

¹²Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD...Psalm 33:11a

This next weekend we are celebrating the 4th of July holiday. In fact the 4th itself is on a Sunday. Our story as a nation is a remarkable one, because an under-financed, not very wealthy, basically middle class nation stood up to one of the most powerful nations on earth and prevailed.

What ensued was a nation based on democratic ideals, no hint of monarchy, a determination to move forward both in the size of the nation, numbers of people, cultivating of resources and ideas to become the greatest nation on earth.

Now while there has been debate as to the religious backgrounds of our founding "fathers", there is one theme that is constantly repeated, an acknowledgement of a need for God's help, and an acknowledgment of God's blessings upon this land. From the Declaration of Independence we read:

*"And for the support of this declaration, **with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence**, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor."*

From our first president George Washington:

*"It is impossible to rightly govern a nation **without God and the Bible**".*

From John Adams, our second president, and a major figure in the struggle for independence:

*"The Fourth of July ought to be commemorated as the day of deliverance **by solemn acts of devotion to God Almighty.**"*

There are other quotes which pay tribute to this thought from other leaders of our land, but here is one from Dwight Eisenhower, who was our president in the 50's:

*"**Without God** there could be no American form of government, nor an American way of life. Recognition of the Supreme Being is the first, the most basic, expression of Americanism. Thus, the founding fathers of America saw it, and **thus with God's help**, it will continue to be."*

We too often take for granted what we have as a nation. For those of us who are people of faith, we should use this day to consider God's blessings in this land, and give thanks to God.

God's traveling mercies go with you if you are traveling over the holiday!

Pr. John