
Poem appropriate for inauguration

I was among the hundreds or thousands or maybe millions who were familiar with the words the Rev. Joseph Lowery reverently spoke at President Obama's inauguration: "God of our weary years, God of our silent tears, Thou who hast brought us thus far on the way; Thou who hast by thy night, led us into the light, keep us forever in the path we pray."

Those inspiring words came from James Weldon Johnson's poem "Lift Every Voice and Sing." His brother, J. Rosamond Johnson, added music to the poem.

"Lift Every Voice and Sing" was first sung in Jacksonville, Fla., at a special celebration more than 100 years ago. An all-black chorus of schoolchildren sang the three very long and musically complex verses.

And later, segregated black schools and black churches in the South sang, "Lift Every Voice and Sing" regularly. And when African-Americans migrated from the South to other parts of the country they took "Lift Every Voice and Sing" with them.

I salute Lowery for wisely choosing the words of Johnson's poem because they fittingly reflect President Obama's audacity of hope.

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