

Monthly Magazine of Pax Christi Catholic Community in Eden Prairie December 2019

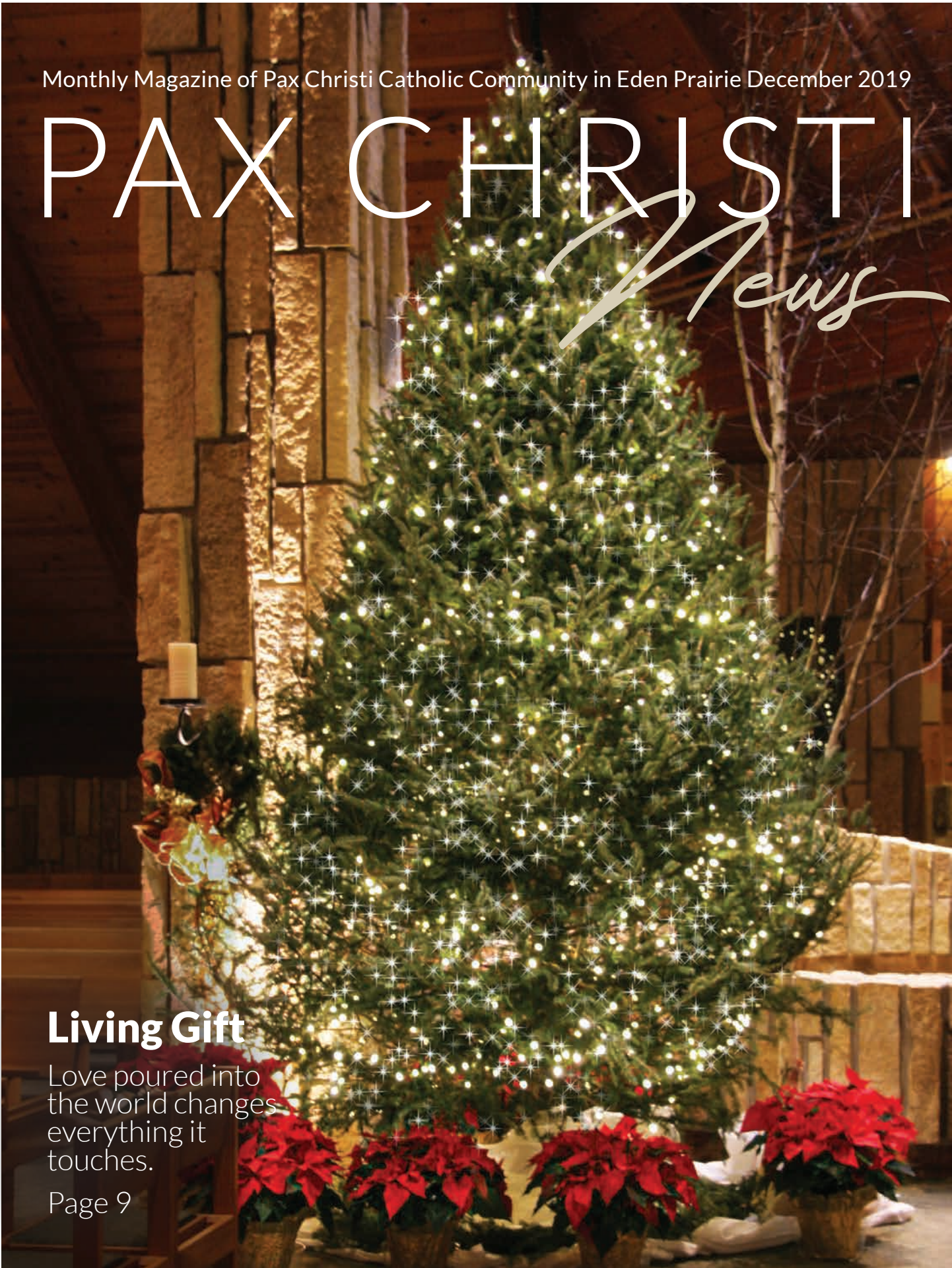
PAX CHRISTI

News

Living Gift

Love poured into
the world changes
everything it
touches.

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PAX CHRISTI

Catholic Community

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Phone: 952-941-3150 Website: www.paxchristi.com

Office Hours

Monday–Thursday 8:00am–4:30pm
Friday 8:00am–12:00pm

Mission Statement: As a community of faith nourished by the Eucharist, we are committed in our discipleship with Christ to act for justice, be of generous service, and authentically welcome all to Pax Christi Catholic Community.

Values: God-Centered, Justice, Inclusion, Spiritual Growth, Stewardship, and Lay Leadership.

