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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO DELIVERS REMARKS AT THE ST. CHARLES
BORROMEO CHURCH**

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Well, what a joyous day. First, I want to give honor to God, without Him this day would not be possible.

Reverend Gregory Chisholm: Amen. Amen.

[Applause]

Mayor: And it is a joy to be here with the Saint Charles Borromeo family, this beautiful space, this space full of life and hope. I want to thank you. This church does so much good spiritually and for the community, and those good works are legion, and they're because you've had a great leader in Father Gregory Chisholm.

[Applause]

Reverend Chisholm: Thanks a lot.

Mayor: Thank you. And I've got a chance to see Father Gregory's leadership as part of a citywide group of faith leaders who have taken on the big challenges, taken on the challenge of making sure people had enough food to eat during this crisis. And I know you've been in the forefront. This church has been the forefront, making sure we protect people, protect their health, making sure we fight the scourge of gun violence, whatever challenge we face –

Reverend Chisholm: Praise God.

Mayor: You have been in the forefront. Thank you, Father Gregory. God bless you.

[Applause]

Now I was going to come here in part to talk about a rather important thing that happened yesterday in our nation. But, obviously, the first thing to talk about is Miss Pearl.

[Laughter]

And so, we congratulate you. Miss Pearl, we congratulate you for all the good you have done in your life. And the beautiful example you set for all of us. Everyone's proud of you today. God bless you.

Reverend Chisholm: Amen.

[Applause]

Mayor: God bless you. Everyone, this is a moment of joy because the people have spoken. And so, we also have an opportunity today to say, congratulations – congratulations to President-Elect Joe Biden.

[Applause]

Don't those words sound good? President-Elect Biden. Doesn't it feel good?

Reverend Chisholm: Amen.

Mayor: Don't you feel the pressure lifting off?

[Laughter]

Mayor: Makes you feel a little calmer, just hearing those words.

Reverend Chisholm: Steady –

Mayor: Steady. And he is a man of faith and he is a healer. He is a moral man. He's someone whose humanity, you can just see it – his decency and his humanity. Isn't that what we want from the White House? Isn't that what we expect from the person in the White House?

Reverend Chisholm: Praise God. Praise God.

Mayor: And we're going to have it again. And somebody new in the White House accompanying him – and we congratulate Vice President-Elect Kamala Harris.

[Applause]

Reverend Chisholm: Amen. Amen.

Mayor: And she has achieved so much already in public life and she will achieve so much more. And in the process, she is opening wide the doors of leadership to everyone, to all the talent that makes up our nation, and was so often ignored. But now she is the living embodiment of the notion that everyone's greatness can be respected and fulfilled in this country. That's what we believe in, right? That's what we believe in. Now, brothers and sisters, this is a moment to think about where we go from here. And I want to talk about our city just for a moment because our city has been through so much, this year, 2020. I think one thing that most people agree on is

they are looking forward to the day when they reach their calendar and pull down the page that says 2020, and we put 2020 in the past and move forward. Except for yesterday, I would say, generally we want 2020 in the past, and we will move forward.

And the evidence of our ability to move forward is in the way we handled the struggle this same year, we have gone through. Remember that this city was the epicenter of the coronavirus crisis. We bore the brunt right here and it was so painful, and it was so tough. And yet we fought back didn't we? New Yorkers fought back. We went from worst to first. We became one of the safest places in this country. Scripture tells us, "First shall be last and the last shall be first." That's what happened here before our very eyes, because New Yorkers put on those masks, New Yorkers practiced social distancing, New Yorkers cared for each other and looked out for each other. And that showed a strength and resiliency about our city. They said we could not come back from what we went through in March and April, but we did. They said we could never open up our schools again, but we have. The people of this city, determined that our schools would be there for our children and now they are. They said that people would not come out to vote because of the coronavirus, because they were depressed by the state of our public life, because they didn't think their vote would matter. Well, guess what, they sure did think their vote would matter.

[Applause]

Here in this city, all over this country, record turnout in the middle of a pandemic.

Reverend Chisholm: Amen.

Mayor: Because people believed the change was needed and they were ready to take ownership and do something. And that is a reminder of our future path, that's a reminder of who we can be, what we must be. People who take charge of our own situation and make it better. If you want a little inspiration right here in your midst, just look to Miss Pearl who believed that she could lead a life in New York City, packed her bags, came here, and made that life come true. Miss Pearl, you're an example of the greatness of New York City. And that greatness will be in evidence more than ever as we fight back.

I'll conclude with this point, someone said to me, very innocently, Father – they said to me the other day, worried, worried about everything we'd been through. They said, do you think New York City can restore its former glory? And I said, with great respect, I said, I think that is the wrong question. I think the question is, how will we reach our greater glory? How will we reach even higher? Because we never stop in New York City, do we? We never accept second best. We, in fact, need a better city. We need a city that is more fair to all its people. We need a city that includes everyone, not just those with the greatest means, but everyone. We need a city that respects everyone. That's what we believe in. That's what our faith teaches us. And that's the city we can build. So anytime the naysayers, the doubting Thomases, tell you the best is in the past, they obviously don't know about the life of Miss Pearl. They obviously don't know about this church. They obviously weren't paying attention when New York City fought back the coronavirus. They don't understand New York City. New York City's greatest days are ahead.

[Applause]

And I have faith, when I look at every one of you, when I look out into this congregation, I have faith because I believe in each of you and what we can do together. Thank you. God bless you all.

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