

## PAX CHRISTI USA COMMUNITY ADVENT SERVICE – week 3

*Third week of Advent – [Readings are from Saturday, December 18th](#)*

**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 Finn-Schultz family in Jacksonville, FL will light the Advent candles tonight on behalf of us all. We invite everyone on the call to light their own candles wherever they are.

**First reading:** From the prophet Jeremiah...

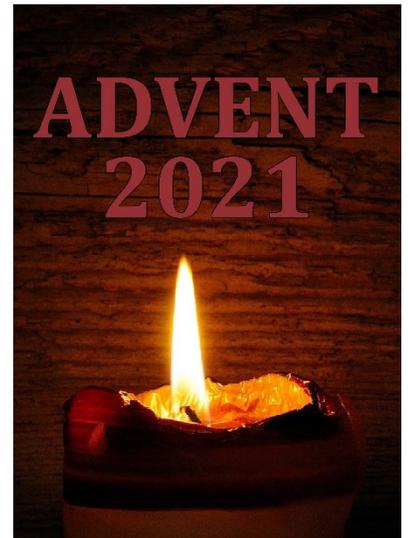
Behold, the days are coming, says God,  
when I will raise up a righteous shoot to David;  
As king he shall reign and govern wisely,  
he shall do what is just and right in the land.  
In his days Judah shall be saved,  
Israel shall dwell in security.  
This is the name they give him:  
“The LORD our justice.”

Therefore, the days will come, says God,  
when they shall no longer say, “As our God lives,  
who brought the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt”;  
but rather, “As our God lives,  
who brought the descendants of the house of Israel  
up from the land of the north”–  
and from all the lands to which I banished them;  
they shall again live on their own land.

The word of God.  
THANKS BE TO GOD.

**Gospel reading:** From the gospel of Matthew...

This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about.  
When his mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph,  
but before they lived together,  
she was found with child through the Holy Spirit.  
Joseph her husband, since he was a righteous man,  
yet unwilling to expose her to shame,  
decided to divorce her quietly.



Such was his intention when, behold,  
the angel of God appeared to him in a dream and said,  
“Joseph, son of David,  
do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home.  
For it is through the Holy Spirit  
that this child has been conceived in her.  
She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus,  
because he will save his people from their sins.”  
All this took place to fulfill  
what God had said through the prophet:

Behold, the virgin shall be with child and bear a son,  
and they shall name him Emmanuel,

which means “God is with us.”  
When Joseph awoke,  
he did as the angel had commanded him  
and took his wife into his home.  
He had no relations with her until she bore a son,  
and he named him Jesus.

The gospel of our God.  
PRAISE TO YOU LORD JESUS CHRIST.

**A reflection from this year’s Advent-Christmas reflection booklet**, by Kim Mazyck. Kim is the Director of Outreach and Partnerships with the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, and will be reading her reflection originally written in 2013 and featured in this year’s commemorative booklet. Kim worked for a long period with Catholic Relief Services and has also spent time at Catholic Charities USA and Human Rights Watch, and she is a graduate of Georgetown University. She previously also served on the Pax Christi USA National Council.

*“Therefore, the days are surely coming, says God...” (Jer 23:7)*

Advent is cited as the season of waiting and vigil. I think of Joseph in the throes of wedding planning, suddenly filled with anxiety and questioning when he learns that Mary is pregnant. While the world prepares for the joy of Christmas, it can be easy to forget about the challenges of life. When we are pushed and pulled in many directions, it is often hard to quiet our hearts and minds to hear the wise counsel of God. Joseph’s faith and his ability to hear God remind us to quiet ourselves and know that “God is with us.”

When the prophet Jeremiah speaks of people living on their own land, he is speaking of security. If we continue to listen to the Holy Spirit, we know that God will keep us safe and in the fullness of peace.

**> *In the midst of anxiety, how can you work to bring peace and security for others?***

**Silent reflection** (3-5 minutes)

We invite you to quietly reflect on tonight's reading and the question: **In the midst of anxiety, how can you work to bring peace and security for others?** 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 who stays on the call 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 hope, hear our prayer.

## **Closing prayer** (by Pax Christi USA Teacher of Peace Art Laffin)

Jesus, it is You who we seek during this Advent.  
For You are the Incarnation,  
the Word made flesh  
who dwells among us.

It is You, Jesus, our Savior, that we will follow,  
and no other earthly principality or power.  
May Your spirit of love and nonviolence fill our hearts, and the hearts of people everywhere,  
as we strive to make God's reign of justice, peace  
and love a reality in our world.

Jesus, Son of God, Human One, Healer, Peacemaker, Redeemer—our only hope,  
help us to disarm our hearts and our world of violence, racial hatred and fear.  
In this time of peril and pandemic, empower us to abolish war, all weapons—from nuclear  
weapons to killer drones to handguns, halt the climate crisis and safeguard all creation.

Help us to respect the dignity of each person, welcome the immigrant and refugees, and to resist  
and help transform structures and policies that cause and perpetuate economic exploitation,  
poverty, racism, sexism, discrimination, inequality, and social injustice.

Help us, dear Jesus, during this holy Advent season,  
to make Your Word flesh,  
to rid ourselves and our world of all that wounds, divides and destroys,  
and become channels of your peace, justice, mercy, and reconciling love.

For nothing is impossible with God!  
Come Lord Jesus! Amen.

*(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.)*