



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on July 19, 2019

## Chaplain Casts “Dark Spirits” out of U.S. House Chamber

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As contention and conflict have been ramping up in the House of Representatives to a seemingly out-of-control level, at least one interested observer has had enough. On July 18 the Rev. Patrick Conroy, a Jesuit priest and the official chaplain of the House, opened up the day’s session by taking his authority as the spiritual advisor to the members of Congress, and casting the “dark spirits” at work in the congressional chambers.

In a short two-minute prayer Conroy noted that it has so far been “a difficult and contentious week in which darker spirits seem to have been at play in the people’s house. In Your most Holy Name,” he continued, “I now cast out all spirits of darkness from this chamber — spirits not from You.”

The bold priest continued by casting out “the spirit of discouragement which deadens the hope of those who are of goodwill. I cast out the spirit of petty divisiveness, which clouds the sense and desires to be of fruitful productivity in addressing the issues more appropriately before this House. I cast out any sadness brought on by the frustration of dealing with matters detrimental to the honorable work each member has been called to engage in.”

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He then beseeched God to pour out “Your sacred oil as You did upon Aaron of old. Anoint Your servants here in the House with a healing balm to comfort and renew the souls of all in this assembly. May Your Spirit of wisdom and patience be sent upon all, so that any spirit of darkness might have no place in our midst. Rather, let Your Spirit of comity, of brother and sisterhood, and love of our nation, and of all colleagues in this chamber, empower our better angels to be at play in the common work to be done for the benefit of all of Your people.”

Father Conroy concluded his short, but pointed prayer: “May all that is done within the People’s House be for Your greater honor and glory. Amen.”

CNN reported that “the idea for the prayer came to him, the chaplain said, after Tuesday’s [July 16] contentious House vote to condemn as racist President Donald Trump’s tweets telling four Democrat congresswomen to ‘go back’ to their home countries.”

The priest told CNN that “I was on the House floor on Tuesday and to me it felt different than other days. It felt like there was something going on beyond just political disagreement. The energy of the House was very off. No one was relishing what was happening.”



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Conroy added that “if you are a person of faith, ultimately everything in our lives, our communities and our culture is a battle between darker spirits and our better angels.” He insisted that “I wasn’t picking sides” with the prayer. “That’s ultimately the goal every day. I want every member of the House to be able to say ‘amen.’”

Democrat Missouri Congressman Emanuel Cleaver recalled to Fox News after the prayer that the previous day, “Father Patrick and I sat together earlier in the day of all of the chaos and confusion during the resolution concerning President Trump. And he said to me — leaned over and said, ‘You know, I feel a presence in here, an evil presence.’ He said it’s not a Democrat or a Republican. He said there’s something else going on here. He said, ‘I’m going to have to pray tomorrow to ask God to cleanse this place.’”

Cleaver, who is an ordained Methodist minister, said that “it’s hard to argue with Father Patrick. Because there is a mess going on here, and the tragedy is that I think there are many Americans who think it’s okay.” He added that he is concerned America’s adversaries would use the deep division to their advantage against the nation.

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