



## **Most Reverend Raymond J. Boland**

**Bishop Emeritus**

**Diocese Kansas City ~ St. Joseph**

### **Fifth Annual Theological Conference - The Catholic Church in the 21st Century**

We Hold These Truths

Catholicism and American Public Life Invocation

Saturday, June 16, 2007

Rockhurst High School ~ Kansas City, Missouri

God, our Father,

In your loving providence we have inherited the sacred responsibility for the welfare of our nation which, over two centuries ago, was generated in conflict and forged together into a union of participating states.

It is a challenge which constantly depends upon the enlightening wisdom of your Spirit and the courage to be faithful to the liberating message for which your Son lived and died. From the beginning our Founding Fathers in giving voice to their ideals proclaimed that all men are created equal and that you, our Creator, endowed them "with certain unalienable Rights" which include the right to "Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness....." (Declaration of Independence , July 4, 17 76 )

With political independence attained the people of our infant republic further pledged themselves "to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty" (Preamble to the Constitution, adopted 1787, ratified 1788) to themselves and their posterity.

These noble aspirations, when achieved in their fullness, are not incompatible with your Son's teachings which sustain the very fiber of our faith. He came among us that we may have life and have it more abundantly. He called us to a justice devoid of prejudice and greed. He postulated a freedom capable of nourishing the human potential and respecting the dignity of every man and woman fashioned by the divine gift of creativity. He bequeathed to us the awesome task of constructing a society where peace and justice become the preface to our eternal destiny.

We ask you, Lord, to call from our midst men and women of sterling integrity to be servant leaders of our nation at all levels of our political milieu. Help them and help us to form our consciences so that in supporting them we may always expect and demand that principle should take precedence over popularity, that their decisions be crafted to benefit the common good and that our quality of life should be judged by the priority we give to addressing the needs of the weakest and most vulnerable in our society.

Lord, make it possible for us to be less unworthy of the many blessings you have showered upon us. Help us to be better stewards of your benevolence by inspiring us to be good citizens sustained and fortified by the life-giving nourishment of your gospel.

AMEN