



“He went about doing good and healing....” *Acts 10:34A, 38*

Dear Residents, Team Members and Families,

Easter is celebrated throughout the world in various religious and secular ways. This past week was Holy Week for all Christians. It is generally a time to reflect on the mysteries of salvation and new life that Jesus brought us in the last days of his life. This week also was the start of Passover, a week-long celebration of miracles and freedom from slavery in Egypt. April 23rd also marks the beginning of Ramadan for those of the Muslim faith, which is a month of fasting, prayer and reflection.

In the convergence of these holidays, there is a message for all of us. That is a message of unity, support, caring and adapting. Together, we are united in prayer that supports every person and gives us the strength to accomplish more than we can alone.

Here at Lutheran Social Ministries, our celebration of Holy Week is different than any of us could have imagined. There are no formal services in our chapels. Our residents and staff could not gather in prayer for Holy Thursday services and washing of the feet. There was no formal service for the Passion of Christ on Good Friday. And, there is no gathering tomorrow for Easter to celebrate the Resurrection.

We have the “new normal” with televised and dial-in liturgical and prayer services as well as chaplain visits. This year, rather than gathering together to share special dinners, many will dine in the privacy of their own living spaces with simple reminders of the Easter holiday in the colorful eggs, desserts and napkins. The day is still special, but different.

For the many in health care, the stark reality is that Easter is far from the minds of those caring for the sick. There are moments in the day that are overwhelmingly sad and solemn, more like Good Friday, than the joyous Easter celebration. But, if we reflect on those long days, we see moments that remind us that Easter is here every day, even when we cannot see it.

Easter is here because it fulfills the promise of change, new beginnings and new life. A new beginning means life is never the same, because Easter is the celebration of a miracle and mystery of the resurrection. That mystery is the belief in the resurrection and the faith of trusting what you cannot see, explain or fully understand. This year, Easter reminds us that we must have faith, as there are no worldly answers to explain the pandemic and why it affects some and not others. While there is no comfort in not knowing or understanding, many of us find comfort in our faith.

And it is our faith that we must turn to during these difficult times. Our faith centers us; it is the driving force in our compassion and the care we provide, regardless of the physical and emotional toll as well as risk to ourselves. Those driven by faith put others first, trusting that Our Lord will care for them. Those driven by faith overcome their fears of leaving homes and come to work; they are driven to help and respond. Those driven by faith give to others their last ounce of strength just when they believe there is none left.

This is our celebration of Holy Week and Easter this year. All of us here at Lutheran Social Ministries, and especially those caring for our residents who are frightened and ill, are the true heroes and the perfect reminder to me of Christ in our lives and the power of the Resurrection. They live the Gospel and the call to care for one another. They live the message in the Acts of the Apostles of "doing good and healing." They are blessed with deep spiritual joy and grace in knowing that the moments they spent with a resident made a difference even if they could not change the outcome.

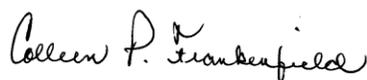
Whether you celebrate Easter, Passover or Ramadan this month, know that we are all united in faith. It's a faith that drives us to accept those things we cannot change. It's a faith that motivates us to willingly give of ourselves even in the most difficult situations. It's a faith that leads us to truly believe that people are good and caring and that they do more than their best each day.

I am so proud and ever grateful to our team of staff and those contractors who join us in caring for our residents during this difficult time. They remind me every moment of every day that God is alive in all of us and in the power of faith.

I am also grateful for our residents and their family members. We pray every day for each of you and for your health at a time when we all are in need of hope and healing. All of our energy and time are focused on being with your loved ones to assure their comfort and care across our continuum and in all our communities. Thank you for your patience and unwavering support.

Have a happy Easter!

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Colleen P. Frankenburg".

President/CEO
Easter 2020