



# Stronica Proboszcza



## The Pastor's Page

June 30<sup>th</sup>, MMXIX

Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

*Month of the Sacred Heart*

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Niech będzie pochwalony Jezus Chrystus!  
Praised be Jesus Christ!

### **Monday, July 1<sup>st</sup> – Feast of the Precious Blood**

Devotion to the Precious Blood is as old as Christianity. As Catholics we believe that the Blood of Christ is precious because it is Christ's own great ransom paid for the redemption of mankind. As there was to be no remission of sin without the shedding of blood, we hold that the "Incarnate Word" not only offered His life for the salvation of the world, but He offered to give up His life by a bloody death, and to hang bloodless, soulless and dead upon the Cross for the salvation of humanity. Jesus is said to have given His life – His Blood – for the sake of all humanity, regardless of any religious division or difference in belief, atoning for every form of sin. The Precious Blood is a call to repentance and reparation. The early Fathers say that the Church was born from the pierced side of Christ, and that the sacraments were brought forth through His Blood. It is a symbol of mankind's redemption. But we, too, must share in sufferings; as St. Paul tells Timothy, "All who want to live a life of piety in Christ Jesus will have to suffer persecution

### **Wednesday, July 3<sup>rd</sup> – St. Thomas the Apostle**

Thomas was born in Galilee. The gospels don't say what he did for a living or how Jesus invited him to become a disciple. He was the twin brother of St. James and was therefore called Didymus. Glimpses of Thomas in the Gospel of St. John show a man who liked to believe the worst so that he would never be disappointed.

One example of this occurred after Jesus' friend Lazarus died. Jesus decided to go into Judea, even though the authorities there were threatening to arrest Him. This frightened the apostles. Possibly their lives would be in danger, too. But Thomas said to the others, "Let us go, that we may die with Him."

The Gospel of St. John doesn't explain why Thomas was the only disciple not there when the risen Christ first appeared to the others. Later, when they told him what had happened, Thomas said he would never believe their story unless he saw and touched Jesus' wounds. A week later, Jesus graciously offered Thomas peace. He made it clear that he knew and understood Thomas's doubt. Thomas responded, "My Lord and my God!"

There are various ideas about where St. Thomas preached after the descent of the Holy Spirit. One tradition says that he did his mission work in India. To this day a group of people living along the Malabar Coast call themselves "Christians of St. Thomas." Records show that this community is very old. They claim that their ancestors were baptized by St. Thomas himself, therefore he has been declared the patron saint of India. St. Thomas the Apostle was martyred sometime around the year 53 A.D.

## God Bless America, Our Home Sweet Home!

Once again we celebrate the birth of our nation this Thursday on July 4<sup>th</sup>! Although we do not usually consider Independence Day a religious holiday, without a doubt there is a definite religious significance to the occasion. We proudly commemorate the courage of the founding fathers of our country, which allowed them to be faithful to the inspiration they received from God, and to establish a new and free nation. The founding fathers WERE religious men! They all believed in God! There was not an atheist among them! They sincerely believed that the source of our human dignity and our freedom came from God Almighty, the Creator of us all. It is very disappointing these days when the particular lack of faith of this generation is projected upon the state of mind and heart of the founders of the United States, as a justification for a Godless way of life and blatantly immoral lifestyles so popular today. This was definitely NOT what the founders of the nation had in mind when they separated Church from State! For our nation's founders, faith in God went well beyond a gentle hope that America would receive heavenly blessings. Their writings show that our early leaders held a stronger belief: God manifested His will in history, and a nation that honestly sought to conform itself to the dictates of the Almighty would enjoy His blessings. Certainly they were not alone in that belief; but as they witnessed the optimistic energy of the American people and the success of the new form of government, they concluded that this nation had indeed been greatly blessed – and they gave their thanks to God. During times of distress and peril, they prayed for forgiveness and deliverance. They turned to God in good times and bad. Their belief in God's blessing on America can be found in their own words: *The second day of July 1776 (when independence was approved by the Continental Congress, two days before the final wording of the declaration could be resolved) will be the most memorable date in the history of America. I am apt to believe that it will be celebrated by succeeding generations as the great anniversary festival. It ought to be commemorated, as the Day of Deliverance by solemn acts of devotion to God Almighty. It ought to be solemnized with pomp and parade, with shows, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires and illuminations from one end of this continent to the other from this time forward forever more...* These are the words of our nation's second president John Adams from a letter he sent to his wife Abigail on July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1776. Though he was off by two days, most of his prophecy has come to pass. The 4<sup>th</sup> of July is a day we enjoy celebrating. The weather is warm. It is a day off from work. There are parades and fireworks, picnics and sporting events. But to be completely faithful to the spirit of the day there should also be a moment of silent prayer (*or maybe even spoken public prayer!*) thanking God for the great nation that is ours and the strength necessary to be faithful to the many sacrifices that were made over the last 243 years to keep it strong and free!

