



Quarterly Pax Mass
December 19, 2024 // #PaxMass
5:00 Pacific / 6:00 Mountain / 7:00 Central / 8:00 PM Eastern

Thursday of the 24th Week in Ordinary Time

Presider:

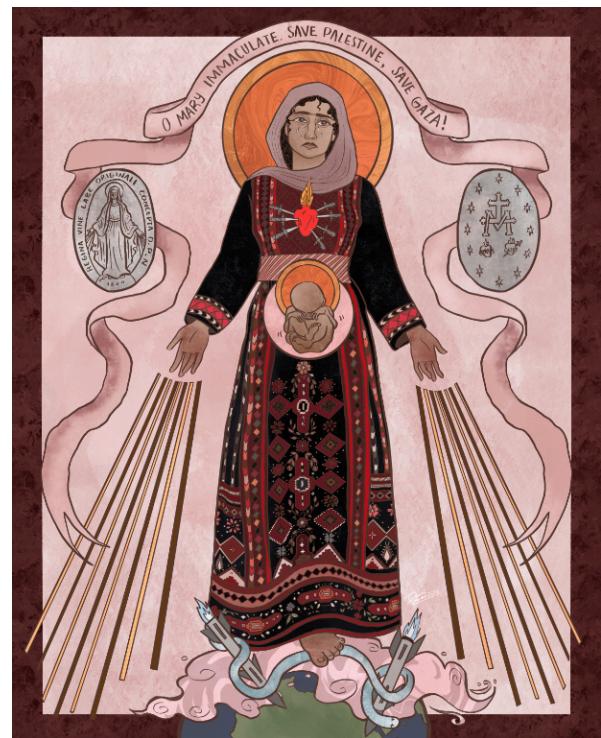
Bishop John Stowe, OFM Conv., Lexington, KY, Bishop President of Pax Christi USA
Scripture translations from [the readings for December 19 from the lectionary](#).

Welcome:

Judy Coode, Pax Christi USA Communications Director

+ We celebrate this Mass in memory of— **Donna Grimes** (Ambassador of Peace, former National Council, and Peace Pair), **Milt Jepson** (Phyllis Jepson, former staff, Pax Christi FL), **Timothy McCarthy** (a Pax Christi supporter from Virginia), **Fr. Joe Nangle, OFM** (Teacher of Peace, Ambassador of Peace, and Peace Pair), **Mark Simon** (nephew of Janice and Gerry Vanderhaar, and whose funeral is today), and **Ursula Slavick** (Pax Christi Maine).

The **Our Lady of Gaza** icon on the right is by artist Dani M. Jiménez, artist based in Costa Rica and member of the Pax Christi Young Adult Caucus (PCYAC), who will be leading us in the Responsorial Psalm this evening. **At the end of the program on pages 8 and 9, you can read Dani's statement on this piece of artwork** and view Dani's work on Instagram: **@&hersaints**.



OPENING SONG: [Ven, Jesús, Emmanuel](#)

Opening prayer

First reading Judges 13:2-7, 24-25a

Tiffany Hunsinger, Pax Christi Young Adult Caucus (PCYAC) - Dayton, OH

A reading from the book of Judges:

There was a certain man from Zorah, of the clan of the Danites,
whose name was Manoah.

His wife was barren and had borne no children.

An angel of the LORD appeared to the woman and said to her,
"Though you are barren and have had no children,
yet you will conceive and bear a son.

Now, then, be careful to take no wine or strong drink
and to eat nothing unclean.

As for the son you will conceive and bear,
no razor shall touch his head,
for this boy is to be consecrated to God from the womb.
It is he who will begin the deliverance of Israel
from the power of the Philistines."

The woman went and told her husband,
"A man of God came to me;
he had the appearance of an angel of God, terrible indeed.
I did not ask him where he came from, nor did he tell me his name.
But he said to me,
'You will be with child and will bear a son.
So take neither wine nor strong drink, and eat nothing unclean.
For the boy shall be consecrated to God from the womb,
until the day of his death.'"

The woman bore a son and named him Samson.

The boy grew up and the LORD blessed him;
the Spirit of the LORD stirred him.

