

smile, and the glint in his Irish eyes when a story came to mind.

We think of a man advancing in years with the sweetness and sincerity of a Scout saying the Pledge. We think of that grave expression that sometimes came over his face, the seriousness of a man angered by injustice and frightened by nothing. We know, as he always said, that America's best days are ahead of us, but with Ronald Reagan's passing, some very fine days are behind us, and that is worth our tears.

Americans saw death approach Ronald Reagan twice, in a moment of violence and then in the years of departing light. He met both with courage and grace. In these trials, he showed how a man so enchanted by life can be at peace with life's end.

And where does that strength come from? Where is that courage learned? It is the faith of a boy who read the Bible with his mom. It is the faith of a man lying in an operating room who prayed for the one who shot him before he prayed for himself. It is the faith of a man with

a fearful illness who waited on the Lord to call him home.

Now death has done all that death can do. And as Ronald Wilson Reagan goes his way, we are left with the joyful hope he shared. In his last years, he saw through a glass darkly. Now he sees his Savior face to face.

And we look for that fine day when we will see him again, all weariness gone, clear of mind, strong and sure and smiling again, and the sorrow of this parting gone forever.

May God bless Ronald Reagan and the country he loved.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:09 p.m. at the National Cathedral. In his remarks, he referred to Episcopal minister and former Senator John C. Danforth of Missouri. The related proclamation and Executive order of June 6 are listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume. The related proclamation of July 2 is printed in the *Federal Register* at 69 *FR* 41179.

## The President's Radio Address *June 12, 2004*

Good morning. This week, America mourned the passing of President Ronald Reagan. We remembered a gentle, decent man and one of the greatest leaders our Nation has known. He was a courageous patriot whose leadership transformed the country and the world he leaves behind.

In this time of sadness, we think especially of Nancy Reagan, a loyal, loving wife of 52 years, and the President's three children and the rest of the Reagan family.

Ronald Wilson Reagan entered the world more than 93 years ago in an apartment above a local bank in Illinois. His life would include success in careers from sports broadcasting to film acting to public office.

Along the way, his deepest convictions were formed, and through all the trials of life, those convictions never wavered.

Ronald Reagan believed that everything happens for a reason and that we can trust in God's purposes. He believed that people are basically good. He had no tolerance for bigotry or injustice. Above all, he believed in the courage and triumph of free men and in the capacity of the American people to overcome any obstacle.

President Reagan brought those convictions to the White House in 1981, and he departed 8 years later with achievements that have endured. With bold, persistent action, he restored the confidence of our

Nation, strengthened the spirit of free enterprise, challenged and shamed an oppressive empire, and inspired millions with his conviction and moral courage.

As he showed what a President should be, he also showed us what a man should be. Ronald Reagan carried himself with a decency and attention to the small kindnesses that also define a good life. He was a courtly, gentle, and considerate man, never known to slight or embarrass others. From the Oval Office, he took time to answer letters from schoolchildren and grandmothers and countless strangers curious about life in the White House.

Ronald Reagan deeply loved the United States of America, and that love is being returned. Over the past week, tens of thousands of mourners stood in line in California and in Washington, DC, to pay their final respects. There were 21-gun salutes and dignified processions and homemade memorials at a funeral home in Santa Monica.

Now that Nancy Reagan has taken her husband to his place of rest, we offer our gratitude. Our country is stronger and our world is freer for the brave leadership of this modest son of America. Ronald Reagan always told us that for America, our best was yet to come. We know that is true for him too. His work is done, and now a shining city awaits him.

May God bless Ronald Reagan. Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 10:01 a.m. on June 11 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on June 12. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 11 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address. The related proclamation and Executive order of June 6 are listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume. The related proclamation of July 2 is printed in the *Federal Register* at 69 FR 41179.

## Remarks at an 80th Birthday Celebration for President George H.W. Bush in Houston, Texas

June 12, 2004

Thank you all. As you can see, I have been given the high honor to represent my three brothers, my sister, and our respective families at the 80th birthday party for our dad, our Gampy.

You're probably wondering how I got to be the family spokesman. [Laughter] Well, we polled the family, and rumor has it, somewhere in our large family, the tiebreaking vote for tonight's speaker was cast by a fourth cousin by the name of Chad. [Laughter] While holding his son above the crib, Chad's father reports that the lad burped, and it sounded like "George W." [Laughter] Once again, my

life was affected by a dangling Chad. [Laughter]

Yesterday we said farewell to a good man, our 40th President, Ronald Reagan. Today we honor another good man. I want to thank you all for coming to wish our dad a happy birthday.

We thank those who worked so hard to make this event a great success. We thank the entertainers for coming. Right before I came on the stage, I had a chance to say hello to Dennis Miller. He was somewhat disappointed. I said, "Why?" He said, "I thought we were raising money for a thousand pints of light." [Laughter]