

Prayer before Congress

By the time you read this pastor's notes, if all things have gone according to plan, I will have opened the House of Representatives of the United States Congress with a prayer! Rep. Chuck Fleischmann, the Representative for the 3rd Congressional District of Tennessee - and coincidentally, a parishioner of the Basilica (when he is in town) invited me to serve as the guest chaplain on Wednesday, June 12th. The prayer prayed upon this occasion will form a part of the official Congressional record of the U. S. Congress. I thought I would share that prayer with you all to form a part of our own record in our "bulletin archives." :-)

Prayer before Congress

Capitol Building

Washington, D. C.

June 12, 2019

Very Reverend J. David Carter, JCL

Almighty God and Father of all the nations, as we stand in this great chamber of worldly power, we humbly acknowledge that the dome of this Capitol stands beneath the dome of the heavens, which You created, and which You continue to rule in truth and justice. We are grateful for the many gifts of your Providence that You shower down upon our people from on high. We also humbly acknowledge that all our actions take place in view of Your sovereign omniscience. "For there is nothing hidden that will not become visible, and nothing secret that will not be known and come to light." (Luke 8:17) Therefore, we invoke this day Your blessing upon those who labor beneath this dome and who have been entrusted with the sacred duty of governing our nation.

Banish from our hearts all temptations to greed and envy. Move our hearts to the virtues that will bring lasting happiness. Keep us steadfast in the pursuit of the common good. Make us ever mindful of the shortness of our days, and make us always desirous of standing before You with integrity. Invoking Your mercy upon our failings and your grace upon the work of our hands, we ask this through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

Ministry Highlight: *Catholic Motherhood*

I would like to take the opportunity to highlight a very important, fruitful, and flourishing ministry here at the Basilica of Sts. Peter and Paul. Since before I came as Pastor, a group of mothers under the leadership of Rachel Wesson have been meeting regularly to share the faith and a moment of togetherness. They have done so very faithfully for all of these years, and many young mothers have joined. They have lived out the Gospel ideal of charity and solidarity, especially by reaching out to mothers with newborn infants by providing meals and assistance, knowing that they themselves have been the beneficiary (or wanted to be a beneficiary) in a time of need. It is beautiful to see this group that exemplifies faith in action in our parish, and they are so often "unsung heroes" whose heroic service is unseen by many. I wanted to highlight this good and say that they are *exemplars* for what it means to be a community of faith.

The most important work that they do is on the spiritual level, when they pray. They have a prayer chain that broadcasts prayer intentions, not only for people and events in our own parish, but for special needs far and wide. There is always a book they are studying to deepen their life of faith, and of course they recently did the "Mommipotent" program, which was very well attended. They also provide for one another a great outlet for social time and genuine Christian friendship and fellowship. They have stepped up staffing the nursery and don't ask anything from the parish to do so. I am especially grateful for Rachel Wesson and her zeal, perseverance, and attention to this much-needed ministry.

