

WASHINGTON, D.C., December 1, 2017 - President Trump gave the following address at the lighting of the National Christmas Tree on Thursday, November 30, 2017.

Today's the day that I've been looking very much forward to all year long. It's one that we have heard and we speak about and we dream about and now as the President of the United States, it's my tremendous honor to finally wish America and the world a very Merry Christmas.

I want to thank everyone who has come together here right in front of the White House, that beautiful, beautiful White House, and everyone watching from home to see the lighting of this incredible national Christmas tree.

For nearly a century, through good times and bad, every president has taken part in this wonderful tradition, first started by President Coolidge. But I was informed tonight that the weather we have is the best it's been in 25 years. In fact, I said, 'Is it always like this?' And the secretary said, 'Hasn't been like this for a long time.' So, we are very lucky.

Finally, in 1870, President Ulysses S. Grant signed legislation making Christmas a Federal holiday. And I sort of feel we are doing that again. That's what's happening.

From the earliest days of our nations, Americans have known Christmas as a time for prayer and worship, for gratitude and good will, for peace and renewal.

Melania and I are full of joy at the start of this very blessed season. We're thrilled to think of the people across the nation and all across the continent whose spirits are lifted by the miracle of Christmas.

For Christians, this is a Holy season – the celebration of the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The Christmas story begins 2000 years ago with a mother, a father, their baby son, and the most extraordinary gift of all, the gift of God's love for all of humanity.

Whatever our beliefs, we know that the birth of Jesus Christ and the story of this incredible life forever changed the course of human history. There's hardly an aspect of our lives today that his life has not touched: art, music,

culture, law, and our respect for the sacred dignity of every person everywhere in the world.

Each and every year at Christmas time we recognize that the real spirit of Christmas is not what we have, it's about who we are – each one of us is a child of God.

That is the true source of joy this time of the year.

That is what makes every Christmas ‘merry.’

And that is what we remember at today's beautiful ceremony, that we are called to serve one another, to love one another, and to pursue peace in our hearts and all throughout the world.

And so tonight, I thank the millions of Americans who light our lives and brighten our wonderful communities. I thank those who are serving the needy during the season and throughout the year. I thank our military men and women who are stationed around the world keeping us safe.

I thank our law enforcement officers who protect our streets and secure our homeland. I thank America's teachers, pastors, and all those religious, and those people that have taught us so much, for their leadership in our communities and our society.

And, especially tonight, I thank America's families. At Christmas, we are reminded more than ever that the family is the bedrock of American life.

And so, this Christmas we ask for God's blessings for our family, for our nation. And we pray that our country will be a place where every child knows a home filled with love, a community rich with hope, and a nation blest with faith.

On behalf of Melania, myself, Barron, all of my children, all of my grandchildren – they're here with us tonight – I want to thank you.

God bless you and God bless the United States of America. Thank you very much.

Merry Christmas everybody. Merry Christmas. Happy new year. Thank you.