

## Rabbis at the presidential inauguration

Dennis Coday | Jan. 17, 2013 NCR Today

Rachel Gordon has a great story over on [Religion & Politics](#) [1] about rabbis at the presidential inauguration.

When did Americans first hear Hebrew at a presidential inauguration? It was at the swearing-in of John F. Kennedy, the first Catholic president of the United States (a victory that poet Robert Frost called "a triumph of Protestantism over itself"). Kennedy had invited Rabbi Nelson Glueck to pray. As the president of the Reform movement's seminary in Cincinnati, Glueck was a leader of American Jewry, and his archeological scholarship had earned him international renown. ...

Glueck was not the first rabbi to recite a prayer at a presidential inauguration. That honor went to President Truman's old friend Rabbi Samuel Thurman, in 1949. In fact, all of the post-WWII inaugurations from Truman to Kennedy included rabbis' prayers. Glueck's participation, however, was notable for his use of Hebrew; the rabbi recited the priestly blessings in their original language. It is a detail of American religious history that has been largely ignored, but it provides insight into Judaism's position in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

Read the rest of the story here. [When Was the Last Time a Rabbi Prayed at a Presidential Inauguration?](#) [2]

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### Links:

[1] <http://religionandpolitics.org/>

[2] [http://religionandpolitics.org/2013/01/15/when-was-the-last-time-a-rabbi-prayed-at-a-presidential-inauguration/?utm\\_source=rss&utm\\_medium=rss&utm\\_campaign=when-was-the-last-time-a-rabbi-prayed-at-a-presidential-inauguration](http://religionandpolitics.org/2013/01/15/when-was-the-last-time-a-rabbi-prayed-at-a-presidential-inauguration/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=when-was-the-last-time-a-rabbi-prayed-at-a-presidential-inauguration)