# Donald Trump marks Pope Francis’s death during White House Easter Egg Roll, sparking mixed reactions



On Easter Monday, April 21, 2024, President Donald Trump made a public statement at the White House’s annual Easter Egg Roll that drew widespread attention and sparked debate regarding its tone and timing. The remarks came shortly after the announcement of Pope Francis’s death, a moment marked by solemnity but accompanied by the festive atmosphere of the event.

Thousands had gathered at the White House lawn for the traditional Easter celebration, where President Trump, First Lady Melania Trump, and the Easter Bunny were present. During his speech, President Trump announced that he had signed an executive order to lower all federal and state flags to half-mast in honour of the late Pope Francis. He described the Pope as “a good man” who “loved the world” and expressed that it was “an honour” to mark his passing in this way.

Trump’s comments included praise for the Marine Band performing at the event, saying, “I want to thank everybody for being here – this is some band. I’ve heard this band, actually indirectly for four years, and very directly now for four-and-a-half. The Marine band is very, very special.” He also emphasised efforts to “bring religion back” to America, reflecting on Easter as a “very special time.”

However, the juxtaposition of the announcement about the Pope’s death alongside the light-hearted presence of the Easter Bunny did not sit well with many observers. Social media users expressed astonishment and criticism, with some describing the moment as “unbelievably thoughtless” and others calling it “disgusting.” One commenter on the social media platform X remarked sarcastically, “‘Hey I’ve got to announce the Pope has died, quick get the Easter Bunny suit on and stand next to me’.” Another user noted, “If you didn’t know the Pope had passed away from alternative sources, nothing he said there would have informed you. Self-centred to the fullest.”

At the same time, there were voices defending the President’s remarks. Some argued that the event was primarily an Easter gathering with the Pope’s death appropriately acknowledged. One individual wrote, “Not really fair to put that in quotes. It was an Easter greeting with an acknowledgement of the Pope’s death.” Another added confusion over the backlash, stating, “Huh? He was announcing that the US flags would be all at half-mast for the Pope. I’m so confused about what you are trying to criticise.”

Pope Francis’s death was officially confirmed by the Vatican’s director of health and hygiene on the evening of April 21. The pontiff died at the age of 88 from a stroke, coma, and irreversible cardiovascular collapse. Earlier this year, he had been hospitalised with a severe case of pneumonia affecting both lungs and was also treated for bronchitis.

Preparations are underway for the Pope’s funeral mass, scheduled to take place at 10am on Saturday at St Peter’s Square in the Vatican. It is anticipated that numerous world leaders will attend to pay their respects, including the Prince of Wales, President Donald Trump, Sir Keir Starmer, French President Emmanuel Macron, and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky.

The combination of a national festive event, the Easter Egg Roll, and the announcement of a major religious leader’s death created a complex and unusual moment in the political and cultural landscape on Easter Monday. The White House’s handling of the announcement, particularly President Trump’s remarks, elicited a range of reactions reflecting the contrasting tones of the day.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9fMOVxBItKA> - This video contains President Donald Trump's full speech at the White House 2025 Easter Egg Roll on April 21, 2024, where he announces signing an executive order to lower all federal and state flags to half-mast in honor of Pope Francis, describing the Pope as 'a good man' who 'loved the world.' It also captures the presence of Melania Trump and the Easter Bunny, matching the festive event setting.
2. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rc-kS2eIwYs> - This video provides another full recording of President Trump's Easter speech, confirming his praise for the U.S. Marine Band and his remarks about the significance of Easter and efforts to 'bring religion back' to America, as well as acknowledging the attendance of around 40,000 people at the event.
3. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uUFihLy4sfc> - This news coverage reports on President Trump's remarks at the Easter Egg Roll, noting his acknowledgment of Pope Francis's death and his directive for flags to be lowered to half-mast. It also discusses the mixed public reactions and the cultural context of the Easter celebration alongside the somber news.
4. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-65312386> - This article from a reputable news outlet confirms the official announcement of Pope Francis’s death on April 21, 2024, describing his cause of death as stroke, coma and irreversible cardiovascular collapse, and notes his prior hospitalizations for pneumonia and bronchitis.
5. <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/pope-francis-funeral-plans-vatican-2024> - This source details the preparations for Pope Francis’s funeral mass scheduled at St Peter's Square at 10am on Saturday, including anticipated attendance by global leaders such as the Prince of Wales, President Donald Trump, French President Emmanuel Macron, and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky.
6. <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/04/22/us/politics/trump-easter-egg-roll-pope-francis.html> - This New York Times article analyzes the controversial tone and public reaction to President Trump's juxtaposition of the Easter celebration with the announcement of Pope Francis's death, including responses from social media users criticizing or defending his remarks.
7. <https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/us-news/donald-trump-branded-thoughtless-way-35106806> - Please view link - unable to able to access data