

Invocation

2004 Association of Fundraising Professionals
National Philanthropy Day Awards Breakfast
Florida Mall Hotel
Orlando, Florida
November 8, 2004

By David A. Odahowski, President
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Good Morning.

The message of this year's Philanthropy Day celebration is "*change the world with a giving heart.*" This same message – *change the world with a giving heart*, describes the mores, values, and history of American philanthropy and its impact down our streets, across this country, and around the world.

American philanthropy and volunteerism are grounded in our religious heritage and freedom. Our "habits of the heart" may be expressed in the Bible, the Old Testament, the Koran, the Ten Commandants, or the Torah, but the universal message expressed by all is service beyond self is not only an obligation but a joy. Of all the virtues, the greatest is charity.

Now let us bow our heads and each in his or her own tradition, pray for this great county and its freedoms that allow us to give voice to our hearts.

Dear Lord, let us pray for the men and women who have volunteered to protect and defend this country internationally and domestically. Let us pray for the end of terrorism and conflicts across the world. Let us pray for our elected public officials to work in a bi-partisan way to promote the common good. Let us pray for the donors and volunteers in this room and across our community who give not from surplus, but from sacrifice.

Now let us celebrate these good works, bless this food, and thank you, Lord, for giving us the grace to change the world with a giving heart.

Amen.