

*Remarks for the
James Ivory Homeless Persons' Memorial Day
December 23, 2002*

Good morning. I love this time of the year – not because of the material aspect of the holiday season, but because of how it calls us to be better people, to live up to the call to serve one another.

This call comes to us from Jesus, in the 22nd chapter of Matthew. He is asked, which is the greatest commandment? And his word to us is this: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself.”

Wednesday we celebrate the birth of Jesus. It's not too early to celebrate by answering his call to love the Lord, and to love our neighbor.

Every man, every woman, every child we see on the street is our neighbor. Each of us in this room is a neighbor to the other. It's up to us to treat each other like neighbors – not just this day, but every day of the year. It's up to us to look out for each other – to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to provide shelter.

It's a blessing for me to be with you here today. As governor, I have responsibilities to the people of this state, responsibilities that often present obstacles and challenges along the way to their fulfillment.

As a man, I have a responsibility to my neighbor – to love him or her as myself. That’s a humbling responsibility, and one I take very seriously.

Today we’re here to recognize the James Ivory Homeless Persons’ Memorial Day. I have a proclamation I want to share with you.

(read proclamation)

Merry Christmas.