

# BARACK OBAMA

October 11, 2008

Dear Friends,

I appreciate the opportunity to share a few thoughts with everyone gathered here today. It's an honor to join in celebrating the life of the first immigrant to enter our country through Ellis Island, Annie Moore. This is a great opportunity to celebrate the richness of our nation's ethnic heritage, and the unique role that Irish-Americans have played in writing the American story.

Today, you're looking back at Annie's life and at the lives of your ancestors. As you do this, I also encourage you to take a moment to look around you. Because in its own way, this gathering is just as remarkable as Annie's first steps into the New World. She came with little more than her two brothers and the clothes on her back. She lived the hard tenement life of an immigrant in New York City, but she worked hard, overcame adversity, and raised a family. And now, just a couple generations after her passing, you are PhDs, investment counselors, actors and writers, and live in every corner of the country. Aside from that \$10 gold piece shining in her hand, she wasn't given anything more than an opportunity. But she went forward knowing that her children, grandchildren and great grandchildren would enjoy greater opportunities and lead better lives.

The idea of honoring those who came before you by sacrificing on behalf of those who follow is at the heart of the American experience. Irish Americans like your ancestors, and mine from County Offaly, understood this well. And because of that understanding and that spirit, America has led the world through great challenges over the last century. Now is our time to lead again. Together, we can overcome the challenges of our time with the same spirit and resoluteness that carried Annie Moore to our shores.

Once again, thank you for allowing me to be a part of today's celebration. Please accept my wishes for an enjoyable event and continued success.

Sincerely,



Barack Obama



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