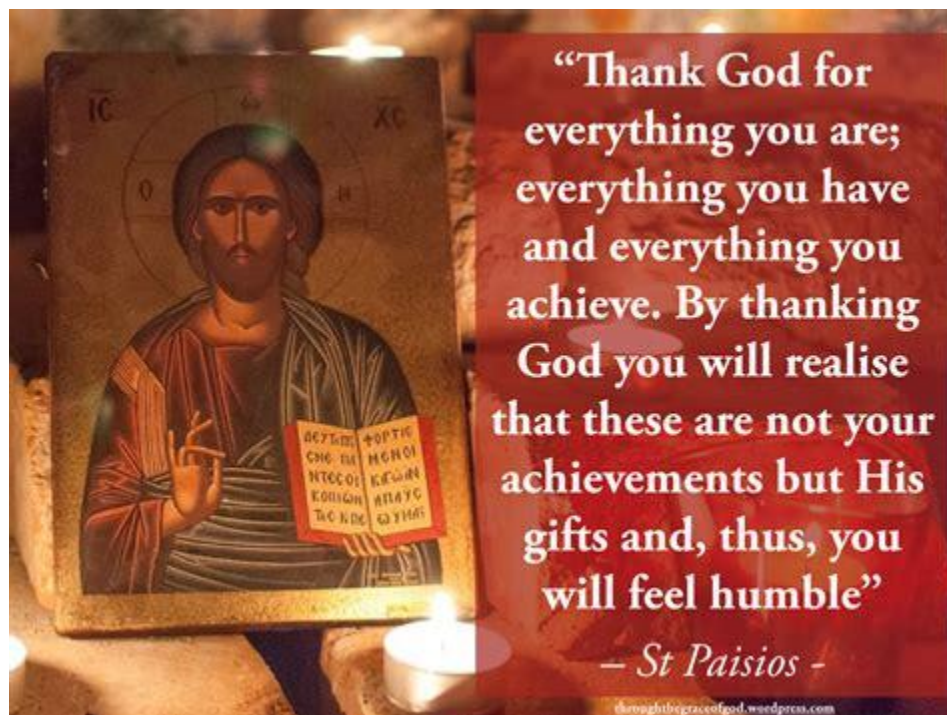


FROM FATHER JOHN: *“The LORD is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in mercy. The LORD is good to all, compassionate toward all your works. All your works give you thanks, LORD and your faithful bless you. They speak of the glory of your reign and tell of your mighty works, Making known to the sons of men your mighty acts, the majestic glory of your rule. Your reign is a reign for all ages, your dominion for all generations. The LORD is trustworthy in all his words and loving in all his works.”* (Psalm 145:8 – 13)

Happy 250th Birthday!



Our nation celebrated its 250th Birthday yesterday. This is a great and glorious thing – that freedom, liberty and justice has reigned as a supreme Good in our country for 250 years. No other nation in the world has been dedicated to the good of its people from start to finish in the same way that our country has been.

Our country was founded on one simple and yet world-changing principal, *“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.--That to secure these rights,*

Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.” (Declaration of Independence)

This could only have happened through the grace of God. Our country has survived great wars, economic depressions and recessions, a civil war that nearly destroyed our nation, great plagues, hurricanes, tornadoes, etc. through the grace of God.

As President Abraham Lincoln wrote in his Proclamation establishing the celebration of Thanksgiving, *“In the midst of a civil war of unequalled magnitude and severity, which has sometimes seemed to foreign states to invite and to provoke their aggression, peace has been preserved with all nations, order has been maintained, the laws have been respected and obeyed, and harmony has prevailed everywhere, except in the theater of military conflict ... No human counsel hath devised nor hath any mortal hand worked out these great things. They are the gracious gifts of the Most High God, who, while dealing with us in anger for our sins, hath nevertheless remembered mercy.”*

Our nation, and our American Catholic Church, have good cause to celebrate the anniversary of the founding of our nation. Each of us should spend a portion of our day in prayer and reflection thanking God for giving us the gifts of freedom and liberty. Prayer, scripture reading and reflection help us keep gratitude in the forefront of our thoughts.

It is fitting that we give thanks to God. God has been very good to us. Thanking God for His goodness, His love, His forgiveness and His mercy is always a good spiritual exercise. It's something we should do every day, every week – Give Thanks to God! God has given us countless blessings; He has healed us in so many ways and has offered us grace upon grace throughout our lives. Let us return to the Lord, glorify God in a loud voice, and give Him thanks!

May God Bless you and all those who love the Lord.