Mass Schedule

Saturday	5:00pm
Sunday	9:00am, 11:00am, 5:00pm
Mondays	8:30am
Tuesdays	8:30am
Wednesdays	6:00pm
Thursdays	8:30am
Fridays	8:30am

Rosary prayed following weekday morning Masses.
Nursery available at all Sunday Masses.
Interpreter for hearing impaired at 11:00am Mass.

Sacrament of Reconciliation (private)

Saturdays (Advent) 3:30–4:30pm

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A Feast of Peace

Making Bethlehem Present in Christmas Celebration

On Christmas Eve of 1223, just a few years before his death, Saint Francis of Assisi celebrated the Feast of Christmas with the people of the Rieti Valley in Greccio, a very small town situated in the hills northeast of Rome. They gathered together because Francis wanted to restore the memory of the Christ child who was born in Bethlehem. His attention was focused on the simplicity, poverty, and humility of that child who was born in Bethlehem. Thomas of Celano, Francis' first biographer, states that "there simplicity is given a place of honor, poverty is exalted, and humility is commended, and out of Greccio is made a new Bethlehem."

Even though they were experiencing the darkness of that night, Thomas proclaimed that "the night was as the day," signifying that an extraordinary light permeated the darkness of the world. The entire celebration, therefore, was in remembrance of the "Light that had come into the world" (John 3:19) who came to conquer sin and death. This Light brings to the world grace and newness of life!

Fr. Steve McMichael
OFM Conv.



As Thomas of Celano recounts the story of what happened in Greccio, he switches from the past to the present tense to draw the reader into the events of that evening. We are invited into the scene in which a friend of Francis' from Rieti invites all the inhabitants to join with the Poverello from

Assisi in this celebration of the *Word becoming flesh and dwelling among us* (John 1:14).

As they could, the men and women of that land with exultant hearts prepare candles and torches to light up that night whose shining star has enlightened every day and year. Finally, the holy man of God comes and, finding all things prepared, *he saw them and was glad* (John 8:36). Indeed, the manger is prepared, the hay carried in, and the ox and the ass are led to the spot... *The night is lit up like day* (Psalm 139:12), delighting both people and beast. The people arrive, ecstatic at this new mystery of new joy. The forest amplifies the cries and the boulders echo back the joyful crowd.

We have a "live" Christmas crib scene in which all of creation joins in this joyful celebration!

They celebrate the liturgy of Christmas that evening. Francis, as a deacon, preached to them about Jesus who he calls "the poor king" and "the babe from Bethlehem." This child was born in complete humility and poverty in the "poor city of Bethlehem." The emphasis is entirely about how Jesus as a baby entered into the vulnerable state of any human child who is born in the state of poverty.

He then states that a virtuous person of the area saw a miracle: he saw a little child lying lifeless in the manger and Francis approach the child to "awaken him from a deep sleep." Thomas of Celano claims that this vision was fitting since the people of Francis' day had been *given over to oblivion* (Psalm 31:13) signifying that this child had been forgotten in the world. The reenactment of that evening impressed on their memories of those who were there the



importance of the Christmas celebration. This child was now awake because the people gathered for this event were now fully aware to the meaning of this birth that had happened twelve hundred years before.

Naming Greccio the “New Bethlehem” was to show Christians that they did not have to wage war—Francis lived during the age of the Crusades—in order to celebrate Christ’s birth. Christians could celebrate Christmas anywhere in the world when they reenacted the birth of Christ in their local places. They did not need to go to the exact place of Christ’s birth; they could celebrate it anywhere of their choosing. All they had to do was make the memory of what happened in Bethlehem present in their Christmas celebration. Thus Christmas is a Feast of Peace.

Francis’ desire was to show that the Light of the world who came into the world some twelve hundred years before was still present in the world. Lights are one of the main symbols of the Christmas

Feast. As we experience the lights of Christmas, we should remember that we are all called by the One who was the Light of the world to be bearers of light to our world.

As the Gospel passage indicates today, the Feast of Christmas is not only about the memory of what happened two thousand years ago, but how the tender compassion of God is breaking upon us now, shining in the darkness of the world around us, even conquering the shadow of sin and death, guiding our own feet into the way of peace (see Luke 1:79). Because the “Word has become flesh” has entered our world, we are now the bearers of Christ’s mercy, compassion, light, and peace.

The Word became
flesh and made
his dwelling among
us. (John 1:14)

Francis of Assisi – The Saint: Early Documents, vol. 1, eds. Regis J. Armstrong, J. A. Wayne Hellmann, and William J. Short (New York: New City Press, 1999), pages 254-257.



