

GOSPEL MEDITATION - ENCOURAGE DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF SCRIPTURE

July 5, 2026

Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Matthew 11:25-30

This weekend, our nation celebrates the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Unlike most nations, the United States was not founded primarily on a shared ethnicity, language, or culture. Instead, our founders built a political community out of diverse peoples united by a shared vision of liberty. That vision echoes something deep in the Christian mystery revealed in today's Gospel.

Jesus returns to his hometown. The people see only what is familiar: the carpenter, the son of Mary, one of their own. As Mark tells us, **“They took offense at him. Jesus said, ‘A prophet is not without honor except in his native place and among his own kin and in his own house.’”** Their narrow vision blinds them. Jesus has come to inaugurate a new communion that transcends geography, bloodlines, and culture. He has come to unite all people in himself.

At its best, America's national unity reflects this possibility, which fully subsists only in the Catholic Church. Our unity is not based on ancestry or tribe, but on a shared commitment to higher ideals. For this reason, we can love our country with gratitude while situating patriotism within the broader horizon of faith.

Rooted in Christ, we are less vulnerable to the unholy tribalism that threatens civic life and faith. This weekend, let us thank God for our nation and pray that we also live as citizens of Heaven in Jesus Christ.

— *Father John Muir*

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