

TELEPHONE MESSAGE  
SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

FATHER HESBURGH DINNER  
October 3, 1977

I am sorry that Mrs. Humphrey and I cannot be with you in person tonight as we honor our friend Father Hesburgh. No one is more deserving of our recognition than this great humanitarian, inspiring moral force and gifted leader of American higher education. Father Hesburgh is an example to us all -- a man of excellence and a man of God.

Having said this, I am humbled by the kind remarks that Father Hesburgh has just made. Certainly I would never challenge or dispute the absolute truth of everything said by a man of the cloth. Seriously, I am very grateful to Father Hesburgh for his warm friendship.

But, the man we are honoring here tonight is Father Hesburgh. And what a distinction it is to have the admiration and respect of the distinguished leaders of our nation that are here tonight as your friends. That alone is a unique testimonial to the value and contribution of this man. I know I speak for all of us in saying that to know you has enriched our lives. To work with you is to experience a renewal of spirit.

Father Hesburgh has given so much to his country and to mankind. He has been an inspiration to all of us during a time when cynicism, suspicion, doubt and despair seem to claim so many of our fellow human beings.

Father Hesburgh has used his talent, energy and position to do the work of the Lord as he sees it. He has always strived to make our country and the world a little better for his existence. As a result, his life has been one of constant compassionate caring for people.

Father Hesburgh has tirelessly worked for the social, economic and moral rehabilitation of prisoners, for the full civil rights of those who have been the object of discrimination, for a system of higher education that focuses on values as well as technical skill, and for the guarantee to every person of his or her fundamental human rights without the fear of repression. He has made his mark at Notre Dame, in Washington, and wherever he has brought the great force of his ideas.

Yes, Father Hesburgh deserves our admiration for his achievements as President of one of our greatest universities for 25 years. He deserves our praise for his great work as Chairman of the Civil Rights Commission. And, he deserves our gratitude for helping to give the cause of universal human rights the priority in world affairs that it must have.

But, above all of this, Father Hesburgh is our model and our friend because with all of the acclaim, all the achievements, he has remained a humble man, a loving man, a good priest and servant of God.

I am proud to know you, proud to work with you and proud to call you my friend.

It is a great pleasure for me to introduce the Vice President of the United States Walter Mondale for remarks and a presentation to Father Hesburgh.



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