

# PAX CHRISTI USA COMMUNITY ADVENT SERVICE – week 3

*Third week of Advent – [Readings are from Monday, Dec. 12, the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe](#)*

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

One of the participants in tonight's service will light the Advent candles on behalf of us all. We invite everyone on the call to light their own candles wherever they are.

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

Sing and rejoice, O daughter Zion!  
See, I am coming to dwell among you, says your God.  
Many nations shall join themselves to God on that day,  
and they shall be her people,  
and she will dwell among you,  
and you shall know that the God of hosts has sent me to you.  
God will possess Judah as her portion in the holy land,  
and she will again choose Jerusalem.  
Silence, all humanity, in the presence of your God!  
For she stirs forth from her holy dwelling.

The word of God.  
THANKS BE TO GOD.

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

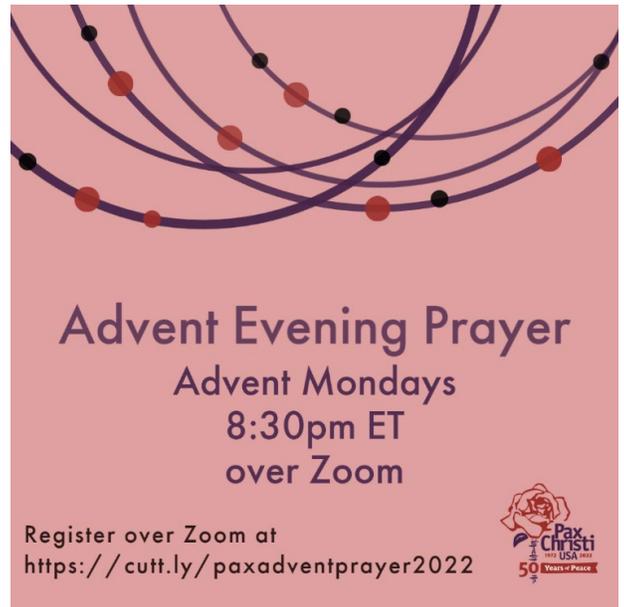
Mary set out and traveled to the hill country in haste to a town of Judah, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the infant leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit, cried out in a loud voice and said, "Most blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And how does this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For at the moment the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by God would be fulfilled."

And Mary said: "My soul proclaims the greatness of God; my spirit rejoices in God my savior."

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

**A reflection from this year's Advent-Christmas reflection booklet**, by Honorine Uwimana.

*"My soul proclaims the greatness of God; my spirit rejoices in God my savior." (Lk 1:47)*



In our Catholic liturgy tradition in East Africa, there is a part between communion and concluding rites called “Thanksgiving”, celebrated with songs, dances, hand claps, drums, gifts procession, and, sometimes, testimonies of what God is doing in people’s lives.

No matter the season or the rush of the day, that part will have everyone in the assembly celebrate in gladness and bring the Christ they 20 have just received inwardly to proclaim the good news with a thankful heart outwardly.

Mary’s thanksgiving: The Magnificat confirms once again that a thankful heart is how we make the Christ in us visible and accessible.

Upon meeting her cousin Elizabeth, Mary and Elizabeth do not speak of the discomfort of their pregnancies, their stretching bodies, or the emotional upheaval; Mary does not even talk about the journey into the hill country to Judah, the weather, or the staring crowd. Instead she proclaims the greatness of the Lord.

Mary’s thanksgiving is not “a word of gratitude but...” or “a word of worry or lamentation but...” Mary does not say: Morning sickness is unbearable, but my spirit rejoices in my Savior; or, My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord but the behind-the-doors rumors. Mary’s thanksgiving is complete and proves to be rooted in trust and faithfulness to God.

*As bearers of the good news today, what is your Magnificat?*

## **Silent reflection**

We invite you to quietly reflect on tonight's reading and the question: **As bearers of the good news today, what is your Magnificat?** 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 15 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 joy, hear our prayer.

## **Closing prayer**

Blessed mother of us,

As we journey to welcome your son,

Availing inns in our lives that are otherwise full of every day’s load of emotions and pursuit of earthly treasures, may you visit the little shrines we are building for you in our hearts and fill them with gratitude to our Lord.

Remind us of when we get absorbed by our ideals of a better world and overwhelmed by the human condition, that in the fold of your mantle and the cradle of your arms we dwell, and never goes by a day when you do not gently help us.

Teach us to see that we are of precise and precious detail to you, guide our lives to not resist your signs or despise your daily visitations, and when you send us on missions that intimidate us, give us solace and strength under your shadow and protection to not avoid the hill before us.

Mother, portal of our prayers -Pray for us

Mother, bearer of the word -Pray for us

Our lady of Guadalupe -Pray for us

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 15 minutes.)*