

June 30 – July 1, 2007
Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time
First Kings 19:16-21 Galatians 5:1, 13-18 Luke 9:51-62
1776 - Parish Celebration of USA Independence Day – 2007

A common expression these days is that ‘freedom is not free.’ While sometimes used in reference to those in the armed forces, a broader sense of ‘freedom’ necessarily includes the notions of sacrifice and responsibility. As parents necessarily restrict the freedom of their children, (frequently against the verbalized wishes of their kids), so a mature citizen and/or disciple of Jesus Christ comes to the recognition that ‘freedom’ does not imply equal value to every desire, just the awareness and availability of choices. In our present society, choices abound: some of them healthy, some of them neutral, some of them deadly. While there are continual efforts to restrict the options from which people may select (the negative option or choice being seen as bad by a majority), the removal or limiting of choices does not facilitate freedom or healthy decision making. As Catholic-Christian disciples of Jesus Christ, this weekend’s Scripture selections remind us that discipleship necessarily involves sacrifice, not always possessing what we desire. Mature responsibility entails a measuring of desires and understanding their deeper value...and ranking them in a hierarchy of values. Granted, there are times we do not want to be bothered with the truth (having a double scoop ice-cream cone on a hot summer day even though it is filled with calories) but then there are other events whose repercussions, if chosen, can echo long into our life. Random or casual sex can result in an unpleasant STD or life-afflicting disease. A drunken one-night stand can ruin a marriage or career...and DUIs are not the paperwork we usually frame and put on our walls with our diplomas. A more apt expression might be, ‘freedom is hard’. As Americans it means being open to hearing and providing a forum for a multiplicity of views and voices on every subject under the sun, even those voices and opinions with which we disagree. As Catholic-Christians it means continually weighing the choices available within our lives and seeking the grace of God within them. Living as we do with a long history of personal freedom, it is sometimes hard for us as Catholic-Christians to get used to the idea that the old notion of ‘the church has taught or spoken’ does not carry the weight it was thought to have once had. The task of freedom, both as citizens and disciples, is to enter into the hard work of listening, of respecting, or resisting the impulse to disconnect or play the power card (God says!). Freedom allows educatory speech, the best honoring of freedom is prayerful deliberation, free-assent or free-dissent, until increased maturity and deliberation allow for revisiting previous decisions with a freely embraced sense of responsibility and sacrifice.

A few days early perhaps, but, Happy Fourth of July! May our nations 231st birthday find you pleasantly surrounded with friends and family. Thank you for joining with us this weekend as we celebrate the freedom to which God calls us as his children. We are now accepting Registrations for our **‘Galilee by the Sea’ Summer Experience**, which occurs on July 17-18-19. Three very special nights of faith-experience, food and community. Registration forms are available on the Concierge Shelves. **Also...please note that this weekend is the RSVP deadline for our August All-Parish Retreat at La Quinta...**if you want to go...this would be a good weekend on which to sign up! Our **Women of Faith Leadership Dinner on July 10th** is just around d the corner...remember, you don’t have to be invited to come, you decide for yourself. Also, attendance does not mean you are going to sign up as leadership for a parish ministry. It is one more opportunity to enrich the lives of our women (as with the men’s event) by allowing them to enjoy a meal and conversation with a professional woman who has integrated her faith into her professional pursuits. As the fireworks light the July sky and as you enjoy your potato salad or fried chicken, remember, you are loved. FKB