

**The Reflection from Pastor Fr. John
Carlos, Holy Cross Church, Harrison, NJ,
July 4, 2021**

ERA OF GOOD FEELINGS

This Sunday, as we celebrate July 4 and mark 245 years since the adoption of the Declaration of Independence, it does not seem as if we are in an era of good feelings – just the opposite. We are in a time in our nation’s history when many Americans seem to take personal offense at individuals whose ideas, beliefs, values, and opinions do not match their own.

Today’s social media has amplified those bad feelings. It has become a way for persons not only to express their views, but to attack and disparage those individuals whom they find offensive. It seems people are all too ready to write off persons they judge to be in the opposing camp.

In this Sunday’s Gospel, we read of people taking offense at Jesus. Jesus comes to his hometown of Nazareth. At first those listening to his words in the synagogue are impressed by his teaching, wisdom, and mighty deeds.

But soon their feelings of admiration fade away as questions and perhaps feelings of envy and suspicion fill their minds. Who was Jesus to be standing before

them? He was no learned rabbi, no recognized prophet, no member of the religious establishment. Because Jesus did not fit their expectations of a prophet “they took offense at him.”

Perhaps this Gospel, coming as it does on July 4, can remind us that while we can disagree with others, and even find their views offensive, we are not to consider them outside of God’s care. Nor are we to deny them the respect and civility they deserve as our fellow Americans.

If we behaved that way, we would not only be acting as true Christians, we would also be contributing some needed good feelings to this period in our nation’s history.

In your service, prayerfully.

Father John Carlos