



RELIGIOUS FREEDOM WEEKLY
from
Americans for Freedom of Religion

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*"Greater love has no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends."
John 15:13*

Memorial Day: A Catholic Understanding of the Nature and Call of Freedom

As Americans, this Memorial Day we remember those who died in service to our country. But as Catholic Americans, we reflect on the meaning of true freedom - a freedom we as Catholics are called to live to the fullest.

In *The Gospel of Life*, Pope John Paul II shows that when freedom is no longer based on objective truth, it destroys itself. When a person declares himself totally self-governing, autonomous, deciding his own truth, as in a secular state, then people will eventually reject each other, as each person seeks to have his own interests prevail. Such a society does not become more free; it becomes less free as vice, corruption, brutality and oppression inevitably increase.

One reason we human beings are willing to fight and die for freedom is because the need for freedom is imprinted into 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 in us so that we would seek Him, for He is truth. Having found truth, we must live it and to do this we must be free from coercion. Therefore, if attacked, human beings will rightly and necessarily die for true freedom.

This Memorial Day, Catholics rightly honor our fallen brothers and sisters, and we remember our Church, which has defended the dignity and freedom of the human person for 2,000 years. ⁽¹⁾

The Gospel of Life, Pope John Paul II; catholic.org/news; Michael Terheyden(1)

***"There is a certain enthusiasm in liberty that makes human nature rise above itself,
in acts of bravery and heroism." - Alexander Hamilton***

