



# A MESSAGE FROM BISHOP MEGAN M. TRAQUAIR

## HOLY WEEK: A PASTORAL MESSAGE

*This is the transcript of the video released on 3.20.2020*

<https://youtu.be/XIH9eAU5Sr8>

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### **Holy Week at Home: A pastoral message from Bishop Megan Traquair**



Greetings Diocese of Northern California. Grace and peace to you. I'd like to begin by thanking you for the wonderful way that you are being church in these unusual weeks. You are being church when you gather together online for worship across the diocese. You are being church when you reach out to each other through the phone tree or just through telephone calls in a pastoral manner. You are being church when you reach out to your community and make sure that the elders in your community are safe.

Let's remember what we have done just in these last couple of days. Last week we began to conduct our worship online for the first time and reached dozens and dozens of people beyond our usual folks in the pews. Last week we got information from the Presiding Bishop that we had permission to do our Holy Week worship online. And then, in just recent days we've heard increasing limitations from our public health departments about our ability to gather. Because of that, I have made the decision that it is now time for us to plan for Holy Week at home. We cannot gather safely for our usual Easter Sunday services in the groups that we would like. And so instead we will be gathering at home.

In the story of Exodus, we know that the people of Israel had found themselves through the Red Sea, and then suddenly dumped into a wilderness; a place they had not expected to go, in a land that they did not know, in a path that was unclear to them. In many ways, that's where we are now. We have suddenly found ourselves in a brand-new landscape. But in Exodus, we know that God was with God's people through the sign of a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of flame at night.

God's presence is still with us here, in Northern California. We see it in so many ways. One of them is the way our worship for our people has reached out to the needs of so many people outside of our walls. We are clearly walking through the wilderness, and we are clearly going to have an amazing story to tell at the end. We will have a chance to remember the good things that we did when we gathered together online for Palm Sunday; when we tell the story at home of the triumphal entry. We will tell the story of Maundy Thursday. We will tell the story of the desolation of Good Friday. We will tell the story gathered together virtually of the great vigil of Easter. And then on Sunday morning, still online, we will gather together and we'll tell the story of the resurrection.

You know, this is not unknown to us. In their early years, the Christians in Jerusalem would walk the way of the cross, and they would tell the story of the sacrifice that Christ made for us before the resurrection. And then when pilgrims could no longer make that journey and take that walk, they found a new way to do it. They would walk a labyrinth, or they would pray the Stations of the Cross. Those Stations of the Cross endure to this day. It's hard to imagine that any of our churches do not have some manner of remembering the Stations of the Cross.

We will be doing the same thing. We'll be remembering in a new way the glories of how God has led us through a time of difficulty and uncertainty, to a time of resurrection. We will find ourselves in a new land. We will find ourselves in a land flowing with milk and honey, a land of abundance and hope. We are on our way to that, and we are on our way together; through Holy Week, all the way to Easter: at home and as a diocese.

And so, my good friends in Christ: take heart and be hopeful; God is guiding us still.

And now may the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make his face to shine upon you; and the blessing of God almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be upon you now, and remain with you always. Amen.