“I Ola Kākou”
So that we may Live

**Heluhelu Baibala / Scripture Reading**

Kānāwai Lua (Deuteronomy) 30:19
Ua waiho a’e nei au i mua ou i ke ola, a me ka make, i ka pōmaika‘i a me ka pō‘ino; no ia mea, e koho mai ‘oe i ke ola, i ola ‘oe a me kou hua.

I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live.

**Mana‘o / Thoughts**

*Life in Forgiveness*
*By Kau‘i Burgess, Community Relations Director*

Growing up, I knew nothing about Lent. All I knew was what my school friends spoke about – fasting, refraining from certain foods, and giving up candy for 40 days. In my juvenile understanding, I remember thinking that Lent must make life miserable.

Today, I understand differently. It is a time of reflection, goodness, and victories. It is a time of building up and a time of overcoming human nature. It serves as a reminder that you and I can overcome death by choosing life and that we can overcome destruction by choosing love.
Mōhala i ka wai ka maka o ka pua  
(People thrive where living conditions are good)

Hate, jealousy, and revenge always promote death – death in relationships as well as the wellbeing of people.

One day, when I was about 10, my cousin Allyn and I were fighting. While we were playing on the street, he attempted to hit me with his bike. Being two years older and a little tougher than he was, I stood still.

After the collision, Allyn found himself on the ground hurt and screaming. I ran to the house to hide, and he followed me with his green eyes full of tears.

My mom, a minister, heard his crying and immediately I was forced to mihi (ask forgiveness) for allowing him to hit me. I couldn’t believe it!

“It wasn’t my fault. He hit me!” I said. But my words fell on the ears of a minister who was herself a great example of healing relationships.

Mihi and kala (forgiveness) were to be practiced intentionally in our family, regardless of whether we thought ourselves to be in the right or wrong. Peace and strong relationships were more important to my mom than being right. It became part of who I am.

Unforgiveness can bring destruction and death to relationships. But forgiveness serves as a form of healing which not only restores, but strengthens bonds. It propels relationships on a path toward growth: a path to life.

Ke Kānāwai Māmalahoa  
(The Law of the Splintered Paddle)


The law was conceived after Kamehameha and his beloved steersman suffered blamelessly unjust harm while powerless and weak. According to history, Kamehameha was hit on the head with a canoe paddle by a Puna fisherman, Kaleleiki. His steersman – as described by Desha – was killed by the mistreatment of jealous high chiefs on Kamehameha’s court.

Created to protect the helpless, the weak and the blameless it reads: Let the old men, old women, and children lie by the roadside and no one shall harm them.
Through this law, Kamehameha brought peace to the lands he ruled, and many were saved from death.

According to Desha, even the people of Puna were forgiven for the actions of Kaleleiiki and his friend Kamanō, as Kamehameha graciously judged that they did no wrong in protecting their own lives.

**Ua ola loko i ke aloha**  
(Love is imperative to life and welfare)

Today, I do my best to practice mihi and kala at home and at work to ensure that my relationships with my children, my husband, my friends, and others around me are healthy and well. I’m certainly not perfect, but forgiveness is just one thing I learned during my childhood that can be practiced as I reflect on all that Jesus did for me on the cross.

Easter will come and go, but regardless of circumstances when a choice is laid before us to forgive or not forgive; to edify or demoralize; to uplift or ignore; to commend or condemn – may we choose life.

**Questions to Ponder**

The week before Easter, which begins with Palm Sunday, is known as Passion Week. Passion is when you feel strong emotions about something. Jesus’ emotions ran deep as he pondered all that he knew he had to do, not for his sake but for ours.

On the night he was betrayed (Thursday), he had his last supper with his followers, and he gave a final commandment – “Love one another” (Aloha i kekahi i kekahi). And he also told them to what extent they should love, “Just as I have loved you, you should love one another.”

- In order for us to truly love, we must mihi and kala. Who is there in your life that you need to ask for forgiveness from and offer forgiveness to? Don’t delay. Go and make things right so life might return to your relationship.

- Christ in his final act of love did that very thing and showed the depth of his love for us by giving himself to die on the cross. He chose death even though he could have easily escaped those who wished him harm. When have you died to your own desires in order to put others first?

- Good Friday is an odd name for the day that Jesus was crucified. It may not have been good for him to die in that excruciating manner, but he did, so he could show that not even death had control over him, for Easter would come. Take some time right now to mahalo Iesu Kristo for that sacrificial act.
Keiki Activity

- Sometimes we get into arguments with our friends, ruining our relationship. It is not easy to be with that person until we make things right. Think of someone you need to mihi and kala. Go and make things right today.

- Jesus thought of others first, throughout his life. Go and do something special for another person that would make them feel good.

Pule / Prayer

Hoʻomaikaʻi mākou iā ‘oe e Ke Akua for all your love which meant that you were willing to die so we might live. Help us to live our new lives for you, bringing maluhia and aloha wherever we go. May we find the strength to be haʻahaʻa as we mihi to those whom we have hurt, on purpose or by accident. May we also huikala those who harmed us in words or actions. We pray that this Easter will bring a special joy as we receive your lokomaikaʻi. ‘Amene.

Hīmeni / Hymn

“Create in Me” / Hoʻomaʻemaʻe Mai iaʻu

Create in me a clean heart Oh God, Hoʻomaʻemaʻe i kuʻu puʻuwai
That I might serve You. I lawelawe aku ia ʻOe
Create in me a clean heart Oh God, Hoʻomaʻemaʻe i kuʻu puʻuwai
That I might be renewed. A i hiki ke hoʻala
So fill me and heal me Hoʻopīha iaʻu hoʻola iaʻu
and bring me back to you. Hoʻihoʻi iaʻu ia ʻOe
Create in me a clean heart Oh God, Hoʻomaʻemaʻe i kuʻu puʻuwai
That I might serve You. I lawelawe aku ia ʻOe

View the video below the I Mua Newsroom story to sing the hymn along with KS Maui Hawaiian Ensemble members Makaio Lorenzo, Kahealani Benjamin, Māhie Kama, Quincee Taguchi, Sarah Ikioka and Ikaika Renaud.