

**Remarks of Mayor Martin J. Walsh  
2013 Boston Marathon BAA Special Tribute  
April 15, 2014**

As it says in the Book of James, “the testing of our faith produces perseverance.”

Perseverance.

We’ve learned that in Boston, over this past year. All of us. We’ve all felt it. We’ve seen it. We’ve shared it. For the families who lost loved ones, for those recovering from injuries of every kind, it’s what life is all about now.

It’s about dancing again, after losing a leg.

It’s about starting a marriage, forged in tragedy.

It’s about learning early on, to care for family and friends.

The testing of our faith produces perseverance.

Is there a tougher test of faith for a parent, than the loss of a child?

Or seeing your child badly hurt, while you fight pain and injury yourself?

These are our neighbors, our friends, part of our community.

On this day of remembrance, I start at the heart of the Dorchester community where I was a kid. Where Martin Richard was a kid.

The other day, I came across some photos from a neighborhood party a few years back. One picture stopped me cold. There I was, with some friends, my arm around a little boy, holding him close. He was wearing a Dorchester

t-shirt and a smile that could light up Fenway Park. The little boy was Martin Richard.

His parents, Bill and Denise, said recently: “A day doesn’t pass when we don’t cry over the loss of Martin. ... But we also laugh when we think about him, which feels like the right way to remember a little boy with a zest for life and a caring heart.”

In a few days, the Savin Hill Little League will open their season. Martin played in that league with enthusiasm and sheer joy. I was a coach in that League, watching kids like Martin gain skill and confidence; and understanding the importance of never giving up.

Martin’s older brother gets it. Henry’s an exceptional student, a good athlete, a great kid---always eager to help. He’s the kind of kid you want your kids to be friends with. And so is his sister, Jane. Now they are teaching us a thing or two about never giving up.

Never giving up.

And, by the way, you didn’t hear it from me, but Jane’s back playing CYO basketball. Martin would’ve loved that. The way he saw the world, anything was possible.

All across our city we are learning that too. We are learning not just perseverance, but resilience. Resilience rooted in hope.

The Psalms tell us, “...Weeping may endure for a night. But joy comes in the morning.”

We endured the night. Violence came to our city. To Boylston Street and Copley Square. And it felt like we knew everyone who was hurt, everyone who was suffering.

We hurt too. And that hurt followed familiar routes. Down the Red Line in Dorchester. Out Comm Ave to B.U. Up 93 through Somerville and Medford. And down Memorial Drive to M.I.T. Our grief drew us a painful map.

And in the darkest hour of that night, we looked to the first responders who are always our beacon. Of hope. Of courage. Of heart.

We saw police officers, fire fighters, and EMTs running toward danger, as they always do. As they always will.

We saw medical staff and BAA volunteers tending to the injured.

We saw businesses on Boylston Street sheltering the traumatized; and our public employees from the City of Boston, rushing to find resources.

We saw people who had come to cheer on the runners, instead running themselves, to save the lives of perfect strangers.

As the days went on and we learned who we had lost, we saw that their lives told us a story of our city.

Lingzi Lu was drawn here from halfway around the world, to study, learn, and explore.

Krystle Campbell was always the last to leave work—but she was always there when her grandmother needed her.

Sean Collier was doing what he had always wanted to do: building a career as a police officer, devoted to community.

And Martin Richard was a little neighborhood kid with a big smile and an even bigger heart.

Together they showed us the qualities of our city that would carry us through.

And to the survivors: We bore witness to your experience, we gained strength from your courage, and we felt hope for our future. And we came together as a city.

Within 24 hours, leaders in government, business, and philanthropy formed the One Fund.

Thousands of people gathered in Dorchester, filling Garvey Park with candles and prayers.

Help came from all across the world. People reached out to us in solidarity, offering messages of healing and hope.

And next week, thousands of runners and millions of our friends from around the world will come to Boston. The 118th Boston Marathon will be a living, breathing celebration of our city's resilience.

We still hurt. We hurt from trauma, we hurt from grief. We hurt from loss. We hurt when violence hits our streets anywhere and everywhere in our city, and our kids become victims.

We hurt now, as we mourn the loss of two Boston firefighters. Their Boylston Street firehouse---Engine 33, Ladder 15---is a company of heroes.

And just last week, another hero lost: A young Boston police officer—injured at the scene in Watertown a year ago, honored for his bravery—is suddenly gone.

We hurt when brave first responders give their all.

“...Weeping may endure for a night.

But joy comes in the morning.”

After a dark night---and a bitter winter---Spring is here. The snow is gone and the Red Sox are back. And in a week, the runners will be too. Running for Martin, for Lingzi, for Krystle, for Sean. For family. For friends. For Boston. For America.

We will never be the same, but we are stronger than ever. We have been tested, and tested again. But we face these hurts with a new understanding of our strength. We have survived the dark night to face the future with hope and confidence.

In the joy of the morning, we can believe as Martin did---as Lingzi did---as Krystle did---as Sean did---as so many Bostonians do: We can believe that anything is possible. And then we work our hearts out to prove it.

This is Boston, after all---a city of courage and champions; a city of hope and a city of heart.

God Bless You. God Bless the City of Boston. And God Bless the United States of America.