

Pretty much every American school kid knows that July 4, 1776 was the day the Declaration of Independence was signed in Philadelphia.

Perhaps less known is that on June 15, 1215 in Runnymede, England the Magna Carta was signed. And last week marked the 800th anniversary of that fateful day.

Prior to the signing of the Magna Carta, English monarchs were somewhat at liberty to act as they saw fit – enormous burdens through taxes and levies were common; as were arbitrary seizures of people, property, and cash by the Crown.

Enter the Magna Carta – the Great Charter of Liberties – that ensured the right to own and inherit property, and protection from excessive taxation. Things we take for granted 800 years later – such as, the consent of the governed, due process, equal protection, and separation of church and state – find their origins in the Magna Carta.

Today is the 12th Sunday in Ordinary Time.

In our reading from Job we hear a portion of God's testimony against Job's complaint. In this pericope, God describes His act of creation – fixing the limits of the seas and oceans, and setting up weather patterns. All the while asking Job: "Who did this?"

The answer, of course, is simple: God did. The laws of nature. The boundaries of Creation. Are all according to God's plan.

The Psalmist speaks of "*the abyss*," and "*the depths*;" "*storm[s]*," winds, and "*waves*," as well as how all of this is "*the work . . . of the LORD*."

And while this may have caused fear, "*distress*," and dire "*straits*," with but a word, God calms the storm and rescues those in danger.

All of this terrifying power of nature remains under God's merciful control. As unreasonable as the universe can often appear, it remains subordinate to the jurisdiction of the Most Holy Trinity.

In the Gospel, the disciples are in boats with Jesus; when "[*a*] violent squall [*comes*] up," and waves begin "*filling up*" the boat ... Jesus stills

the storm with a word, and in His next sentence rebukes His disciples for their lack of Faith.

Indeed, Jesus is the Son of God ... commanding the power of nature with a word. No matter how we might view our circumstances, Jesus remains in control.

Yet are we fully convinced of this? Are we totally committed to living our lives through, with, and in Jesus Christ? When the storms of life beset us ... or perhaps more simply, when we don't get our way ... do we cast aside faithfulness and instead pursue our own whims? Or the way of the world?

Saint Paul reminds us in the Second Letter to the Corinthians that if we have truly died with Christ, we must "*live . . . no longer . . . for [ourselves] but for [Jesus]*" who died and rose for us. We must allow "*the old things . . . [to pass] away*" and embrace the "*new things [that] have come*" to us through grace, mercy, and love.

As we approach this altar to receive the Sacred Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ, let us in Faith step out into the deep. Let us set aside any fears or misgivings ... and place ourselves in the hands of Our Savior. Let us remember that all Creation – ourselves included – is subject to the Laws of God and Reign of God ... and as members of Christ, we are called to be citizens of the Kingdom of God, and reign with Christ in eternity.