and help close down at the end. Your time and helping hands will make a real difference toward our festival's success.

If you can spare a bit of your time either--or both--of the festival days, please come to the meeting this Monday evening, speak to Joanna Hunt or Chris Regula, or simply call the parish office to let us know that you'd like to help.

**THE 100-GIFT BOOTH** still needs prizes for both days. If every household would consider donating two new and unused items—something that you would be happy to win—it would guarantee another “can't miss” attraction.

Please bring your items for this booth to the rectory by Thursday, the 12th.

**PLEASE NOTE** that, because there will be no “Grandma's Attic” this summer, we will not be accepting rummage-sale kinds of items.

**THANK YOU** in advance for any and all of your help.

**A FINAL MEETING** before the Polish Fest will be this Monday, July 2nd, at 7 o'clock in the church hall. You are invited!

**SHARING FAITH AND HOPE...**Preliminary figures indicate that the OLPH Parish Family may well have surpassed the \$10,000.00 mark this year!

Congratulations, and may God reward in the generous way that only He can the many OLPH Parishioners who made this nice parish contribution to the 2018 Catholic Charities Appeal possible.