

PAX CHRISTI USA COMMUNITY ADVENT SERVICE

First week of Advent – [Readings are from Wednesday, December 2nd](#)

Welcome

Opening song

Singer will be the only one unmuted but feel free to sing along wherever you are!

Lighting of candles on the Advent wreath

From their home, the Fischer family in Wauwatosa, WI will light tonight's Advent their candle on behalf of us all. We invite everyone on the call to light their own candle wherever they are.



First reading: From the book of Isaiah...

On this mountain our God
will provide for all peoples
A feast of rich food and choice wines,
juicy, rich food and pure, choice wines.
On this mountain God will destroy
the veil that veils all peoples,
The web that is woven over all nations;
God will destroy death forever.
Our GOD will wipe away
the tears from all faces;
The reproach of the people God will remove
from the whole earth; for God has spoken.

On that day it will be said:
“Behold our God, to whom we looked to save us!
This is the One for whom we looked;
let us rejoice and be glad that God has saved us!”
For the hand of God will rest on this mountain.

The word of God.

Gospel reading: From the gospel of Matthew...

At that time:
Jesus walked by the Sea of Galilee,
went up on the mountain, and sat down there.
Great crowds came to him,
having with them the lame, the blind, the deformed, the mute,
and many others.
They placed them at his feet, and he cured them.

The crowds were amazed when they saw the mute speaking,
the deformed made whole,
the lame walking,
and the blind able to see,
and they glorified the God of Israel.

Jesus summoned his disciples and said,
“My heart is moved with pity for the crowd,
for they have been with me now for three days
and have nothing to eat.
I do not want to send them away hungry,
for fear they may collapse on the way.”
The disciples said to him,
“Where could we ever get enough bread in this deserted place
to satisfy such a crowd?”
Jesus said to them, “How many loaves do you have?”
“Seven,” they replied, “and a few fish.”
He ordered the crowd to sit down on the ground.
Then he took the seven loaves and the fish,
gave thanks, broke the loaves,
and gave them to the disciples, who in turn gave them to the crowds.
They all ate and were satisfied.
They picked up the fragments left over—seven baskets full.

The gospel of our God.

A reflection from this year’s Advent-Christmas reflection booklet by Vickie Machado, former member of the Gainesville (FL) Catholic Worker and a member of the leadership team of Eco-Stewards, a creative community that shapes, inspires and connects young adult leaders through storytelling and place-based pilgrimages focused on faith and the environment

With only seven loaves and one fish Jesus feeds the masses. Math isn’t my best subject, but like many, I know enough to tell you that the numbers in the story don’t add up. It wasn’t until I started helping out at the Gainesville (FL) Catholic Worker that the story began to make sense. Our weekly community meal usually attracted 50-80 people. Everyone from homeless folks to college students would stop by for a home-cooked lunch. One afternoon, we saw a surge of people in the beginning, nearly exhausting our fruit salad and dwindling the soup from three pots to one. We still had two hours left, but little food. Over the course of the day, a friend showed up with some berries, another with an apple. Somehow a melon was found along with overlooked leftover soup in the freezer. Throughout this time, we continued to serve everyone who came through our doors and even had food left over. Loaves and fishes sustained us that day and many days as bills were paid and needs were met. It’s a constant reminder that collectively, we are the body of Christ.

> When have you seen loaves and fishes in action?

Silent reflection

We invite you to quietly reflect on tonight's reading and the question: **When have you seen loaves in action?** After our prayer service is over, we encourage you if you are with others, to share your answer to tonight's question. If you aren't with others but would like to share in a small group after tonight's prayer, we'll send everyone into breakout rooms with a few other people to share for about 20 minutes immediately following the prayer service.

(In preparation for the Prayers of the Faithful, feel free to enter into the chat any prayers you have that you want those of us on this call to lift up over the coming week.)

Prayers of the faithful

Our response is: God of peace, hear our prayer.

Closing prayer

(In 1-2 minutes everyone who wants to stay on the call will be sent to breakout rooms to discuss tonight's reading, reflection and Advent question. Breakout rooms will automatically close after 20 minutes.)