



## A message from **THE PRESIDENT**

On September 11, 2001, almost three thousand people were killed in a series of terrorist attacks. The tragic events that occurred in New York City, Arlington, Virginia, and Shanksville, Pennsylvania on that day remain as painful and hard to grasp as they did on that bright, clear morning 22 years ago. Families lost husbands, wives, partners, children; the nation went into shock.

To honor those who died on that terrible day, let us pause for a moment of somber reflection and mourn for the friends, colleagues, and loved ones we lost. Our hearts are filled with the deepest sorrow. All these years later, we still seek consolation.

Terrorism is a cowardly and hateful thing. I wish to give it no energy, so I choose to focus on another feeling: gratitude. It was truly inspiring how soldiers, firefighters, police, doctors, nurses, and civilians came to the aid of their fellow New Yorkers when the city was in tumult. Their selfless actions remind us once again of the need for service, compassion, and empathy for our fellow citizens and for our brothers and sisters around the globe.

Unified by our common humanity, respecting the differences that make us unique, we must work together to create a world in which events like those of September 11, 2001, are remembered – and never repeated.

In October 2001, the American poet Elizabeth Spires wrote “The Beautiful Day,” which so clearly evokes the ways, large and small, that horrific events can change us.

A month after it happened, my daughter and I  
stood in a rose garden a few miles

north of Baltimore. Espaliered pear and apple trees  
climbed an old brick wall. It was a beautiful day,  
but shadowed and deepened in a way  
I could never have imagined before.

The sky was *intensely* blue, just like the day  
it happened.

Rose of every shade and hue  
still bloomed, the frost yet to come.

My daughter, nearly eleven, wished for a garden  
like the one we stood in. A rose garden

surrounded by a curving wall.  
*Maybe someday...* I said.

We stood there, watching weightless white spools  
of milkweed lift in the wind.

Uncountable numbers drifted upward and away,  
each shining in the sun.

Like words. But what are words now?  
Words are so small. Words have no weight.  
And nothing will ever be the same again.

In remembrance,

Daisy Cocco De Filippis, Ph.D.  
President

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