

the hungry and clothe the poor and aid the widow and the orphan. By helping our brothers and sisters in need, we find our own faith strengthened and we receive the grace to lead lives of dignity and purpose.

We see this grace in the life of a young American named Shannon Hickey. Shannon was one of Laura's guests at the State of the Union. When Shannon was growing up, her favorite priest was Father Mychal Judge, a chaplain with the New York City Fire Department. Father Mychal helped Shannon and her family through Shannon's struggle with liver disease. On September the 11th, 2001, Father Mychal lost his life in the World Trade Center. In memory of her friend, Shannon founded Mychal's Message, a nonprofit organization dedicated to sharing Father Mychal's loving spirit. Over the last 5 years, Mychal's Message has collected and distributed more than 100,000 needed items to the poor and the homeless. With each gift to the needy, Shannon encloses a card with Father Mychal's personal prayer. It reads: "Lord, take me where you want me to go, let

me meet who you want me to meet, tell me what you want me to say, and keep me out of your way." [Laughter]

Father Mychal's humble prayer reminds us of an eternal truth: In the quiet of prayer, we leave behind our own cares, and we take up the cares of the Almighty. And in answering His call to service, we find that, in the words of Isaiah: "We will gain new strength. We will run and not get tired. We will walk and not become weary."

And so I thank you for joining us on this day of prayer. I thank you for the tradition you continue here today. And I ask for God's blessings on the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:45 a.m. at the Hilton Washington Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Rep. Emanuel Cleaver II of Missouri; Prime Minister Said Musa of Belize; Francis S. Collins, director, National Human Genome Research Institute; Rev. Dan Mucci, Jr., senior pastor, Abundant Life Church, Glen Burnie, MD, and his wife Kathy; and entertainer Nicole C. Mullen.

## Remarks Prior to a Meeting on Childhood Obesity *February 1, 2007*

*The President.* Laura and I are so pleased to welcome the Ad Council, as well as leaders from our business community, to talk about a serious American problem, and that is childhood obesity.

Childhood obesity is a costly problem for the country. It puts stress on American families. And we believe it is necessary to come up with a coherent strategy to help folks all throughout our society cope with the issue. And I appreciate the Secretary being here. Thanks for coming, Mr. Secretary.

We'll discuss—one of the strategies is to have the Ad Council put on an interesting series of ads encouraging children to exer-

cise. One way for this Nation to cope with the issue of obesity is to get people outside, whether it be through sports or hiking or conservation. So we'll encourage them to do that, encourage parents to encourage their children to participate in the great outdoors. We'll also talk about healthy diet choices here.

And so I want to thank you all for coming. It's a serious issue that we take seriously here at the Government.

Laura is off to New York to kick off the program to help deal with heart disease here. And you might want to say a few words.

[At this point, the First Lady made brief remarks.]

*The President.* Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:20 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In

his remarks, he referred to Secretary of Health and Human Services Michael O. Leavitt. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

## Statement on Senate Passage of Minimum Wage and Tax Relief Legislation February 1, 2007

Today the Senate has passed significant legislation that will benefit America's workers and small businesses. By working in a bipartisan way to match a minimum wage increase with tax relief for small businesses, the Senate has taken a step toward helping maintain a strong and dynamic labor mar-

ket and promoting continued economic growth. I strongly encourage the House to support this combined minimum wage increase and small-business tax relief.

NOTE: The statement referred to H.R. 2.

## Remarks Honoring the 2006 Stanley Cup Champion Carolina Hurricanes February 2, 2007

*The President.* Thank you all for coming. Have a seat. It's a pretty big deal for a guy that doesn't know how to ice skate—[laughter]—to welcome the Carolina Hurricanes to the White House. We appreciate you coming. You know, I'm not sure what is prettier, the Stanley Cup or Mike Commodore's hair. [Laughter] A little disappointed you got a haircut—[laughter]—but, welcome.

*Mike Commodore.* Thank you.

*The President.* The other thing, I was a little surprised to see that he's not wearing his robe. [Laughter]

At the start of this season, this team was ranked 28th out of 30 teams. I like to be around people that keep expectations low. [Laughter] Instead of listening to the prognosticators, this team had a 112-point season. They had 52 wins. They win the Stanley Cup. They're here at the White House. Congratulations to you.

I congratulate the owners, Peter Karmanos and his son, Jason. I'm sorry that Peter is not here. I understand he had an operation, and we send very best wishes. I thank Jim Rutherford, the president and general manager of the team. The guy has got a lot of—he's a pretty aggressive guy. I just met him, and he said: "I saw Barney outside. You're feeding him too much." [Laughter] Probably right. [Laughter]

I welcome the captain of this team, Rod Brind'Amour, and the players. I welcome their families. If your families are here, I want to thank you very much for enduring a long season. It's pretty hard to be married to a hockey player that's on the road a lot. But I know that you bring inspiration to the players. I appreciate the coach. Peter, you've done a heck of a good job. It's not easy to be a coach of a successful team, and I appreciate the spirit that you brought to this club. Mr. Commissioner,