

## A Holy Week Message from the desk of Mark E. Diehl, Interim Pastor

This Holy Week is unlike any other in my memory. People all around our community, our state, our nation, and our world are hunkered down in efforts to prevent the spread of contagion, to secure the well-being of the most vulnerable, and to protect our families. In the midst of deep divisions ~ political, economic, social, racial, international, religious ~ we are united in a fight for life.

Let me suggest that the focus of Holy Week has always been, even if unrecognized, a fight for life and a fight against destructive forces afflicting the human family. Truth, grace, generosity, justice, love, equity, healing, kindness, reconciliation, mercy, humility, self-giving, forgiveness: Jesus embodied all of these and marshalled them in his confrontation against crippling powers. Traditionally those damaging forces and powers the church has characterized as sin and death. More specific names can help us identify them in us and in our world: pride and arrogance, indifference or a sense of privilege, egoism and grasping for power, blaming and neglecting to take responsibility, profiteering and lies, refusing to respond with actions easily within our grasp.

These are the forces and powers that put Jesus on the cross and continue to assail the human family. All that is good confronted all that is evil on Good Friday's cross.

A similar conflict is playing out in this season of Lent and during Holy Week. The consequences are much too familiar as death takes its toll on the human family in the midst of self-sacrifice and love. During this Holy Week I encourage you to meditate on this cataclysmic encounter, on our present circumstances as life and death clash, on the source of our hope and help, and on how we can be instruments of healing and mercy.