

*Remarks for the
National Day of Prayer and Remembrance
Prayer Service
September 14, 2001*

God understands our prayers even when we can't find the words to say them.

President Bush has proclaimed today as a National Day of Prayer and Remembrance.

Across our country and around the world, as they have been doing since Tuesday morning, people are stopping to reflect on the tragedies that have shaken our souls.

Our world changed Tuesday. The normal pace of our lives was disrupted, and it will take time for us to return to a true sense of normalcy.

We watched the horror unfold Tuesday morning, and continue to follow the rescue operations and investigations into these attacks on our nation and our people.

And, in the midst of our sadness, we are seeing our nation drawn together as never before.

Even as our heads are bowed, we are standing taller as a nation. The response of citizens in America and around the world is evidence of our belief in a tomorrow of hope.

The images of this week have taken us across a range of emotions. We've watched in disbelief as the attacks took place, and with pride as people lined up for hours to donate blood.

We've watched with sorrow as the names
and faces of those who died became known,
and with awe as the stories of heroism
unfold.

We've watched as nations around the world
have collectively shared in our grief, and the
symbols of their caring cannot be forgotten.

In London, the military band at Buckingham
Palace played our national anthem. In
Quebec, an Episcopal cathedral replaced the
Canadian flag with the American flag at
half-staff.

In places around the world, citizens are sharing our grief and holding us close.

Today, on the steps of this building that represents the ideals of our nation, we are gathering to pray and remember those people and those ideals that draw us together. We are joined by religious leaders from around the community, and I invite them now to offer prayer and reflection on this time.

(Individual ministers speak)

We live in the greatest nation on earth, a nation built on principles of freedom and tolerance. We cannot and will not allow those principles to be undermined.

May God bless our people and our nation.