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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m.

The Reverend David F. Dzermejko, Mary, Mother of the Church, Charleroi, PA, offered the following prayer:

God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and Father of the Lord Jesus, in the elective leadership of our office, we gather as members of this magnificent assembly of Representatives, filled with the desire to serve all our people, irrespective of their color, creed, or social class, and at this moment we seek Your divine presence in our midst.

In this 221st year of our independence, so beautifully commemorated at the beginning of this month, we once more pledge ourselves to You as did the founding generation of our mighty Nation, and look for Your guiding spirit to give us wisdom beyond our years, justice beyond our geographic boundaries, and truth beyond our political affiliation.

We pray that the legislative decisions we make this day will reflect the glory of Your kingdom where one day we shall together share life forever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. MASCARA] come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. MASCARA led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Lundregan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate had passed without amendment bills of the House of the following titles:

H.R. 709. An act to reauthorize and amend the National Geologic Mapping Act of 1992, and for other purposes; and

H.R. 1226. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to prevent the unauthorized inspection of tax returns or tax return information.

The message also announced that the Senate had passed with an amendment in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 2158. An act making appropriations for the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and for sundry independent agencies, commissions, corporations, and offices for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1998, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the Senate insists upon its amendment to the bill (H.R. 2158) ''An Act making appropriations for the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and for sundry independent agencies, commissions, corporations, and offices for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1998, and for other purposes,'' requests a conference with the House on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon, and appoints Mr. BOND, Mr. BURNS, Mr. STEVENS, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. CAMPBELL, Mr. CRAIG, Mr. COCHRAN, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. HARKIN, Mrs. BOXER, and Mr. BYRD, to be the conferees on the part of the Senate.

The message also announced that the Senate had passed concurrent resolutions of the following titles, in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. Con. Res. 40. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of the Congress regarding the OAS–CIAV Mission in Nicaragua; and

S. Con. Res. 41. Concurrent resolution calling for a United States initiative seeking a just and peaceful resolution of the situation on Cyprus.

WELCOMING FATHER DAVID DZERMEJKO, GUEST CHAPLAIN

(Mr. MASCARA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous material.)

Mr. MASCARA. Mr. Speaker, I would like to welcome Father David F. Dzermejko, my pastor and today's guest chaplain, to our Nation's Capital.

Father David, along with Father John Marcucci, are the dedicated and hard-working spiritual leaders of Mary, Mother of the Church, my parish back in Charleroi, PA.

I would like to thank Dr. Ford, the House Chaplain, for his kindness and assistance in extending an invitation to Father David to give the opening prayer at this session of the U.S. House of Representatives. I am sure his message will help guide us through our journey today as we do legislative work.

I know Father David joins me in sending greetings and best wishes to Father John and the entire parish family at Mary, Mother of the Church.

While many of us on Capitol Hill talk about family values, I can say without hesitation and qualification that our parish family could serve as a national model for family values. The church has certainly served as an inspiration to my wife Dolores, me, and my entire family.

Hopefully Father David will enjoy his stay in Washington, DC. I assure everyone back home that I will take excellent care of the good Father.

Father David, again welcome and thanks for joining me in this morning's opening session. It is truly an honor to have you with us today.

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