

Pastor's Message

By The Rev. Dr. Anthony T. Padovano

July & August 2007

Autonomy and Inclusivity

On July 4, 1776 The United States of America was created. It gave the world the first national democracy in history, the first written constitution and the first separation of church and state ever attempted. For all this we are grateful, as is the world at large.

July and August are not months with major liturgical celebrations, Advent, Christmas, Easter, Pentecost occur earlier. July and August are significant months, however, in the commemoration of the different ways God's grace works its way through history. July 4, 1776 may have been one of those secular moments, so to speak, which made the world a better place for the human heart and, hence, for the presence of God.

In August, we celebrate the memorial day of some of the greatest Christians in human history. Benedict, who started western monasticism and Augustine, a thinker of extraordinary talent who wrote the world's first autobiography. Ignatius of Loyola is remembered on August 31. He gave us a university system which has enlightened minds for centuries.

I think more personally, of two bridge saints, so to speak, who have touched my life. John Henry Newman died on August 11. I wrote a doctoral dissertation and my first book on him. He spent half his life as an Anglican and half as a Catholic. Brother Roger of Taize, the founder of a community where Catholics and Protestants worship together, is remembered on August 16.

We need to reflect often on the life of Christ and the liturgical seasons. But we ought not forget the many ways historical events and dedicated Christians made the world better for the human family. Nor must we neglect the great spirits of other religions and the great deeds of other nations which give us hope and bring us life.

Anthony