

CONGRATULATING BISHOP JOHN J. MYERS ON BEING NAMED ARCHBISHOP OF NEWARK, NEW JERSEY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ADERHOLT). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my congratulations to a friend of many in central Illinois, a personal friend of mine, John J. Myers, His Eminence John J. Myers, the bishop of Peoria, who a week ago today was named the new archbishop of the diocese of Newark, New Jersey. I can tell the folks who reside in the diocese of Newark, you are in for a real treat.

Bishop Myers, who has served for 11 years as the bishop of the Peoria diocese, was born on the prairie in Earlville, Illinois, a very small farming community. He comes from a very large family. He went to Loras College in Dubuque, Iowa, and was trained and studied in Rome. At the point that the hierarchy of the church made the decision to send Bishop Myers to Rome for his training, I think everyone realized that he was on a glide path to become one of the real leaders of the Catholic Church not only in central Illinois but in America.

He has served with great distinction in the Peoria diocese, which is made up of 26 counties in central Illinois, for the last 11 years. Bishop Myers' most notable accomplishment during the 11 years that he served as bishop of Peoria is the fact that he has ordained over 100 priests into the Peoria diocese, an extraordinary record for a bishop in the United States.

He will succeed Cardinal McCarrick. Cardinal McCarrick was recently named the cardinal for the archdiocese of Washington, D.C. He has some big shoes to fill, but I know that Bishop Myers is up to the test and the task of succeeding Cardinal McCarrick in the archdiocese of Newark, New Jersey.

Bishop Myers is a personal friend of mine. He and I became acquainted in the late 1960s when both he and I were teachers at Holy Family School in Peoria. That was his first assignment, right out of seminary and his first assignment as a priest. I was teaching junior high social studies at Holy Family School, and he and I became very, very good friends. Our friendship has endured for these many decades, since the late 1960s. He baptized two of our four children and was present at the wedding of our daughter Amy 2 years ago.

Bishop Myers is a leader in the church. That is why he has ascended to such an important position as the archdiocese of Newark. He has made many, many profound proclamations and statements and written extensively on the teachings of the church.

The recent articles that have appeared in the local newspapers and in national newspapers will point out very important information, but most significantly the feelings of many of the parishioners, many of the people who live in the Peoria diocese, about their strong feelings for what a holy, religious, intelligent, smart and one of the real leaders of our church Bishop Myers is as demonstrated by the people that he has served so ably during the 11 years as bishop of Peoria.

I worked with Bishop Myers on the consolidation of two very well known high schools in the Peoria area, one 125 years old and one 25 years old. It was a very controversial matter that he and I worked on. I was the president of the local Catholic school board there and he was the coadjutor bishop of Peoria. These were very, very difficult times, but we made the right decision with respect to consolidating those two schools. Like many of the decisions that Bishop Myers has made, he selected a campus that was perhaps not as appealing to some of the people of the Peoria area but it turns out that this high school, now known as Notre Dame High School, is one of the finest high schools in Illinois and certainly one of the finest Catholic high schools in central Illinois.

I know that there was a significant article in the Peoria Journal Star, the local newspaper in Peoria, where the bishop lives, sort of the center and the heart of our diocese yesterday where many people were complimenting him and pointing out some of the significant decisions that he has made as the leader of our diocese.

And so it is with great joy and great honor that I stand here in the House of Representatives and let all Americans know and certainly let Members of the House know, Mr. Speaker, that we are all proud of Bishop Myers, we wish him Godspeed, and look forward to his leadership of the archdiocese of Newark.

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE, AN EXAMPLE FOR OUR TIME

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. PENCE) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember a man who changed his world, and ours, forever, a man whom historians have called "the George Washington of humanity."

Mr. Speaker, yesterday marked the 168th anniversary of the death of William Wilberforce, a member of Parliament in Great Britain who spent his life working to abolish the slave trade in the British empire.

William Wilberforce was the son of a wealthy merchant in Hull, England, born in 1759. At the age of 20 after graduating from St. John's College, Cam-

bridge, Wilberforce won a seat in the House of Commons.

Mr. Speaker, the young member of Parliament quickly became a rising star in British government. He was a close friend of the Prime Minister, William Pitt, and many thought that young Wilberforce might succeed Pitt as Prime Minister one day. But in 1784, Wilberforce's priorities were dramatically realigned. After meeting the great Christian hymn writer and theologian John Newton, Wilberforce underwent what he described later as the "great change."

William Wilberforce's conversion to Christianity was much like that of the Apostle Paul. According to biographers, previously the young parliamentarian had "ridiculed evangelicals mercilessly." Wilberforce himself wrote of his first years in the Parliament saying, "I did nothing, nothing that is to any purpose. My own distinction was my darling object."

With his conversion, however, Wilberforce found a greater purpose in life than personal advancement. He joined a group of like-minded Anglican members of the Parliament known as the Clapham Sect. Wilberforce would write that "God Almighty has set before me two great objects, the suppression of the slave trade and the reformation of manners."

Mr. Speaker, Wilberforce spent the rest of his life fighting against all odds to abolish the slave trade in the British empire. Slavery was so ingrained in Great Britain's imperial culture and so integral to the empire's economy that the first time Wilberforce presented a bill to abolish it in 1791, it was crushed 163-88.

The truth is, Mr. Speaker, that 1 month after Wilberforce's death on July 29, 1833, after fighting unrelentingly for abolition over the previous 42 years, Parliament passed the slavery abolition act, freeing all slaves in the British empire and setting a tone for freedom of humankind across the world.

William Wilberforce has served as an example for me, Mr. Speaker, and I commend him to all Members of Congress concerned with changing our times for the better. As biographer Douglas Holladay said, Wilberforce's life was animated by his deeply held personal faith, by a sense of calling, by banding together with like-minded friends, by a fundamental belief in the power of ideas and moral beliefs to change the culture through public persuasion.

This week, Mr. Speaker, as we debate in this Chamber the very value and the dignity of human life in the cloning debate, as our President mulls over the very value and dignity of nascent human life in the difficult decision this President faces in funding research of human embryos, let us reflect on this anniversary of the passing of the great