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throughout our military, the military medical facilities. You know, I oftentimes say being the Commander in Chief of the military is the thing I'll miss the most, and coming here to Walter Reed is a reminder of why I'll miss it.

Thank you very much.

President's Health

Q. How is your shoulder, Mr. President?

The President. Yes, good shape—it's about an 80 mile-an-hour fastball.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:03 p.m.

Message on the Observance of Christmas 2008

December 23, 2008

"I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

Luke 2:10–12

Each year, Christmas brings together families, friends, and communities to rejoice in the birth of Jesus Christ and celebrate the wonderful gifts God has bestowed upon us. During this season, we remember Jesus' birth from the Virgin Mary, His justice and mercy that changed the world, and His ultimate sacrifice for all people. Though Jesus was born humbly in a manger, He was destined to be the Savior of the world. The light He brought into the world continues to break through darkness and change people's lives two thousand years later.

This holiday season, as you rejoice in the good news of Jesus' love, forgiveness, acceptance, and peace, I encourage you to show grace to those less fortunate, just as God showed it to us. By serving those in need and through other acts of love and compassion, we can honor God's goodness and affirm the immeasurable value God places on the sanctity of life. We remember the members of our Armed Forces serving to protect our country and secure God's gift of freedom for others around the globe. All Americans are indebted to these men and women and their families for their sacrifice, devotion to duty, and patriotism.

Laura and I send our best wishes for a very Merry Christmas. May you be surrounded by loved ones and blessed by the Author of Life during this joyous holiday and throughout the New Year.

George W. Bush

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

Message Sending Holiday Greetings to Members of the Armed Forces

December 23, 2008

To the Men and Women of the United States Armed Forces

Laura and I send season's greetings to you and your families during the holidays.

America is blessed to have brave citizens willing to step forward to defend our freedoms and keep us safe from our enemies. For many of you, this holiday season will be spent far from home, and our Nation honors your sacrifice. We remain mindful of your courage, ask God to watch over you, and pray for your safe return.

Your family members serve our country as well. During this time of year, they are a special source of hope and strength to you, and they both deserve and have the thanks and support of our whole Nation. Their selfless dedication sets an example of patriotism for all Americans to follow.

May God bless you and keep you safe, and may God bless America.

George W. Bush

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.