

PAX CHRISTI USA COMMUNITY LENTEN SERVICE – week 6

Holy Week – Readings are from Monday, April 3

Welcome

*We'll be remembering tonight: **Donald Stirling**, long-time member from Wisconsin; **Fr. Robert Jones**, longtime member with Pax Christi Southern California; and **Sue Malone**, long-time leader with Pax Christi Massachusetts*

Opening song

Opening Prayer: (A Litany for Peace, by Linda Friern and Tony Bartlett, in *The Fire of Peace*)

Let us pray to Jesus Christ that we may be set free from the chains of violence and war.

Jesus the Christ, by your cross and resurrection ... **deliver us**.
by your nonviolence and love...
by your witness to truth...
by your passion and death...
by your victory over the grave...
from the desire for power...
from the conspiracy of silence...
from the negation of life...
from the worship of weapons...
from the celebration of killing...
from the slaughter of the innocent...
from the extermination of the weak...
from the nightmare of hunger...
from the politics of terror...
from a false peace...
from relying on weapons...
from the spiral of armaments...
from plundering the earth's resources...
from the despair of this age...
from global suicide...

By the light of the Gospel ... **give us your peace**.
by the good news for the poor...
by your healing and wounds...
by faith in your word...
by a hunger and thirst for justice...
by the coming of your reign...
by the outpouring of the Spirit...
by reconciliation of enemies...
by gentleness and nonviolence...
by the truth that sets us free...

Lent 2023

Witnesses on the way

*So she ran and went to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and told them.
(John 20: 2)*



by prophecy and witness...
by persecution because of your name...
by the power of your love...

Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world ... **have mercy on us.**
Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world ... **have mercy on us.**
Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world ... **grant us peace.**

First reading: From the book of Isaiah...

Here is my servant whom I uphold, my chosen one with whom I am pleased, upon whom I have put my Spirit; he shall bring forth justice to the nations, not crying out, not shouting, not making his voice heard in the street. A bruised reed he shall not break, and a smoldering wick he shall not quench, until he establishes justice on the earth; the coastlands will wait for his teaching.

Thus says God who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spreads out the earth with its crops, who gives breath to its people and spirit to those who walk on it: I, your God, have called you for the victory of justice, I have grasped you by the hand; I formed you, and set you as a covenant of the people, a light for the nations, to open the eyes of the blind, to bring out prisoners from confinement, and from the dungeon, those who live in darkness.

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

Gospel reading: From the gospel according to John...

Six days before Passover Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. They gave a dinner for him there, and Martha served, while Lazarus was one of those reclining at table with him. Mary took a liter of costly perfumed oil made from genuine aromatic nard and anointed the feet of Jesus and dried them with her hair; the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil.

Then Judas the Iscariot, one of his disciples, and the one who would betray him, said, "Why was this oil not sold for three hundred days' wages and given to the poor?" He said this not because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief and held the money bag and used to steal the contributions.

So Jesus said, "Leave her alone. Let her keep this for the day of my burial. You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me."

The large crowd of the Jews found out that he was there and came, not only because of him, but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. And the chief priests plotted to kill Lazarus too, because many of the Jews were turning away and believing in Jesus because of him.

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

A reflection from this year's Lenten reflection booklet – Pax Christi USA Ambassador of Peace
Sr. Jane Morrissey:

Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair. (Jn 12:3)

Imagine! You are close to the household at Bethany. It's a humble place and the door is open. You're neighbors and it's six days before Passover. This morning you heard at synagogue the words of God. "I have called you. ... I have grasped you by the hand." Outside the synagogue you heard of Lazarus raised from the dead and chief priests with a plot to kill. You see Mary. You watch her hands washing Jesus' feet. You eavesdrop. Judas criticizes and Jesus says, "Leave her alone."

Do you leave? If so, what are you keeping for the day of his burial?

Silent reflection

We invite you to quietly reflect on tonight's readings and reflection, and to consider this Lenten question: ***Do you leave? If so, what are you keeping for the day of his burial?***

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

From Thomas Merton's Asian Journal

Oh God, we are one with You. You have made us one with You. You have taught us that if we are open to one another, You dwell in us. Help us to preserve this openness and to fight for it with all our hearts. Help us to realize that there can be no understanding where there is mutual rejection. Oh God, in accepting one another wholeheartedly, fully, completely, we accept You, and we thank You, and we adore You, and we love You with our whole being, because our being is in Your being, our spirit is rooted in Your spirit. Fill us then with love, and let us be bound together with love as we go our diverse ways, united in this one Spirit which makes You present in the world, and which makes You witness to the ultimate reality that is love. Love has overcome. Love is victorious. 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 Lenten question. Breakout rooms will automatically close after 20 minutes.)