



Our Lady of Purgatory



Maronite Catholic Church

May 23-24, 2020

SEVENTH SUNDAY OF THE RESURRECTION



HAPPY MEMORIAL DAY

Why are human beings willing to fight and die for freedom? As Americans, this Memorial Day we will remember those who died in the service of our country. But as Catholic Americans, we should also reflect on the meaning of true freedom and thank God for the Church which proclaims the way to the fullness of that freedom. One reason why we are willing to fight and die for freedom is because the need for freedom is imprinted into our very nature. This is why we fight for it for others.

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Catholic Americans, we should also reflect on the meaning of true freedom and thank God for the Church which proclaims the way to the fullness of that freedom.

I honor those in my family and yours who paid the ultimate price for the freedom that I have enjoyed as an American. However, I believe that some today have trivialized the meaning of freedom or distorted it beyond recognition. True freedom is much deeper than being able to do what we want. Freedom directs us toward truth and choosing the truth perfects our exercise of freedom.

Again, the Catholic Catechism is so very helpful for our understanding: "The more one does what is good, the freer one becomes. There is no true freedom except in the service of what is good and just. The choice to disobey and do evil is an abuse of

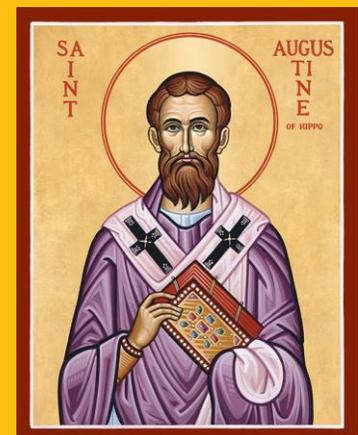
freedom and leads to "the slavery of sin." Freedom makes man responsible for his acts to the extent that they are voluntary. Progress in virtue, knowledge of the good, and asceticism enhance the mastery of the will over its acts." (See, CCC #1731-1734)

The Church teaches us that to understand freedom we need to consider both our nature and the very purpose of our humanity. "Through

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"Faith is to believe what you do not see. The reward of faith is to see what you believe."

St. Augustine of Hippo



Fr. Vincent Farhat, Pastor | Rev. Mr. Jean Mattar, Deacon | Joseph Abraham, Sub-deacon

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OFFICE HOURS: The Church office will be open Monday through Thursday from 10:00 am until 3:00 pm.

our physical bodies, we sum up the elements of the material world and bring them to their highest perfection and freely raise their voice in praise to the creator" (cf. *Gaudium et spes* 14). Thus, we know that we are more than the material world, for which we have the capacity to appreciate and give thanks.

Once we understand that we are a unity of body and soul, created in the image of God and endowed with reason and free will, we are ready to taste of the Church's teaching on freedom. Paragraph 1730 found in the Catechism of the Catholic Church is short, but its breadth is enormous. It states that "God created man a rational being, conferring on him the dignity of a person who can initiate and control his own actions. God willed that man should be 'left in his own counsel,' so that he might of his own accord seek his Creator and freely attain his full and blessed perfection by cleaving to him."

The perfection of any created thing is to be able to fully act according to what it is, to its nature. And, in this respect, the thing gives glory to its creator. On the other hand, when, for any reason, a thing cannot fully act according to its nature, we correctly view it as lacking in a good. When a person cannot fully act according to their human nature, this lacking in a good can take on a moral dimension and result in the loss of freedom.

Human beings, by virtue of their reason and free will, are unique among all other created things in that they can freely choose to act in ways that are not in accord with their nature, that is, they can turn away from God and reject their own perfection, which is to become fully human and fully alive. However, turning away from God is not true freedom, it is an abuse of freedom. Instead of freeing us; it enslaves us. We need to understand this point

because it is critical. Therefore, I have selected two examples.

First, in order to help us understand the significance of the abuse of freedom, Dr. Scott Hahn gives us a general example using a train. It is the nature of a train to run on tracks. As long as the train remains on the tracks, it is able to carry people or needed materials across the country. If, one day, the train viewed its tracks as restricting its freedom and decided to jump its tracks, what would happen? Therefore, acting according to our nature liberates and frees us. Acting against our nature results in a kind of slavery because we are no longer free to "Be all that we can be."

Second, Blessed John Paul II gives us a more specific example in *The Gospel of Life*. He shows us that when freedom is no longer based on objective truth, it destroys itself. He says, since freedom is inherently relational, if the self is understood in terms of absolute autonomy, as it is in secular society, then people will eventually reject each other as each person seeks to have their interests prevail. Thus, society becomes a mass of competing individuals without mutual bonds. Such a society does not become more free; it becomes less free as vice, corruption, brutality, and oppression inevitably increase.

Now, I believe we can try to answer our original question. One reason why we human beings are willing to fight and die for freedom is because the need for freedom is imprinted onto our very nature. By virtue of our ability to reason and our free will, we are impelled to seek truth, especially religious truth.

Our Creator instilled this drive within us, so that we would seek Him, for He is truth. And having found truth, we are obligated to live it to the best of our ability. But we cannot satisfy this obligation unless we are free from coercion.

Consequently, it is the obligation of the state to ensure that its citizens are free to exercise their religious freedom. However, if the state fails in its obligation, or is attacked by another state, then, at some point, human beings will rightly and necessarily fight and die for true freedom.