Living Gift

**When we give most gifts, they disappear.
There is one exception. The gift of love remains.**

Love poured into the world changes everything it touches. I encountered a gift like this on a recent trip to Ireland. When my husband and I were in Killarney, we visited the Muckross Estate and Gardens.

On the tour we learned the story of this epic estate. It had been owned by some of the most prominent families in Ireland, including the Guinness family. The sheer size of the estate, wars, and economic hardship led to its decline.

Its fortunes changed when a family from California bought the estate and 13,000 acres of land. William Bowers Bourn purchased it as a wedding gift for his beloved daughter, Maud. When she died unexpectedly, her family chose to give it as a gift in her honor to Ireland.

What is incredible about this gift is that it included the Killarney National Forest. It's an enchanted forest with moss-covered trees that stretch to the sky. There are shades of green in every hue, waterfalls, sparkling lakes, mountains, valleys, paths, and breathtaking vistas.

Killarney National Forest is a national treasure enjoyed by people from all over the world. It became the first national park in Ireland.

The gift from the Bourn-Vincent family inspired Ireland to donate an additional 10,000 acres of forest. Spending time in this magical place was possible because of a father's love for his daughter and her love of Ireland.

The legacy of generosity blesses the giver and the recipient. Often, strangers are blessed by generous acts by people completely unknown to them. I was one of them. I knew that I was standing on sacred ground in that forest.

When I recently attended a funeral of one of our beloved founders, I was reminded that it was a small group of women who imagined Pax Christi before a foundation was ever poured. I believe that the Holy Spirit was dreaming with them in this expansive work of God.

Today, as we look around the campus of Pax Christi, we see the inspiring work of the *laborers in the vineyard*. Many people built Pax Christi, and many people steward our beautiful community. We are grateful for this outpouring of faith, love, and generosity.

Pax Christi is a living gift. It touches and changes so many lives.

Written by Maura Schnorbach, Director of Development and Engagement



Killarney Forest



Year-End Giving

The tax law changes that took effect in 2018 prevent many households from deducting charitable contributions on their tax returns, but there are still ways to get a tax break on contributions to Pax Christi.

STOCK: If you donate appreciated stock or mutual funds to Pax Christi, you avoid any long-term capital gains tax on the appreciation. If you are still able to itemize your deductions, you can also take a deduction for the full market value of the stock.

REQUIRED MINIMUM DISTRIBUTIONS: If you are at least 70.5 years old and taking required minimum distributions (RMD) from your traditional IRA, you can take advantage of a Qualified Charitable Distribution by making a direct transfer from your IRA to Pax Christi. Your contribution is counted as part of your RMD. But, because the money doesn't go to you, it won't increase your adjusted gross income.

BUNCH YOUR DONATIONS: Time your contributions to shift more contributions into a single tax year or consider a donor-advised fund, which allows you to bunch and still make annual contributions.

Consult with your tax advisor for more details about the option that is best for you or contact Sue Fier in the parish office at 952-405-7202.

Advent and Christmas

Sacrament of Reconciliation (Private)	Saturdays, November 30, December 7, 14, 21	3:30-4:30pm
First Sunday of Advent		December 1
Second Sunday of Advent		December 8
Feast of the Immaculate Conception	Morning Mass	December 9 8:30am
Advent Reconciliation Service	<i>Opportunity for individual confessions following the service.</i>	December 10 7:00pm
Third Sunday of Advent		December 15
Fourth Sunday of Advent		December 22
Christmas Eve		December 24
Children's Christmas Eve Mass	Fr. McMichael	2:00pm
Christmas Mass	Fr. Byron	4:00pm
Christmas Mass	Fr. McMichael	7:00pm
Lessons and Carols		9:30pm
Solemn Celebration of Christmas	Fr. Byron	10:00pm
Christmas Day		December 25
Christmas Mass	Fr. Byron	9:00am
Christmas Mass	Fr. Byron	11:00am
Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph		December 28/29
Regular Weekend Mass and Reconciliation Schedule		
Feast of Mary, Mother of God		January 1
Holy Day Mass		9:00am
Feast of the Epiphany		January 4/5
Regular Weekend Mass and Reconciliation Schedule		
Baptism of the Lord		January 11/12
Regular Weekend Mass and Reconciliation Schedule		

www.paxchristi.com/advent



An Advent Invitation to Modern Day Prophets

Every Advent, I find myself drawn to the writings of the prophets. Too often, we simplistically think of them as “fortune tellers” when, in reality, they were God’s truth tellers who provided the corrective vision for what was wrong in the present. Pax Christi is committed to forming modern day prophets who will do likewise. Are you open to this particular call? If so, read on!

