



## Things to Ponder

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## Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time – July 2, 2017

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Dear Friends and Visitors:

We had been hiking all day in the July heat and were looking forward to dinner and sleep in the next shelter along that section of the Appalachian Trail in Pennsylvania. When we arrived at our destination, a man was waiting with two gallon jugs of water. He said that he lived nearby and knew that there would be thirsty hikers coming to the shelter that night. The little stream, our only source of water, was another half mile down the trail. Some call this trail magic; but I call it the gift of hospitality.

Many are welcoming family and friends to their homes this holiday weekend. Hospitality in the Middle East is not, however, simply a nice gesture; it is necessary for survival. As we celebrate the freedom we enjoy as a nation, we need to be reminded of the image reflected in these words engraved at the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor:

***“Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free...”***  
**(from Emma Lazarus’ “New Colossus”)**

As Christians, we recognize that the stranger we welcome into our homes is Christ. The saving waters of baptism have forever changed our vision of the world. It does not mean that we ignore evil or the dangers that threaten our security; but it demands that we tackle the problems that confront us with an openness to God’s grace — to the possibility of being surprised by whom we discover in our neighbor!

Yours in Christ,

*Father William Foley*

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