

*Musician Lauren Jauregui.* Woo! We're so honored to be here to help sing Mrs. Obama's initiative a happy birthday. We think it's really cool that she helps people all over the Nation want to be active and want to be healthy. It's really awesome.

*Musician Normani Hamilton.* And because of this special occasion, we wanted to present you guys a birthday cake.

[At this point, members of Fifth Harmony presented a cake to Mrs. Obama and made brief remarks.]

*The President.* Are we ready to sing?

*Ms. Cabello.* Yes!

*The President.* Let's do it!

*Ms. Cabello.* Are you going to sing with us?

*The President.* Sure.

[Fifth Harmony sang "Happy Birthday."]

*The President.* Yay!

*Ms. Hamilton.* Happy Easter!

*The First Lady.* Oh, my God, that was so good! Let's give Fifth Harmony a round of applause. Yay!

*The President.* Yay!

*The First Lady.* Well, you guys, welcome to the Easter Egg Roll. And as you've heard, this is the fifth anniversary of "Let's Move!" And we're celebrating by taking over the Easter Egg Roll with hashtag #GimmeFive. And for those of you who don't know about the Gimme Five challenge, that's the fun, exciting way that we're trying to get the whole country to celebrate the fifth birthday of "Let's Move!" And we're asking Americans of all ages to give me five ways they're leading a healthier life: five jumping jacks, eating five new vegetables, maybe doing a Gimme Five dance. You name

it. And go on and Instagram it, hashtag #GimmeFive, and then challenge somebody else.

We've had so much fun doing this challenge. Beyoncé has done it. Michael Strahan has done it. Everybody's joining. Ryan Seacrest. So be a part of the movement. It's fun. It's a great way to get everybody moving.

So I want to thank you guys for coming. I want to thank all of the staff and all the volunteers. Give it up for our volunteers—

*The President.* Yay!

*The First Lady.* —who worked so hard to put this together.

And I want you to enjoy this day. Take advantage of all of the great activities, the cooking stage we have over there. I'm going to be over at the main stage in a few minutes, and we're going to be doing the Gimme Five dance with the "So You Think You Can Dance" all-stars and mentors. So I hope you guys have been learning the steps, because we're going to do it over there in just a few minutes. So I hope you join me over there.

We're going to turn this backyard into a huge Gimme Five flash mob. Are you ready for that?

*Audience members.* Yeah!

*The First Lady.* All right. Well, with that, we're going to get down there and do some Easter egg rolling. You guys, thank you so much. Have a great time. And Happy Easter! Love you!

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:55 a.m. from the South Portico at the White House. In her remarks, the First Lady referred to musician Beyoncé G. Knowles-Carter; television and radio host Ryan J. Seacrest; and Michael A. Strahan, former defensive end, National Football League's New York Giants.

## Remarks at an Easter Prayer Breakfast April 7, 2015

*Vice President Joe Biden.* Good morning, everyone, and welcome to the White House. Religious leaders, lay faithful, it's an honor: It's an honor to join you in a morning of prayer and

reflection, and it's a delight to have many of you back.

For me, reflection is what Holy Week is all about. And I never fail to get a renewed sense

of hope and possibilities when I attend Mass on Easter Sunday.

I believe Pope Francis got it right in his Easter Vigil homily when he said, and I quote: “We cannot live Easter without entering into mystery. To enter into mystery means the ability to wonder, to contemplate, the ability to listen to the silence and hear the tiny whisper amid the great silence by which God speaks to us.”

I think that’s who we are as Christians, and quite frankly, I think that’s who we are as Americans. We’re constantly renewed as a people and as individuals by our ability to enter into the mystery. We live our faith when we instill in our children the ability to wonder, to contemplate, and to listen to that tiny whisper amid the great silence. We live our faith when we nurture the hope and possibilities that has always defined us as a country. We live Easter—and to live Easter is to live—with the constant notion that we can always do better. We can always do better.

That’s why I’m so grateful for what everyone in this room does to transform hope into possibilities and possibilities into opportunity. And that’s why I’ve been so honored to work every single day for the last 6-plus years with a man who encompasses that faith to his core. A man who knows what it is to enter into the mystery with a deep and unyielding conviction that it’s within each of our reach to make real the promise of the ongoing miracle that is the United States of America.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is my great honor to introduce you to my friend, the President of the United States of America, Barack Obama.

*The President.* Everybody, have a seat. Thank you. Oh, well, we give thanks for this day that the Lord has made. Good morning, everybody.

*Audience members.* Good morning.

*The President.* Welcome to the White House. It is wonderful to see so many friends from all across the country. My first concern was whether you actually got something to eat. [Laughter] Sometimes, prayer breakfasts are advertised—[laughter]—and then, you get there and there’s like a little muffin. [Laughter] A couple berries. [Laughter] And though

your soul may be nourished, you leave hungry. So I hope that is not happening here.

