

Column071121

Companions on the Journey

July 11, 2021

Dear Friends,

There was not enough room to include all this last week so I am including it here. Awhile back I came across someone's research about some of the important figures of the Revolution and the Declaration of Independence. It was about the actual age of some of the key players in the Congress and in the War. How old were they: As of July 4, 1776 when the Declaration of Independence was promulgated below are some names and how old that person was on that First Independence Day.

Dolly Madison	8 (future wife of President James Madison))
Nathan Hale	21 (hanged as a spy/ "I regret I have but one life to give for my country.")
Alexander Hamilton	21 (Father of the US Treasury/ten dollar bill)
Betsy Ross	24 (first American flag maker)
James Madison	25 (signer of Declaration/Fourth US President)
John Paul Jones	28 (US Naval Sea Captain/Hero)
John Barry	31 (Father of US Navy/buried at Old St. Mary's in Phila.)
Thomas Jefferson	34 (writer of Declaration/Third US President died 7/4/26)
Ethan Allen	38 (Revolutionary War General and Hero)
Thomas Payne	39 (Famous wordsmith and pamphleteer for Independence)
Patrick Henry	40 ("Give me liberty or give me death.")
John Adams	40 (Signer of Declaration/Second US President died 7/4/26)
Paul Revere	41 (The midnight ride/"One if by land, two if by sea.")
George Washington	44 (Victorious General/First President of the USA)
Samuel Adams	53 (Founding Father of American Revolution)
Ben Franklin	70 (Inventor/Statesman/Publisher)

I was struck by how many were in their twenties and thirties. If you remove Sam Adams and Ben Franklin, the oldest is George Washington and he was just 44 on that date. The Revolution that began America was a young person's event. There was wisdom but it was not the wisdom developed over a lifetime but rather a more pragmatic wisdom born of putting one's life and that of one's family on the line. I believe that all these figures and many more were open vessels in the hands of the Lord to create something new on the face of the earth, an enterprise of true and lasting freedom. But there is nothing automatic or guaranteed. Each generation of Americans must grasp the truth of the founding American Enterprise and make the decisions and carry out the task of living the truth in freedom. There is no other way for America to continue.

In the Peace of Christ,
Msgr. McHenry