The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Responsorial psalm: [Psalm 71:3-4a, 5-6ab, 16-17](#)

Dani M. Jiménez, Pax Christi Young Adult Caucus (PCYAC) - Costa Rica

Our response is: My mouth shall be filled with your praise, and I will sing your glory!

*Be my rock of refuge,
a stronghold to give me safety,
for you are my rock and my fortress.
O my God, rescue me from the hand of the wicked.*

R. My mouth shall be filled with your praise, and I will sing your glory!

*For you are my hope, O LORD;
my trust, O God, from my youth.
On you I depend from birth;
from my mother's womb you are my strength.*

R. My mouth shall be filled with your praise, and I will sing your glory!

*I will treat of the mighty works of the LORD;
O God, I will tell of your singular justice.
O God, you have taught me from my youth,
and till the present I proclaim your wondrous deeds.*

R. My mouth shall be filled with your praise, and I will sing your glory!

Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel: [Luke 1:5-25](#)

Bishop John Stowe, OFM Conv., Lexington, KY, Bishop President of Pax Christi USA

A reading from the Gospel according to Luke

Glory to you, O Lord.

In the days of Herod, King of Judea,
there was a priest named Zechariah
of the priestly division of Abijah;
his wife was from the daughters of Aaron,
and her name was Elizabeth.
Both were righteous in the eyes of God,
observing all the commandments
and ordinances of the Lord blamelessly.

But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren
and both were advanced in years.

Once when he was serving as priest
in his division's turn before God,
according to the practice of the priestly service,
he was chosen by lot
to enter the sanctuary of the Lord to burn incense.

Then, when the whole assembly of the people was praying outside
at the hour of the incense offering,
the angel of the Lord appeared to him,
standing at the right of the altar of incense.
Zechariah was troubled by what he saw, and fear came upon him.

But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah,
because your prayer has been heard.
Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son,
and you shall name him John.
And you will have joy and gladness,
and many will rejoice at his birth,
for he will be great in the sight of the Lord.
He will drink neither wine nor strong drink.
He will be filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb,
and he will turn many of the children of Israel
to the Lord their God.
He will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah
to turn the hearts of fathers toward children
and the disobedient to the understanding of the righteous,
to prepare a people fit for the Lord."

Then Zechariah said to the angel,
"How shall I know this?
For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years."
And the angel said to him in reply,
"I am Gabriel, who stand before God.
I was sent to speak to you and to announce to you this good news.
But now you will be speechless and unable to talk
until the day these things take place,

because you did not believe my words,
 which will be fulfilled at their proper time."

Meanwhile the people were waiting for Zechariah
 and were amazed that he stayed so long in the sanctuary.
 But when he came out, he was unable to speak to them,
 and they realized that he had seen a vision in the sanctuary.
 He was gesturing to them but remained mute.

Then, when his days of ministry were completed, he went home.

After this time his wife Elizabeth conceived,
 and she went into seclusion for five months, saying,
 "So has the Lord done for me at a time when he has seen fit
 to take away my disgrace before others."

The Gospel of our God.

ALL: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

Homily: Bishop John Stowe, OFM Conv.



[PLEASE TYPE YOUR INTENTIONS IN THE CHAT]

Prayers of the Faithful

Reader: Stephen Niamke

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

For Pope Francis and other leaders of our Church, that they be guided by the wisdom of the Holy Spirit and walk with the people of God in our shared journey of faith. (*Pause for silent prayer*) God of peace, hear our prayer.

For the nations and peoples suffering through war and violent conflict, especially Palestine, Sudan, Haiti, Yemen, Ukraine, Colombia, Mexico, the Philippines, and so many other areas of the world, that nonviolent solutions will be found and peace will prevail. (*Pause for silent prayer*) God of peace, hear our prayer.

For an end to all war and preparations for war, and for a conversion of our military budget to one that serves true human needs. (*Pause for silent prayer*) God of peace, hear our prayer.

For those impacted by the criminal justice system, for those on death row, for those affected by gun violence, for their families, for victims, and for victims' families, that they might find comfort, mercy and justice. (*Pause for silent prayer*) God of peace, hear our prayer.

For our country as we prepare for a change in political leadership, that we as a community stand together to support what is just and right, and to prayerfully, nonviolently, and creatively resist that which must be rejected. (*Pause for silent prayer*) God of peace, hear our prayer.

