Pax Christi USA Lenten prayer service, week 3
March 9, 2026

Opening song - The peace of the earth, Guatemalan traditional, translation by Christine Carson, music by John Bell

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Opening litany

RESPONSE: ***Forgive us, we pray***

For our hardness of heart…
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…

RESPONSE: ***Change our hearts***

That we learn compassion…
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 instruments for peace…

ALL: ***Amen***

Gospel reading: John 4:5-15, 19b-26, 39a, 40-42

Jesus came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of land that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there. Jesus, tired from his journey, sat down there at the well. It was about noon.

A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." His disciples had gone into the town to buy food. The Samaritan woman said to him, "How can you, a Jew, ask me, a Samaritan woman, for a drink?" —For Jews use nothing in common with Samaritans.— Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God and who is saying to you, 'Give me a drink, ' you would have asked him and he would have given you living water." The woman said to him, "Sir, you do not even have a bucket and the cistern is deep; where then can you get this

living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us this cistern and drank from it himself with his children and his flocks?"

Jesus answered and said to her, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again; but whoever drinks the water I shall give will never thirst; the water I shall give will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life." The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I may not be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water.

"I can see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain; but you people say that the place to worship is in Jerusalem." Jesus said to her, "Believe me, woman, the hour is coming when you will worship neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You people worship what you do not understand; we worship what we understand, because salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and is now here, when true worshipers will worship in Spirit and truth. God is Spirit, and those who worship must worship in Spirit and truth." The woman said to him, "I know that the Messiah is coming, the one called the Christ; when he comes, he will tell us everything." Jesus said to her, "I am he, the one who is speaking with you."

Many of the Samaritans of that town began to believe in him. When the Samaritans came to him, they invited him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days. Many more began to believe in him because of his word, and they said to the woman, "We no longer believe because of your word; for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the savior of the world."

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

"Sacred waters": A reflection on this Sunday's Gospel, John 4:5-42, the Samaritan woman at the well, by Amy Woolam Echeverria

We belong to the land, the land does not belong to us. What stirred in you listening to the story of the Samaritan Woman and Amy's reflection on the Subanens in the Philippines? How are water or other natural resources in your area impacted by violence? How has consumption, environmental racism, militarism, or eco-tourism harmed sacred water and what nonviolent actions have been taken or could be taken?

Prayers of the faithful

The first three prayers are from the Season of Creation Catholic Liturgical Guide (2025):

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

That God will open our minds and hearts to turn from the conscious and unconscious ways we are part of the devastating actions and systems that are driving the destruction of Earth and all for whom it is home, we pray...
That we may be open to God's mercy and forgiveness and embrace Christ's challenging mission for us to bring healing care to Creation, our common home, we pray...
That we may deepen our gratitude for nature's rich web of life within which we live, that we may learn to listen to its wisdom and learn, and that we may grow in openness to wiser and more just ways of caring for it and sharing it, we pray...
We pray for our legislators, state and local elected leaders and all associated with our government that they will find the grace to make decisions that benefit our common home and people over profits.
We pray for all in the Pax Christi community who have recently passed away, especially those whose names we now share. May their witness and lives continue to light our way on the path of peace and nonviolence.

Closing prayer

Adapted for tonight from *The Fire of Peace* and *Our Prayers Rise Like Incense: Liturgies for Peace* by Pax Christi USA.

> O God, we believe that peacemaking means bearing fruit, even in the midst of drought.
>
> It means planting seeds even though we may never see the flower.
>
> It means never losing sight of the vision promised by You.
>
> We hold fast to Your word that one day swords will be beaten into plowshares.
>
> May we, as peacemakers, stake our lives on that promise.
>
> We ask this through your life-giving Spirit.

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If you're looking for other resources for prayer, study and action for this second week of Lent, go to https://paxchristiusa.org/lent-2026/.