

**PHOTOCOPY  
PRESERVATION**

**Christmas II:  
Holy Eucharist Services  
Washington, DC  
1/2/00**

THE WHITE HOUSE  
Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

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REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT  
AND THE FIRST LADY  
AT CHRISTMAS II: HOLY EUCHARIST SERVICES

Washington National Cathedral  
Washington, D.C.

11:44 A.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Gathered in the spirit of truth and hope, in unity and peace, at the beginning of the new year, the dawn of a new century, and at the turn of the third millennium, let us offer before God our prayers and thanksgivings.

We give you thanks, oh, God, for the goodness and love you have made known to us in creation. You fill the world with beauty. Open our eyes to see your handiwork and all creation, and in one another.

AUDIENCE: We thank you and praise you, oh, God.

MRS. CLINTON: We give you thanks, oh, God, for your church throughout the world, and for religious faith and freedom in this country. Grant that all who seek you by many names may be united in your truth, live together in your love, and reveal your glory in the world.

AUDIENCE: We thank you and praise you, oh, God.

THE PRESIDENT: We give you thanks, oh, God, for our nation; for the gifts of liberty, freedom and peace; for the women and men who have made this country strong. Give us, like them, a zeal for justice and truth, and grant that we and all the people of this land may, by your grace, be strengthened to maintain our liberties and righteousness and peace.

AUDIENCE: We thank you and praise you, oh, God.

MRS. CLINTON: We pray, also, for the world; for the leaders of the nations and for those who strive and work for peace, that all swords may be turned into plowshares and none may hurt or destroy.

AUDIENCE: We thank you and praise you, oh, God.

THE PRESIDENT: We give you thanks, oh, God, for creating all humanity in your image; for the wonderful diversity of your children, of your races and creeds, cultures and tongues. Enrich our lives by ever-widening circles of fellowship, and show us your presence in those who differ most from us.

AUDIENCE: We thank you and praise you, oh, God.

MRS. CLINTON: In offering you thanks, oh, God, we become aware of our failings and shortcomings. Time after time, we fail to strive for the vision and world you hold out to us. We do not honor one another. We abuse your creation. We take for granted our resources, and we fail to recognize your gracious hand in the harvests of land and sea. Grant us a respect for your whole world.

AUDIENCE: Forgive us, heal us, and restore us, oh, God.

THE PRESIDENT: Time after time, oh, God, we fail to follow your ways and to live up to the hopes of our founding fathers and mothers. We turn from the path of justice and peace, to follow the way of hatred and anger. So move our hearts that barriers which divide us may crumble, suspicions disappear and hatreds cease, and that, in your wisdom and love, we may live with our world family in true justice and peace.

AUDIENCE: Forgive us, heal us, and restore us, oh, God.

MRS. CLINTON: Time after time, oh, God, we hoard the bounty of your goodness. We store up goods for ourselves, and ignore the cry of the poor and hungry. We store up liberty and justice for ourselves and ignore the cry of the oppressed. Look with favor upon the people of this and every land who live with injustice, terror, poverty, disease and death; and grant that we who are so richly blessed may, with your help, respond with costly love and compassion.

AUDIENCE: Forgive us, heal us, and restore us, oh, God.

THE PRESIDENT: Let us pray. Dear Lord, as we awaken to this second morning of a new millennium, help us to remember that all we are and all we do begins with you, for whom a thousand years are but as yesterday when it is passed, and as a watch in the night.

So we begin this jubilee year in humility, with profound thanks for the divine light first revealed 2,000 years ago that has brought us now to this sacred place today. Each in our own way, we thank you for the blessings of this life. For me and my family, I give you thanks for good health, good fortune, and the opportunity to serve the American people.

We thank you for the amazing grace you have shown in getting us through and beyond our individual and collective sins and trials. Through the darkest hours of the 20th century, the shameful trauma of racial oppression, the pain and sacrifice of war, the fear and deprivation of depression, when all we could do was walk by faith, it was your guiding light that saw us through.

We thank you for the promise of the new century, and ask your guidance and grace in helping us to make the most of it; to free our children of hunger, neglect and war; to ease the burdens of the less fortunate; to strengthen the bonds of family; to preserve and protect our earthly home; to use new advances in science and technology to lift all the human family and draw us all closer together.

Finally, we thank you for the rich and wonderful diversity of human life with which you have graced this planet, and ask you to give us the strength and wisdom to give up our fear, distrust and hatred of those who are different. Teach us instead to learn from each other, and celebrate our differences, secure in the knowledge that we are all your children.

Our Constitution tells us you created us all equal. Jesus told us to love our neighbors as ourselves. The Koran says we must do unto all men as you wished to have done to you, and reject for others what you would reject for yourself. The Talmud instructs us, should anyone turn aside the right of the stranger, it is as though he were to turn aside the right of the most high God.

By your grace, we have survived in spite of our blindness to this, your truth. Help us now to accept at long last the enduring truth that the most important fact of life is not wealth, or power, or beauty, or scientific advance, but our kinship as brothers and sisters, and our oneness as children of God.

This, Holy Father, is our prayer for the new millennium.

AUDIENCE: Amen.

END

11:52 A.M. EST