



FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE

Remarks by

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Fraternal Order of Police**

Delivered at

40th Annual National Peace Officers' Memorial Service



As we come together on this National Peace Officers Memorial Day, we must reflect on the past two years, and recognize the grief and fear that has accompanied the challenging and ever-changing times we have faced as a nation due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our communities have struggled to make sense of it all and find peace and acceptance of our new reality. Through it all, there is one thing that has remained constant and steadfast... the unwavering dedication of selfless law enforcement officers who took an oath to protect and serve their communities.

These challenging times have tested our character... yet we have not backed down.

They have tested our perseverance... yet we are still standing tall.

And they have, without a doubt, tested our noble profession... yet we still stand strong on the line between order and chaos in communities across this great nation.

For the last two years, due to the pandemic, for the first time since the Fraternal Order of Police started the National Peace Officers' Memorial Service forty years ago, we were unable to gather in person to memorialize and honor our fallen.

To our surviving families, both blood and blue, we have come together today to draw strength from one another as we honor our fallen law enforcement heroes from both 2019 and 2020. Each of them ordinary men and women who chose a life with an extraordinary purpose.

For some it has been a year, for others much longer.

There simply is no way to set a milestone for a limit on one's grief. For we can measure time, but a loss is simply immeasurable.

However, for the 491 women and men we honor here today, and their families, we know all too well that the sense of order Americans enjoy in their daily lives comes with a high price... a price paid by brave women and men who gave their last full measure of devotion in the service of others.

As we reflect on the loss of our loved ones and colleagues, our minds inevitably begin to question the cost of the sacrifice made. We search for reason and, undoubtedly, our faith in the value of the price paid is lost with our inability to accept what has happened.

These emotions and the sadness felt by our survivor families are overwhelming and difficult, if not impossible, to experience alone. That is why the National Peace Officers' Memorial Service is so very important.

Though nothing can compensate for your great loss, we hope that expressing our honor and respect here today for your loved one will bring you some level of comfort.

Just as we cannot pull on the grass to make it grow, we can't manipulate the time it will take each of us to heal. But know this, the Fraternal Order of Police and your entire blue family are here for you.

As the Treasurer of the National Fraternal Order of Police it is an honor for me to stand before you today representing the 364,000 members from across this great nation to say that we stand with you. We mourn with each of you and we express our heartfelt gratitude and respect for your loved one's courage, dedication, and sacrifice.

It has been said that a person only dies when their name is no longer spoken. As each of these names are read today, let us take comfort in knowing their sacrifice will be forever remembered as they take their place of honor among those who've gone before us.

Later today, when you place the rose upon the wreath in honor of your loved one, take a moment to remember the life they lived and the passion they lived it with. As the final salute is rendered, reflect, not on their absence, but on the love and laughter you shared with one another. Our fallen heroes would not want us to remember them any other way.

As you leave here today, take the time to share stories with one another about your mother, father, son, daughter, brother, sister and coworker. Laugh. Laugh out loud. Cry if you must. Strive to remember them, not as they are now, but as they were. Brave heroes whose mission was only to make the world a better place; each in their own way.

Find joy in your memories. Say their names and say them often... so that their memories may live on forever.