

*Remarks for the
Verdi "Requiem"
March 24, 2002*

Good afternoon. A little over six months ago, our lives and our world were forever changed. We lost some of our innocence, some of our joy, and some of our hope.

Today, in the music of Verdi, we look to recover it. We hope to find solace and strength in the sounds of the instruments and the voices.

We gather to remember and to celebrate.

Today has been formally declared a day of remembrance – a “Mississippi Memorium” – as we remember the thousands lost on September 11. In particular, we remember Lieutenant Jerry Don Dickerson, Jr., and Joe Ferguson – two Mississippians, two men who will never be forgotten.

Some of their family members are here today. Our thoughts and prayers continue with them.

God understands our prayers even when we can't find the words to say them. Over 125 years ago, he inspired Verdi to find the words – and the music – for our prayers today.

Thank you for being here today. May God bless our state and our nation.