For all the members of this community who have died, especially Fr. Joe Nangle, Donna Grimes, Milt Jepson, Timothy McCarthy, Mark Simon, and Ursula Slavick, that God's light may shine on them and on all we have lost. (*Pause for silent prayer*) God of peace, hear our prayer.

... [Intentions from the chat]

[Close with:] For these and all the intentions on our hearts tonight, let us pray to the Lord.

All: God of peace, hear our prayer.



Liturgy of the Eucharist **Invitation to Prayer**

Prayer over the Gifts

The Lord be with you.

All: And with your spirit.

Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: It is right and just.

Preface

All: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts.

Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

Eucharistic Prayer

Mystery of Faith

Doxology

All: Amen

The Lord's Prayer

Sign of peace: We invite you to extend a sign of peace through the screen to all gathered!

Lamb of God

COMMUNION RITE and Communion

Communion Song: [Pan de Vida](#), Bob Hurd and Pia Moriarty

Pan de Vida, cuerpo del Señor,
 cup of blessing, blood of Christ the Lord.
 At this table the last shall be first.
 Poder es servir, porque Dios es amor.

We are the dwelling of God,
 fragile and wounded and weak.
 We are the body of Christ,
 called to be the compassion of God.

Pan de Vida, cuerpo del Señor,
 santa copa, Cristo Redentor.
 Su justicia nos convertirá.
 Poder es servir, porque Dios es amor.

Prayer after Communion

Final blessing

Announcements and goodwill offering – Daniel Francis, Director of Development

- Last Monday Advent reflection service next week - December 23
- On page 8 and 9 of the program for this evening, artist Dani M. Jiménez shares more on her icon, Our Lady of Gaza.

Closing song: "*Go Tell It On the Mountain*" in Arabic: [Roh Zoron Bebayton](#)

**BRIEF STATEMENT FOR THE PAX MASS
FROM ARTIST DANI M. JIMÉNEZ**
DECEMBER 19, 2024

Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal has earned her name through her countless miracles. In my own short life, I've seen plenty enough to know she does not forsake a promise. This is the Miraculous Medal of Gaza, also called Our Lady of Gaza. It's a digital piece I painted back in November 2023, when the horror was still fresh. When I first posted it, certain friendships ended, and people around me warned me about oh-so-publicly sympathizing with terrorism. It riddled me with shame more than anger. Because I have been pro-Palestinian since I first knew what Palestine was. Clearly, I had not been vocal enough.

This piece was and still is dedicated to a longtime friend, Wafa El-Rayes, and her family. Wafa and I met over three years ago, and she is an incredible Palestinian-Canadian writer and journalist. She conducted an interview for CBC Radio where she interviewed a family member in Gaza who was seven months pregnant at the time. When this interview happened, this cousin said that she knew she had to deliver via c-section, with no anesthesia available in the Strip. Wafa's family was able to get her out of Gaza in the end, and she was able to deliver her baby boy in Cairo safely.

However, this was not the case for all 50,000 pregnant women in Gaza at the beginning of this acceleration of genocide. Only God will know what was of those 50,000 women.

Only a miracle can stop this killing machine, set in motion by greed and thirst for power. However, I want to reframe our thinking of this word: 'miracle.' in this sense. Saint Teresa of Ávila has this beautiful poem:

"Christ has no body but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks
Compassion on this world,
Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good,
Yours are the hands, with which he blesses all the world.
Yours are the hands, yours are the feet,



Yours are the eyes, you are his body.
Christ has no body now but yours,"

Yes, through God's grace and miracles, Palestine *will* be free. But Palestine ought to be free first in our minds, in our actions, in our hearts, and in our love for our Palestinian neighbors. You and I have an active duty in all this, both in physical works of mercy and in prayer. Place your trust in God and in Love, and never allow your heart to harden. We do not have the luxury of hopelessness; there is far too much work ahead of us.

Thus, I say:

Holy Virgin, Mother of Christ, pray for us.
Blessed Virgin of the Miraculous Medal, pray for Gaza.
Mother of Hope, pray for your homeland.
Mary of Nazareth, Mother of God, pray for Palestine.