

- 1 It is in late October or early November that the State Opening of Parliament takes place. Many people crowd the streets of London to watch the Queen's procession to the Palace of Westminster - the Houses of Parliament. Many others watch on TV, and it was on this day in 1958 that the State Opening of Parliament was televised for the first time.
- 2 The Queen sends her messenger (called "Black Rod") to the House of Commons to summon MPs to join her in the House of Lords. As "Black Rod" approaches the doors to the debating chamber of the House of Commons, the doors are closed on him. With a steel rod he knocks three times. The Commons then invite the Queen's messenger to enter.
- 3 It was over 300 years ago that King Charles I stormed into the House of Commons, seeking to arrest 5 MPs who opposed him. It was the start of the Civil War. Since then no king or queen has ever set foot in the House of Commons. These days, the closing of the door on "Black Rod" is a reminder that Parliament is the supreme authority in the land, and no leader or king or queen is above the laws set by Parliament.
- 4 When the MPs arrive in the House of Lords, the Queen reads out words that have been given to her by the government. The Queen's Speech sets out what the government intends to do in the following months. At the end of the Speech, the Queen says:
*"My Lords
and Members of the House of Commons,
I pray that the blessing of Almighty God
may rest upon your counsels."*

5 *Let us pray:*

**Almighty God,
we pray for all
who are in positions of leadership
in our country,
that they may show
wisdom and understanding.
We pray that they may live
as people of integrity and honesty,
growing in a sense
of duty and responsibility,
always being aware of the needy
and ready to be of service to others.
Amen.**

This is an excerpt from the page of this date in
'Praying Each Day of the Year',
a 3-volume book
by Nicholas Hutchinson, FSC.

For details:

<http://www.matthew-james.co.uk/>

Could make use of a search engine
to research this topic further.

This material is part of
the prayer and education website
of the De La Salle Brothers
in Great Britain:
www.prayingeachday.org