



**To:** Rochester Regional Health Employees  
**From:** Levi Gangi, Supervisor, Spiritual Care, RRH  
**Subject:** Chaplain's Message: Facing Uncertainty

**April 2, 2020**

### **Facing Uncertainty**

At some point in your life, you've probably heard someone say "just take it one day at a time." It may have encouraged you or annoyed you, depending on the source. It's a common phrase, sometimes cliché, but in the midst of the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic it is certainly relevant for us in health care. Each new day brings, well – we just don't know yet. We are used to long hours, and too much to do in too little time. But it is much more unsettling to face unknowns: How long will this last? How many people will fall ill? How do I protect my loved ones and still do my job to the best of my ability?

Uncertainty about the future is not something we as humans accept without difficulty. We plan the best we know how, we pursue physical and relational security, and unless our name is Edgar Allan Poe we don't spend too much time dwelling on our own mortality. And yet because we are firmly and irrevocably rooted in the *now*, uncertainty is always around us, lapping at our safe borders. But the human spirit has always endured through uncertainty in ways that inspire, defy reason, and make us proud. That human spirit exists in each one of us who now enter patient rooms, look for ways to help our co-workers, and work diligently at home in order to keep others safe.

As World War II dawned in 1939, bringing with it unknown hardships, destruction and sacrifice, British author C.S. Lewis wrote these words: "If humanity had postponed the search for knowledge and beauty until we were secure, the search would never have begun." We can always find a reason to be afraid and to delay creativity, courage or compassion. But we in

health care have chosen a profession where we actively put others first – and those others are now looking to us to maintain hope and stay vigilant and in the midst of uncertainty.

None of us can do this alone. Despite the need for social distancing, I encourage you to find a way today to encourage your co-workers, to smile in the hallway or over your Skype meeting interface, and to dispel the fog of unknowing with words that bring hope, humor, and invite each of us to be stronger at the end of each uncertain day.

It is a privilege to serve beside you,  
Levi