*Happy Independence Day! Enjoy the free day by using your freedom from work to spend time with family & friends and to refresh body & soul!*

Have you ever wondered what became of the fifty-six men who signed the Declaration of Independence on July 4<sup>th</sup> in 1776? Five signers were captured by the British as traitors and tortured before they died. Twelve had their homes ransacked and burned. Two lost their sons serving in the Revolutionary Army, another had two sons captured. Nine of the fifty-six fought and died from wounds or hardships of the Revolutionary War. They signed and pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor. What kind of men were they? Twenty-four were lawyers and jurists. Eleven were merchants, nine were farmers and large plantation owners; men of means, well educated. But they signed the Declaration of Independence knowing full well that the penalty would be death if they were captured.

Carter Braxton of Virginia, a wealthy planter and trader, saw his ships swept from the seas by the British Navy. He sold his home and properties to pay his debts, and died in rags. Thomas McKean was so hounded by the British that he was forced to move his family almost constantly. He served in the Congress without pay, and his family was kept in hiding. His possessions were taken from him, and poverty was his reward. Vandals or soldiers looted the properties of Dillery, Hall, Clymer, Walton, Gwinnett, Heyward, Rutledge, and Middleton. At the battle of Yorktown, Thomas Nelson, Jr., noted that the British General Cornwallis had taken over the Nelson home for his headquarters. He quietly urged General George Washington to open fire. The home was destroyed, and Nelson died bankrupt. Francis Lewis had his home and properties destroyed. The enemy jailed his wife, and she died within a few months. John Hart was driven from his wife's bedside as she was dying. Their thirteen children fled for their lives. His fields and his gristmill were laid to waste. For more than a year, he lived in forests and caves, returning home to find his wife dead and his children vanished. A few weeks later, he died from exhaustion and a broken heart. Norris and Livingston suffered similar fates.

Such were the stories and sacrifices of the American Revolution. These were not wild-eyed, rabble-rousing ruffians. They were soft-spoken men of means and education. They had security, but they valued liberty more. Standing tall straight, and unwavering, they pledged: "For the support of this declaration, with firm reliance on the protection of the divine providence, we mutually pledge to each other, our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor." They gave us a free and independent America. The history books never told us a lot about what happened in the Revolutionary War. We didn't just fight the British. We were British subjects at that time and we fought our own government!

Some of us take these liberties so much for granted, but we shouldn't. So, take a few minutes while enjoying your 4<sup>th</sup> of July Holiday and silently thank these patriots. It's not too much to ask for the price they paid. Remember that freedom is never free! Be proud of our country and the many people who have worked so hard and sacrificed so much to make the United States what it is today. It is a wonderful country and the many, many people from other nations throughout the world who still desperately try to enter this country are proof of that! Patriotism is still very fashionable and appropriate! The 4<sup>th</sup> of July means much more than just beer, picnics and baseball games.

*"Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breath free,  
the wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed  
to me. I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"*

Inscribed at the base of the Statue of Liberty, words of Emma Lazarus

## **Thursday, July 4<sup>th</sup> - the Feast of the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus**

The Feast of the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus was actually removed from the liturgical calendar after the Mass was "reformed" in the 1970's. This feast day fell on the Thursday after the octave of Corpus Christi. Of course there is also no octave of Corpus Christi any longer either, however the idea of the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus is still extremely relevant to our Catholic faith even without a feast day.

This feast day commemorated the supreme love of the Sacred Heart which instituted the great sacrament of the Holy Eucharist in order to dwell here below with us and to give to our souls His flesh as food and His blood as drink. In the tabernacle dwells the most loving Heart, a human Heart, but one that never wearies of us, that longs for our love, with an infinite love: "Come to Me, all you that labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you."

From the time of Jesus' first revelation of His Most Sacred Heart to St. Margaret Mary, there has always been a connection between it and the Most Holy Eucharist. Jesus asked for frequent Holy Communion of those faithful who love Him and are devoted His Heart, especially on the First Friday of every month. To those faithful devotees Jesus has promised a multitude of graces and blessings!

## **Joining a Parish**

A pastor of a church was approached by someone asking about becoming a member of the parish. As the conversation about expectations concerning membership in the congregation was explained by the pastor, it became apparent that this person did not have the kind of commitment that the pastor was looking for in a new parishioner. "Yes, I would like to join your church," the potential new member stated. "However, don't expect to see me every Sunday at Mass because I have a lot of other things on my busy agenda for Sunday mornings. Usually I am pretty tired from the hectic work week, so I like to sleep in on those days. Also, don't expect too much of a donation to the church because I have a lot of club memberships and financial commitments. And my time is certainly very limited, so don't look for me to serve on any committees or to teach catechism."

The pastor indicated that perhaps there was another church in the vicinity better suited to the person's needs. He gave the inquirer directions to this church located only a few blocks away. The pastor was thanked for his time and his honesty. When the person looking for membership arrived at the address the pastor had given, all that was found was a dilapidated and vacant church building with all the windows boarded up. There is a BIG difference between merely being registered and on the books of a church and being a real member of a parish and a follower of Christ. Hopefully and prayerfully, each of us will take very seriously Christ's personal call to discipleship.

***Please remember, we are now collecting food to stock the pantry shopper booth at the festival. Donations can be made in the basket in the main vestibule of the church. Thank You!***