

PAX CHRISTI USA COMMUNITY LENTEN SERVICE – Holy Week

Fourth week of Lent – [Readings are from Holy Thursday, April 1st](#)

Welcome

Opening song

Singers will be the only ones unmuted but feel free to sing along wherever you are!

Litany of Repentance

LEADER: We ask forgiveness for our complicity in the violence and suffering present in our world and we repent of the violence and selfishness present in our own hearts.

Our first response will be, “Forgive us we pray.”

For hardness of heart... **ALL: “Forgive us we pray.”** (Repeat after each line.)

For wasting our gifts...

For wanting too much...

For wounding the earth...

For neglecting the poor...

For trusting in weapons...

For ignoring racial injustice...

For refusing to listen...

For exporting arms...

For desiring dominance...

For wanting to win...

For lacking humility...

For failing to risk...

For failing to trust...

For failing to act...

For failing to negotiate...

For failing to hope...

For failing to love...

For our arrogance...

For our impatience...

For our cowardice...

For our pride...

For our silence...

For our complicity...

Our next response will be, “Change our hearts.”



That we learn compassion... **ALL: "Change our hearts."** (Repeat after each line.)
That we embrace nonviolence...
That we act in justice...
That we live in hope...
That we might be strong...
That we do your will...
That we might be peace...

ALL: Amen.

First reading: From Paul's first letter to the Corinthians...

Brothers and sisters: I received from the Christ what I have also handed on to you: Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread and, after giving thanks, broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after supper, Jesus took the cup, and said, "This cup is the covenant in my blood. Whenever you drink it, do it in remembrance of me." As often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim Jesus' death until the Christ comes.

The word of God. **ALL: Thanks be to God.**

Gospel reading: From the gospel of John...

It was before Passover, and Jesus realized that the hour had come for him to pass from this world and to his loving God. Jesus had always loved his own in this world. Now he showed how complete this love was. He knew that God had put all things into his own hands, and that he had come from God and was returning to God. During supper, Jesus rose from the table, took off his clothes and wrapped a towel around his waist. He then poured some water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and dry them with the towel that was round his waist. When Jesus came to Simon Peter, Peter said, "Rabbi, you're not going to wash my feet, are you?"

Jesus answered, "You don't understand what I'm doing now, but later you'll understand." Peter replied, "You will never wash my feet!" Jesus answered, "If I don't wash you, you have no part with me." Peter said to Jesus, "Then, Rabbi, not only my feet, but my hands and my head as well." Jesus said, "Any who have bathed are clean all over and need only to wash their feet. Then, you will be clean, though not every one of you." For Jesus knew who was to betray him. That's why he said, "Not all of you are clean."

After washing the disciples' feet, Jesus put his clothes back on and returned to the table. He said, "Do you understand what I have done for you? You call me 'Teacher' and 'Leader' — and rightly so, for I am. If I, then — your Teacher and Leader — have washed your feet, you ought to wash one another's feet. I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should also do."

The gospel of our God. **ALL: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.**

A reflection from this year's Lenten reflection booklet – Anne McCarthy, osb: Anne will read her reflection and offer a few additional words to expand it to include the context we're living in today.

*I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you,
you should also do. (Jn 13:15)*

When Jesus washed his disciples' feet, he took care of their basic needs and demonstrated a love that was concrete and active. Jesus gives us a strong example of nonviolence that is central to the Gospel message. In his day, washing others' feet was the work of the lowest of servants. When Jesus washed feet, he dissolved the pattern of inequality and created true community. This message is important for us, because it is easy to talk about equality but still live in patterns of inequality.

Foot washing in community is the central worship of the international L'Arche community, a movement where people with and without intellectual disabilities share life together in communities of faith and friendship.

We sat in small circles for L'Arche Erie's Holy Thursday foot washing. I was with my housemates, a family with two children and parents, and a friend who had lived in a L'Arche home. In the ritual, all had their feet washed and all washed another's feet, moving around the circle. All receiving, all serving. Even the four-year-old was excited to wash his mother's feet and then let his sister wash his. Our friend, who needs daily physical assistance, tenderly washed and dried the feet of the person who regularly helps her. Washing feet in this liturgy sanctified the daily ways we care for each other, and revealed the reciprocal blessings of all relationships.

The room is hushed, a mantra playing, as the circles slowly and quietly move through the ritual. For all the beautiful, meaningful liturgies I participate in, this one moves me to tears with its vulnerability and tenderness.

Do this in memory of me, Jesus commands. Not necessarily washing feet, but definitely loving as he loves, in concrete actions that build true community and express the dignity of all.

*Jesus calls us to concrete, active love.
Are there symbols or rituals that speak to that love for you?*

*Jesus takes on the work of the lowest servants.
What are tasks in your life and in our culture that are considered demeaning?
Do you ever perform them? If not, could you?
Does sharing in the work change relationships??*

Silent reflection

We invite you to quietly reflect on tonight's readings and reflection, and to consider the Lenten questions posed to use from Anne's original reflection.

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. We'll take now just about 3-4 minutes of silence to reflect quietly.

(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 love, hear our prayer.

Closing prayer

Christ has no body now but yours,
No hands but yours,
No feet but yours.

Yours are the eyes through which
Christ's compassion must look out at the world.

Yours are the feet with which
Christ is to go about doing good.

Yours are the hands with which
Christ is to bless us now. Amen.

(From St. Teresa of Avila)

(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 Lenten question. Breakout rooms will automatically close after 20 minutes.)