"If America dies, it will be by suicide"

A good day to you and to each of my esteemed listeners! Welcome to EWTN's Open Line Tuesday edition! Barbara McGuigan here, alive and grateful to be your host each Tuesday and each Saturday on The Good Fight! I pray you had a safe and Happy 4th of July! I woke up to Fr. John Corapi's Independence Day Message! Most prophets in Sacred Scripture were reluctant. After all, fighting sin is a dirty business, especially as a sinner. But not this prophet, Fr. Corapi – he is up to the challenge! Praise God for those courageous souls who call it like it is...while there's still time! Here are the numbers to call:

In North America call 1-800-585-9396

Outside North America call 1-205-271-2985

Our email address is always Openline@ewtn.com

Fr. Corapi began by quoting the words of John Adams, in a letter to his wife Abigail about the Declaration of Independence, which Congress approved on July 2, 1776, and revised and signed on July 4, 1776. This day, he wrote,

> …ought to be commemorated as the day of deliverance, by solemn acts of devotion to God almighty. It ought to be solemnized with pomp and parade, with shows, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires, and illuminations, from one end of this continent to the other, from this time forward forevermore.

Fr. Corapi said:

> Like so many of the Founding Fathers, Adams recognized that the day of deliverance came from the providential hand of almighty God. I am not sure about large numbers of duplicitous politicians and other so-called public servants today, whether elected or appointed.
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> Freedom is a great thing, and we do well to celebrate it on the 4th of July. That being said, it's something rooted in truth, and apart from truth there can be no authentic freedom. "If you continue in my word [truth], you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." (John 8:31-32)
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> An individual, a country, or a world that does not remain rooted in objective truth cannot ultimately live in freedom. If you are serious about your faith, my dear friends, I strongly recommend that you read #1730-1748 [in the Catechism of the Catholic Church] as we approach the wonderful celebration of Independence Day. #1731 says: Freedom is the power, rooted in reason and will, to act or not to act,

> to do this or that, and so to perform deliberate actions on one's own responsibility. By free will one shapes one's own life. Human freedom is a force for growth and maturity in truth and goodness; it attains its perfection when directed toward God, our beatitude [true happiness].

The problem is, as I see it anyway, brothers and sisters, is, as Professor Peter Kreeft says,

> Triangles can never be non-triangular, and rocks are always guaranteed to be rocky, and grass is always grassy, and dogs are always doggy, and cats are always catty, but humans can be inhuman. We alone can fail to achieve our nature. Our nature is a task given to us to achieve, not a fact given to us to simply receive.

In other words, we must desire to grow and mature in truth and goodness, which will only happen when our minds and hearts are directed toward God, our true happiness. As St. Augustine prayed, "Lord, give me the desire to desire." When we lose our goodness, our sense of conscience, our ability to discern right from wrong, we lose our being. To lose the capacity to smell sin, to become desensitized to what is good, true and beautiful, is to "give oneself to evil" and in the process to lose your human essence. And therein lies the reason why all the inhumanities, that pose as "rights" in America today, will ultimately destroy mankind. Humans become inhuman when God is not the object of their actions. When human hearts refuse to be formed according to the Heart of Jesus, we are doomed to failure.

Back to Fr. Corapi who cites #1733 of the Catechism:

> The more one does what is good, the freer one becomes...
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> One of the most common errors of all time is to confuse freedom and license. Today, frequently under the specious pretext freedom, mankind acts in a manner that is really license. We are not morally free to do whatever we choose to do. Only when rooted in truth and acting in objective truth can we hope to be free. No one has the moral right to do evil. No one has the moral right to choose to take an innocent life or to engage in actions that are out of accord with right reason or any objective standards of morality we have ever known.
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> The inevitable consequence of abusing freedom is losing freedom. Soon, if we do not alter our present course, the United States will no longer be the home of the brave and the land of the free. Loss of personal freedoms, one at a time, is already underway. One day we shall awake from our moral slumber and find that we have become slaves.

On the 4th of July, the *Orange County Register* here in Southern California reproduced an address that Abraham Lincoln, as a member of the Illinois House of Representatives gave on January 27, 1838, to the Young Men's Lyceum of Springfield, Illinois. I'd like to give you just a few excerpts. Lincoln spoke of our “fundamental

blessings" as "a legacy bequeathed us, by a once hardy, brave, and patriotic, but now lamented and departed race of ancestors." He asked how his generation could pass those blessings along to succeeding generations, and what dangers might prevent them from doing so.

Lincoln said America could die not from outside forces but only from within, from national suicide. He decried the lawless mob violence that prevailed in some parts of the USA at that time, and he said Americans must defeat that deadly and destructive spirit by fostering respect for law. He said:

> As the patriots of seventy-six did to the support of the Declaration of Independence, so to the support of the Constitution and Laws, let every American pledge his life, his property, and his sacred honor; – let every man remember that to violate the law, is to trample on the blood of his father, and to tear the character of his own, and his children's liberty

To sum up the thoughts of a great man, Abraham Lincoln: if America dies, it will be by suicide. It will come from within. To sum up the thoughts of another great man, Fr. John Corapi: We must live in truth and act in truth if we are to remain free. Abuse it and we shall lose it! Wake up, America! God is not a disinterested spectator. Let's thank God for our freedom, but let's not sit by idly while the forces of darkness divorce freedom from truth. For, as Jesus says, "The man who sins is the slave of sin." (John 8:34).

My brothers and sisters, I welcome your thoughts and ideas. Are you concerned about America gradually losing freedom and respect for truth? What do you think should be done to stop the destruction? Do you have a pressing need or problem you might want to discuss? Here are the numbers to call: 1-800-585-9396 and 1-205-271-2985.

Closing: A thousand thanks for your calls and emails. It is a grace to know you!

St. Maximilian Kolbe, the Franciscan priest in the Nazi death camp of Auschwitz who gave up his life in August 1941 so a fellow prisoner could live, said:

> No one in the world can change Truth. What we can do and and should do is to seek truth and to serve it when we have found it. The real conflict is the inner conflict. Beyond armies of occupation and the hetacombs of extermination camps, there are two irreconcilable enemies in the depth of every soul: good and evil, sin and love. And what use are the victories on the battlefield if we ourselves are defeated in our innermost personal selves?

Until next week on Open Line, Blessed be God and may He mightily bless you!
Bye for now...