

FROM THE PASTOR

JULY 4, 2021

**THE FOURTEENTH SUNDAY IN THE TIME THROUGHOUT
THE YEAR**

**THE SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
INDEPENDENCE DAY**

The Fourth of July

As everyone is aware, today we keep the great Holiday of Independence Day. To all of us it will always be known by its endearing title, *The Fourth of July*. Today we mark the 245th anniversary of the independence of our Beloved nation. On this day in 1776 God Our Lord brought forth a new nation in the vast expanse of the wilderness of North America. This nation would be conceived in liberty and become a bright shining light to all the world. It seems that from all eternity God had seen this land which would, in His providence, become a continental nation, stretching from sea to sea. Our country is the fulfillment of what King David wrote in the Psalms, when God said, "I shall place my dominion in the sea." So many have done so much to preserve this liberty, and yet last summer we saw the cities of our great nation burning with the smoke of Satan. Let us pray that our nation will always be a bright beacon, the City shining on the hill for all the world to see. With the great Roman poet Virgil, we too say, *Hic Amor, Haec Patria Est. Here is my love, here is my native land!* (Aeneid Book IV:347) Please follow your poor Pastor's advice today: *Please let everyone have a hot dog (or two). The diet begins on Monday!*

Mr. Donald P. Cavanaugh, Grand Knight

During my eight years as your Pastor, it has been a great grace for me to work with our Knights of Columbus and our Squires. On Thursday, July 1st, the term of our Grand Knight, Mr. Donald P. Cavanaugh, expired. Don will now always be a past Grand Knight, or, as we say in the K of C, a PGK. Mr. Cavanaugh, along with his dear parents and brother, is a founding member of our parish. His mother, Mrs. Pat Friedman, went home to God earlier this year at the fullness of years, 92. I will always be grateful that three years ago, I could attend Pat's surprise (and it really was) 90th birthday party. So many were there. Don's years as Grand Knight saw many wonderful events, for he built upon the foundations put in place by his immediate predecessors, PGK Peter Boyle, James Galante, James Black, Esq., Eugene J. Reilly, Leo Benjamin, and so many others. It was Mr. Cavanaugh who has begun and organized the Field of Honor. I am sure we have all been so impressed

with its beauty. The various officials of the Village of Brookville have told me of what a wonderful impression it makes. St. Paul's is the first property one sees when entering the Village from the South and the Field of Honor stands as a beacon of welcome to all. We salute and congratulate Mr. James Viania, our new Grand Knight. May God always bless him. And are we not all so proud of our Squires who hold the Cross for us to kiss. Thank you, Mr. Cavanaugh, and may God reward you!

St. Junipero Serra, Pray for Us

On Thursday, July 1st we celebrated the Feast Of St. Junipero Serra. There was hardly a more glorious Apostle of the faith in our beloved country, but, sadly, he has become the latest victim of the cancel culture.

It was nearly 45 years ago, on September 14, 1975, that the first native born citizen of the United States was numbered among the saints, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton. During his apostolic visit to the United States of America in September 2015, Pope Francis canonized St. Junipero Serra, the Father of California. It was the first and only canonization to take place on the soil of the United States of America. St. Junipero Serra is the only saint whose statue is found on the rotunda of the U.S. Capitol Building in Washington DC. Who was this remarkable man?

California is rightly known as one of the most beautiful and productive lands in all the world. Its luscious fruits and wine, olives and ranches have made it world renowned. But it was not always so. At one time before the great work of evangelization by the Catholic Missionaries there were no roads, no gardens, no fields of grain, no orchards, no vineyards, no olive groves, no permanent settlements. There were no ranches, no dairies, no stables. Its inhabitants lived in grass huts and lived on rodents and grasshoppers. Such was California before the grace of the redemption and the Cross of Christ was planted there.

But into this desperate world there came the brown robe who was all but 5'2" and who walked with a limp. He had journeyed thousands of miles from Vera Cruz in Mexico to the Bay which he named in honor of the founder of his order, San Francisco. St. Junipero Serra was a son of St. Francis, and he was among the bravest of men who ever lived. No heart ever burned greater than his in his love for the native people of California. He came to teach them, correct them, protect them, and love them with a love they had never known before, the love of Christ the Redeemer. He came to bring them the sacraments and save their souls for Christ.

His goal was to create a golden trail of missions from south to north, from San Diego to San Francisco. Each mission would be 20 miles from the other – approximately a day’s walk. He chose the lushest areas to found the missions, to teach the natives agriculture and husbandry. Soon they abandoned their diet of rodents and grasshoppers and dined on citrus and every other fruit, the rich oil of the queen of fruits, the olive, and drank the fruit of the vine. But above all they were fed with the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Our Lord Jesus Christ in Holy Communion.

Junipero wished to create a united people in this new land, for he had no notion of race. While on the East coast of North America the Protestant colonists were enslaving and killing the Native peoples whom they called Indians, St. Junipero wrote to the Vice Roy of Mexico, begging him to send Spanish men north *and to take wives among the Indian women*. St. Junipero built the great missions of California, still visited today with their vineyards and adobe chapels. The world has never known the likes of St. Junipero Serra again.

Sadly, a beautiful statue of St. Junipero Serra which was on display in the city he founded -San Francisco – was torn down last summer by individuals who, sadly, do not know the history of California and this wonderful saint. The Archbishop of San Francisco, accompanied by priests, deacons and faithful, went to the site to bless it and make reparation. We must pray that the desecration of the images of Our Lord, Blessed Mother, and the saints will cease. Sadly, the Member of the House of Representatives in whose district this sacrilege occurred simply remarked, “People will do what they will do.”

In Jesus and Mary,
Monsignor James F. Pereda