

**Pax Christi USA Lenten prayer service, week 6**  
**March 30, 2026**

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*This week's prayer service was organized by members of the Pax Christi USA Anti-Racism Team.*

**Opening song:** [This Little Light of Mine](#)

**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**

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**First reading, [Isaiah 42:1-7](#)**

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, the LORD, 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, the LORD, 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 the Lord

**All: Thanks be to God.**

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**Gospel reading, John 12:1-11**

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 the Lord.

**All: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.**

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**Reflection**, from Michael Martín's reflection for today from Pax Christi USA's booklet *Peace compels us: Reflections for Lent 2026*:

“I, the LORD, have called you for the victory of justice...”

Isaiah’s daring claim that the Anointed “shall bring forth justice to the nations” seems impossible enough. As a promise fit for the deepest longings of our hearts, it’s at least easy to grasp. But it’s the how that truly baffles. The Anointed, Isaiah continues, will usher justice “not crying out, not shouting, not making his voice heard in the street.” What does that say about us? I mean, the very music of the peace movement is shouting in the street. The prophet goes further: “A bruised reed he shall not break, and a smoldering wick he shall not quench...” How can God restore order to the world without breaking a few reeds? The more I think about it, the more I’m convinced that such total justice is only God’s to give. Only the Creator can ensure that nothing — not a wanton drop of costly perfume — can be wasted, that nothing will be lost. Likewise, only the Creator can guarantee that the reeds already broken will — like Lazarus — be raised up again, redirected to their blessed purposes. I welcome the reminder now as we plod this final stretch to Easter. Yes, poverty is still with us, as Jesus so plainly puts it. But since we know nothing is wasted, nothing lost; since we know every drop — every prayer, every action, no matter how impossible the odds — will seed God’s final restoration, we trust that we will rise in peace.

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### **Silent reflection**

*We invite you to quietly reflect on tonight's readings and reflection, and to consider this Lenten question: How can we help assure that the broken reeds we encounter in life will be raised up again?*

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### **Prayers of the faithful**

For world leaders, that they would place the lives of the most vulnerable at the center to ensure peace and justice in the world. ***Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer***

For those in detention centers in the United States and abroad, that they may hope in You who sets prisoners free. ***Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.***

For all people who are suffering the effects of war, that You would keep families safe and protected, and bring all wars to an end. ***Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.***

For the people of the United States – that we may bring fragrant oil, like Martha and Mary of Bethany, not counting the cost, to all those suffering injustice. ***Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.***

For the Church, that she will continue to speak boldly and fearlessly against all actions that violate human dignity. ***Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.***

For parishes and churches that are segregated along the lines of language or race, that they may take up the work of solidarity and communion. ***Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.***

For Pax Christi, that we may be the light of Christ to those suffering in fear and darkness. ***Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.***

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### **Closing prayer**

God of now, we come before you in profound reverence and gratitude as we walk with Jesus on this Via Dolorosa let us stand as our Mother Mary and not recoil. Isaiah reminds us of our steadfast call to the victory and triumph of your justice.

Our eyes are wide open. Continue to unveil in each of us as your Pax Christi community the tenets of your truth, your light and your ways of proceeding.

We are rooted in you as we live the call to antiracism and unambiguous justice. We are yours. Embolden us through the Spiritual Authority of your Holy Spirit to stand up, speak up and move. Let the world see and feel who we are and what we stand for in these darkened ambiguous days of threatened democracy, violence, disordered thinking and events. We are not afraid. Help us to reassure by our every breath, word and action particularly to our immigrant and less fortunate brothers and sisters they are not alone. Fortify our spiritual armor of presence, integrity, mercy, materials, influence, reconciliation, respect, gratitude, kindness, skills, infallible joy, unity, nonviolence, spiritual listening, pause, light and a profound awe and reverence for all of your creation. Guide us to more deeply trust our “unknowing.” Let us find comfort in knowing you made our hearts magnanimous enough to hold joy, love, misunderstanding and pain at the same time.

Merciful God, as we enter the Via Dolorosa with our eyes wide open, let us see your son, be with your son and become your son. Let us to step up and let his flesh become our flesh, his sweat, our sweat, his breath our breath, his thirst our thirst, his pain and suffering our pain and suffering. Let’s call this senseless violence for what it is in all its gore, blood, abandonment, humiliation and disfigurement.

Let us be more present to Jesus now than ever before. We know that your every desire has a profound purpose and meaning beyond our understanding. Let us surrender our desires to your desires so that all that we think, feel and do will better praise love and serve you.

Amen

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**Closing song – [Ain't Gonna Let Nobody](#)**