



My Dear Parishioners,

Praised be Jesus Christ! Thanks to all who attended our St. John the Baptist Bonfire last week; it was great to bring that ancient tradition here! Each year as the 4<sup>th</sup> of July week approaches, I commend for your reading, Eric Metaxas' 2016 best-seller: [IF YOU CAN KEEP IT](#). It's my favorite book on American Liberty because it defines what Liberty is and makes clear that Liberty works *so long as we keep it*. And to keep liberty is to be about virtue. Apart from virtue, liberty fails quickly.

As Christians, we recognize this duty to "keep" virtue but we know too that we are kept by virtue. Long before we were "good", God was; He loved us first. This is the foundation of faith, our response to Him! How beautiful and important to note this, all that God has done: His providence, His Hand.

Five years ago, Michael Medved wrote a great book about this: [God's Hand on America: Divine Providence in the Modern Era](#). It's a fascinating read of American history and how God has kept us. I commend it to you for your summer reading and share a tidbit of History that some think reveals God's Hand!

Peace,

Fr. Rogers

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It is a fact of American history that three Founding Father Presidents—John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, and James Monroe—died on July 4, the Independence Day anniversary. But was it just a coincidence?

On July 4, 1831, James Monroe, the fifth President, [died at the age of 73](#) at his son-in-law's home in New York City. Monroe had been ill for some time and newspapers had reported on Monroe's illness before his passing. Local and national newspapers were also quick to report after Monroe's death that they thought his July 4 passing was a "remarkable" coincidence, at the least, since Thomas Jefferson and John Adams had both also died on July 4, 1826 – [the 50th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence](#).

The oddness of the events wasn't lost on the *New York Evening Post* in 1831, when the newspaper founded by Alexander Hamilton called it a "coincidence that has no parallel": "Three of the four presidents who have left the scene of their usefulness and glory expired on the anniversary of the national birthday, a day which of all others, had it been permitted them to choose [they] would probably had selected for the termination of their careers," the *Post* reported on July 5, 1831.

The *New York Commercial Advertiser* wrote on July 5, 1831: "It would be difficult to find a parallel in history, three of them have been called away in a good all age, on the same proud anniversary."

And then the Boston *Traveler* wondered about the coincidence on July 8. "Again our national anniversary has been marked by one of those events, which it may be scarcely permitted to ascribe the chance."

Then the Frederick, Maryland *Town Herald* marked Monroe's passing on July 9, 1831 by also noting the "presidential coincidence": "This have three of our revolutionary presidents departed this life on the anniversary of our independence; presenting the most remarkable tissue of coincidences that have marked the history of nations," the newspaper said.

Back in 1826, Daniel Webster's [eulogy for Adams and Jefferson](#) spoke to a point that many people believed: that something other than coincidence was involved.

"The concurrence of their death on the anniversary of Independence has naturally awakened stronger emotions," Webster said. "It cannot but seem striking and extraordinary, that these two should live to see the fiftieth year from the date of that act, that they should complete that year, and that then, on the day which had fast linked forever their own fame with their country's glory, the heavens should open to receive them both at once."

"As their lives themselves were the gifts of Providence, who is not willing to recognize in their happy termination, as well as in their long continuance, proofs that our country and its benefactors are objects of His care?"