I want to thank everybody here for their prayers, which mean so much to me and Michelle. Particularly at a time when my daughters are starting to grow up—[laughter]—and starting to go on college visits, I need prayer. [Laughter] I start tearing up in the middle of the day, and I can’t explain it. [Laughter] Why am I so sad? [Laughter] They’re leaving me.

And I want to thank everybody here for the wonderful work that you do all across the country with your remarkable ministries.

We hold this Easter Prayer Breakfast every year to take a moment from our hectic lives for some fellowship, friendship, prayer, and reflection. And I know pastors here have had a very busy Holy Week, and so for you to travel here and take the time to spend with us is extraordinary after what I know is difficult. I can’t say that our work during this season is comparable, but you should try dealing with thousands of people in your backyard on an Easter Egg Roll. [Laughter] After that you need quiet reflection, particularly because I had some of my nephews who—6 and 4—in my house all weekend. And you need quiet reflection after that. [Laughter] Girls are different than boys.

This morning we also remember a man of God who we lost this weekend, a man known and loved by many of you, the dean of American preaching: Dr. Gardner C. Taylor. Anybody who had the privilege of hearing him speak knows what power he had. He was a civil rights hero. He was a friend of Dr. King, who used his spellbinding sermons to spread the Gospel and open people’s hearts and minds. He taught and mentored countless young ministers. So as we mourn his absence today, we also take solace knowing that he leaves a living legacy and that he is in a better place.

I am no preacher. I can’t tell anything to this crowd about Easter that you don’t already know. I can offer just a couple of reflections very quickly before we begin the program.

For me, the celebration of Easter puts our earthly concerns into perspective. With humility and with awe, we give thanks to the extraordinary sacrifice of Jesus Christ, our Savior. We

reflect on the brutal pain that He suffered, the scorn that He absorbed, the sins that He bore, this extraordinary gift of salvation that He gave to us. And we try, as best we can, to comprehend the darkness that He endured so that we might receive God's light.

And yet, even as we grapple with the sheer enormity of Jesus' sacrifice, on Easter we can't lose sight of the fact that the story didn't end on Friday.

*Audience members.* Amen! That's right.

*The President.* The story keeps on going. On Sunday comes the glorious Resurrection of our Savior.

"Good Friday may occupy the throne for a day," Dr. King once preached, "but ultimately, it must give way to the triumphant beat of the drums of Easter." Drums that beat the rhythm of renewal and redemption, goodness and grace, hope and love. Easter is our affirmation that there are better days ahead and also a reminder that it is on us, the living, to make them so.

Through God's mercy, Peter the Apostle said, we are given "an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you." It's an inheritance that calls on us to be better, to love more deeply, to serve "the least of these" as an expression of Christ's love here on Earth.

That's the spirit we feel in the example of His Holiness Pope Francis, who encourages us to seek peace, to serve the marginalized, and be good stewards of God's creation. Like millions of Americans, I'm honored that we will be welcoming him to our country later this year.

I want to quote him. He says that we should strive "to see the Lord in every excluded person who is thirsty, hungry, naked; to see the Lord present even in those who have lost their faith . . . in the imprisoned, sick, unemployed, persecuted; to see the Lord in the leper—

whether in body or soul—who encounters discrimination."

Isn't that how Jesus lived? Isn't that how He loved? Embracing those who were different; serving the marginalized; humbling Himself to the last. This is the example that we are called to follow: to love Him with all our hearts and mind and soul and to love our neighbors—and all of our neighbors—as ourselves. As it says in the first letter of John, "Let us not love with words or speech, but with actions and in truth."

On Easter, I do reflect on the fact that as a Christian, I am supposed to love. And I have to say that sometimes, when I listen to less than loving expressions by Christians—

*Audience member.* Well, well. Preach!

*The President.* —I get concerned. But that's a topic for another day. [Laughter]

Where there is injustice—I was about to veer off. [Laughter] I'm pulling it back. Where there is injustice, we defend the oppressed.

*Audience member.* Preach!

*The President.* [Laughter] Where there is disagreement, we treat each other with compassion and respect. Where there are differences, we find strength in our common humanity, knowing that we are all children of God.

So today, we celebrate the magnificent glory of our risen Savior. I pray that we will live up to His example. I pray that I will live up to His example. I fall short so often. Every day, I try to do better. I pray that we will be strengthened by His eternal love. I pray that we will be worthy of His many blessings.

With that, I'd like to invite Reverend Dr. Amy Butler to offer our opening prayer.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:30 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to his nephews Aaron and Austin L. Robinson; and Amy K. Butler, senior minister, Riverside Church in New York City.