



MEDIA ADVISORY

Diocese of Laredo

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TO: All Media

FROM: Bennett McBride
Director of Communications
956-722-4167

RE: A Message from Most Reverend James A. Tamayo, Bishop of Laredo
“Finding Hope in the Midst of Fear”

Finding Hope in the Midst of Fear
A message from the Most Reverend James A. Tamayo,
Bishop of the Diocese of Laredo, during Holy Week

In the midst of the spread of the COVID-19 global pandemic, it is our nature to fear the unknown and to question the future. As people of faith entering the most sacred time we call Holy Week, we have the opportunity to reflect on the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Our Lord. Meditating on Jesus' agony and uniting our sufferings with His, along with our brothers and sisters of the Jewish faith who will celebrate the feast of the Passover, we can find the strength to carry the weight of our own personal crosses.

In faith circles, it is said that nothing is a coincidence. Everything that happens is part of God's loving plan for us. I see how in this Holy Week God is uniting members of various faiths to pause and be present to Him in prayer. In like manner, I take it as God's plan during this coronavirus pandemic, that He desires all people of goodwill to unite in one single prayer; thus, making the circumstances within our communities holy by the way we express our support and love for one another.

Before his Passion and Crucifixion, Jesus prayed to God, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet, not as I will, but as you will." (Matthew 26:39) Ultimately, His prayer was to do the Will of God. Our prayer must be the same. We must surrender our own desires and plans and accept those of our Heavenly Father who cares deeply for each one of us. He will never abandon us. We must place our full trust in Him: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart." (Proverbs 3:5)

In the coming week, we will celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord on Easter Sunday. The day's celebrations will likely look different this year than in past years. We may not be able to gather with extended family and friends and practice the same traditions. We may not even be able to pray in our own churches. I encourage you to turn your eyes upward; do not despair. Easter is a celebration of the Risen Christ. Lift up your spirits and be filled with joy as the Risen Christ imparts upon us all hope and a renewed life!

Plan now to make time to celebrate, for we know that after our Lord's walk to Calvary and His Crucifixion, He rose from death. This is why we rejoice. Our faith gives us a hope that is greater than any fear faced in this life.

Unite with your families and pray. God hears our prayers. During this time of social distancing, technology is helping people draw close to God in new ways. Masses, church services, meditations on Scripture, and other prayers are livestreamed more often. The technology of social media is being used in positive ways to deepen our relationship with God. Our Lord speaks to us in varied ways. Find him in quiet prayer and in the expressions of faith found through social media.

On behalf of spiritual leaders of all faiths, I extend God's holy blessing and heartfelt greetings of Easter joy and peace to all people of goodwill. TODO CON AMOR.