

(Invocation delivered by the Reverend Theodore M. Hesburgh, C.S.C., President, University of Notre Dame, at the National Academy of Sciences Centennial, Constitution Hall, Washington, D. C., October 22, 1963)

Lord God, Creator of all that is, and has been and will be, we thank Thee this day for the blessings that have prospered the first hundred years of the National Academy of Sciences.

Much has happened during this century as the members of this Academy, true to their dedication, have widened our knowledge of the Universe that Thou hast made, from the inner constellations of the atom to the outer reaches of galactic space. We pause this day to contemplate Thy awesome primeval command, "Let there be light". This might well be the Academy's motto, as it begins another century of search for the wondrous truth that yet lies undiscovered to us in the microcosmic and macrocosmic depths of reality. In discovering the splendor of this truth, in all its beauty, and order, and power and symmetry, may we ever more discover Thee and may we serve Thy more wondrous pattern for all of us.

If our science were to have one heartfelt prayer in our times, might it be this: that science might become in our day the great liberator, a force for peace in the hands of the scientist, not a scourge for mankind, a demonic destructive power. Lord, Thou hast in the beginning instructed

man to establish dominion over the earth. Through science, man has today the possibility and opportunity of dominion, the power of liberating himself at long last from his ancient enemies of hunger and thirst, grinding poverty and hopelessness, illness and premature death, homelessness and ignorance and unfounded fears and superstitions. Grant us the wisdom, O Lord, so to dominate ourselves that we may be liberators and not destroyers, creating harbingers of hope not specters of the ultimate destruction.

Grant us, O Lord, the understanding to work together, across all the boundaries of nation, culture, and creed, so that we may truly unite the world in hope rather than separate men by an abyss of fear.

Grant us, O Lord, deep reverence for all that is and, especially, for what exists beyond the pale of science: the inner dignity of man that science is to serve, not abuse.

And, finally, deliver us, O Lord, from all arrogance because for all our power, we still need Thee and each other; for all we know, there is yet a vast universe of things unknown; for all our deepest yearnings in time, there is still a deeper hunger for the unending fullness of eternity, when darkness will truly become light, when life will be freed of its finite chains, when in possessing Thee, we will truly possess together,

in knowledge and love, the whole universe that we now see in a glass,
darkly.

Bless this day, O Lord we pray. Bless us and bless our hopes
and grant us peace in our times.