This Memorial Day Catholics rightly honor our fallen brothers and sisters, those who have died so that we may continue to choose freedom. But we should also remember our Church, who has defended the dignity and freedom of the human person for over two-thousand years

OUR DEEPEST SYMPATHY

This past week, David Dickinson passed away in the loving arms of Jesus. Our condolences go to his wife Mae, his children and their families. He will be remembered by everyone with love. We ask Almighty God to welcome David into His kingdom and may his soul rest in peace. Allah yerhammo.

Prayer for Spiritual Communion

O Divine Ocean of Mercy and Compassion, be with us in our time of trial and difficulties. Today I make an act of spiritual communion with you, the Life-Giving Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. At this time, I am not able to receive the sacred body and blood of my Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ, but I choose to live in union with him and in the unity of the Holy Spirit. I offer my day, my daily life, my joys and sorrows to you, for those around me, and for the whole world. Be with us O life-giving Triune God, for we know that nothing in this world has power over us. O Lover of all people, have mercy on us and on the whole world.

LITURGY INTENTIONS

Saturday, May 23, @ 5:00 PM, liturgy is being offered for the souls of Olivia and Harold Smith requested by Smitty and Lou Cabral. May their souls rest in peace.

Sunday, May 24, @ 10:30 AM, liturgy is being offered for the soul of Margaret Abraham Thomas requested by her family. May her soul rest in peace.

**Monday, May 25,
Tuesday, May 26,
Wednesday, May 27,
Thursday, May 28,**

**Saturday, May 30, @ 5:00 PM,
Sunday, May 31, @ 10:30 PM,** liturgy is being offered for the living and deceased members of the Joseph Semaan Dawood and family. (FM) Liturgy is being offered for the soul of Ralph Farhat requested by his family. May his soul rest in peace.

ANNUAL BISHOPS CHARITY APPEAL

Each year the Eparchy of St. Maron of Brooklyn appeals to each parish for the annual Bishops Charity Appeal. The money is divided as follows: 30% for priests' retirement, 25% go towards the seminarian's education and boarding, 15% goes toward our endowment fund, 15% goes to Patriarchal liturgical commission and texts, and 15% goes to Lebanon. Each parish in the eparchy is asked to send an amount based on the size of the parish and the ability to raise this money for these much-needed programs. OLOP Church must raise \$3,500.00. All of you have been very generous in the past and I am confident we will raise the amount requested. Thus far we have collected \$1,478.00 toward that amount. I thank you for your continued generosity for this worthy cause.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2020 GRADUATES

On behalf of the entire community of Our Lady of Purgatory Church, I would like to congratulate our 2020 graduates. I know the celebratory circumstances this year have been cancelled due to the Covid-19 virus. Nonetheless, each of you have made this community and your families very proud. We celebrate with you for your achievements. We ask Almighty God to bless you on your next journey and we assure you of our prayers and good wishes.

God bless the following graduates:

Natalya Chedid- Graduate of Dartmouth High School and continuing her education for Aerospace/Aeronautical Engineering.

Jesselyn David- Graduate of New Bedford High School and continuing her education at UMass Boston for nursing.

Eileen Barakat- Graduate of Cape Cod Technical High School and continuing her education at UMass Amherst majoring in Horticulture and minor in Photography.

Samantha Hakeem- Graduating from The Catholic University of America with a BA in Politics and a double minor in Spanish and History.

Lily Reynolds- Graduate of UMass Dartmouth with a degree in nursing.

Marissa Ann Pontes- Graduate of Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Services and continuing for a Master's degree.

Samuel D. Thomas JD- Graduate of Boston College Law School, Cum Laude. Served as Editor of the Boston College Law Review. He received the Recipient of the Cornelius J. Moynihan Award For Outstanding Editorial Work on a Law School Publication.

WINE AND HOST OFFERINGS

This month of May, the wine and bread offerings are in memory of Joseph M. Thomas, requested by Thomas Hitchings Family. May his soul rest in peace.

Anyone who would like to give an offering in memory of a loved one or for a special intention for the month of October, please see Fr. Vincent. The cost for the month is \$75.00, which covers the cost of the communion bread and wine. Thank you and God bless.

PLEASE REMEMBER THAT ALL LITURGIES WILL BE AVIALABLE THROUGH ZOOM. PLEASE SEE THE SCHEDULE BELOW. I WILL SEND AN INVITATION FOR EACH SERVICE. I WILL ALSO SEND THE TEXT FOR EACH LITURGY SO THAT YOU MAY PARTICIPATE AT HOME.

ALSO PLEASE BE SURE YOU PLACE YOUR PHONE OR COMPUTER ON MUTE ONCE YOU LOG INTO THE SERVICE.

WEEKLY COLLECTION FOR May 16-17, 2020

Sunday Collection	\$ 1,075.00
Memorial Donations	\$ 275 .00
Total:	\$ 1,350.00

THANK YOU FOR YOUR KINDNESS AND GENEROSITY BY SENDING IN YOUR WEELY COLLECTIONS VIA MAIL. THIS HAS BEEN VERY HELPFUL FOR THE CHURCH. GOD BLESS YOU AND YOUR FAMILY.

IN OUR PRAYERS

Fernanda Thomas, Hiam Cheiab, Leo Roderick, Rose John, Theresa John, Laurette BouRamia, Annie Peter, Jeannie Francis, Mariam David, Norma Thomas, Zita Drouin, Lucienne Rodrigues, Ed Da Rocha, Edmond Salameh, and Alice Daher. If anyone is missing from this list please contact the Church office.



Joseph & Marie Kenyon

How empty life is without you. Your Love and Patience has made us into who we are today. Your Guidance has set our path in life. We Miss seeing your face, hearing your voice, seeing your smile and hearing your laugh. We Love you and miss you even more with each passing day

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