Beginning in January, we will be offering the brand new *JustMatters* series, *Faith & Racial Equity: Exploring Power and Privilege*. It is an eight-week module that awakens groups to the economic systems, public policies, cultural norms, and hidden biases that empower some and oppress others. The first half of the module introduces a framework for understanding and recognizing racial disparities in power and privilege. Sessions five through eight take a deeper dive into specific issues related to power and privilege, including affirmative action, the school-to-prison pipeline, the criminal justice system, and powerful biases in media representation. Participants will explore how their faith should inform their response to their learning, as well as discern action steps for working toward racial equity in their own communities.

The module is designed for participants who are willing to wrestle with hard questions and take an honest look at their own attitudes, assumptions, and choices. Through spiritual grounding and community-building, participants find support and belonging throughout their journey to personal transformation and social action.

Immersion and Retreat

In order to build community and Scriptural grounding, the series begins with a one-day retreat during which participants join in prayer, introspective reflection, and holy conversation around their personal experiences with race and privilege. The immersion connects participants with community organizations already engaged in racial justice efforts. This real-world experience guides groups in discerning how they can put their learning into action.

Sessions

Participants commit to participating in eight, two-and-a-half-hour sessions. The sessions take place weekly, and we are offering two different options: Wednesday afternoons or Thursday evenings. All sessions include prayer, dialogue, active listening, and relationship-building. In addition, participants will read two books that will challenge them with stories and concepts to transform their understanding of racism and privilege in their local and national contexts.

Registration

Registration is now open on the parish website. If you have questions or are in need of additional information, feel free to contact either Joan Howe-Pullis, or Scott Brazil, Director of Faith Formation.

Written by Scott Brazil, Director of Faith Formation





Weaving Advent Ribbons of Hope

Our Call to Prophetic Courage

The scriptures of Advent grace the Christian world with words of idyllic comfort, particularly from the prophet Isaiah. Familiar texts like “beating swords into plowshares, and spears into pruning hooks,” (2: 4) and “the wolf shall be a guest of the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the young lion shall browse together, with a little child to guide them” (11:6). However, the work of the prophet, the work of Advent, the work of us, is to ensure that the peaceable kingdom of God is not theoretical but is realizable because of our desire to pursue and call forth what is good, right, true, and holy in this world.

The enemy of action is fear, and the enemy of fear is action. Young activists of our day—like Malala Yousafzai, speaking for the right for girls to be educated, or Greta Thunberg, advocating for action on climate change, or the student survivors of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas shootings, organizing the March for Our Lives to bring awareness of the need for gun control, or Mari Copeny, promoting the right to have clean water—are all leading and guiding the adult world while modeling that prophetic hard work and fearlessness to bring about peace, justice, and goodness in our world. These are young believers who have chosen to stand before our world with a fiery spirit to point out wrongs that can be righted.

The scriptures are still ours to explore so that they may have a transformative effect on our lives if taken seriously. One of our Advent songs this year speaks to the prophetic considerations we must focus on as Christians:

*God, you call us to be prophets, who pursue an end to hate,
Confronting all the structures that bar and separate.
God, receive our honest effort when we build up something new,
And guide us as we fashion our work to honor you.*

Text: Adam Tice, Copyright GIA publications

We are called in this new liturgical year of service to be praying and working for healing, wholeness, and right relationships. What will be our response? For what do we pray? What is the light we should walk in? What can we see in the Light?

This Advent, you are invited to share your commitment to create change in our world by scribing your action(s) on the Advent Ribbon Wall in the back of the worship space. Perhaps we don't (yet) have the advocacy stage that our young leaders have presented, but the invitation is ours now to create something more beautiful in our section of the world we walk today, in our homes, in our relationships, in our schools and work places, so that goodness, justice, and truth may reign, and the Incarnation of the Christ is made present.

*Written by Jane Schmitz, Parish Director,
and Donna Kasbohm, Director of Liturgy and Music*



Grief at Christmas

Our grief journeys are as individual as the pine tree we choose to grace our homes at Christmas. When confronted with loss, we prefer Christmas celebrations that respect our personal grief and honor the memory of our loved one.

As mourners, Christmas festivities often intensify our heartbreak. Holiday music resounds throughout malls. A favorite carol elicits longing for our loved one, and a co-worker's merriment magnifies our loneliness. Tears flow at the beauty of a peaceful December snowfall. Family Christmas tasks seem overwhelming.

I was 22 years old the October day my oldest brother died in a small airplane crash. My shock, bewilderment, and deep sadness influenced my grief experience that first Christmas.

Through family losses, I have learned the importance of maintaining my well-being. An overarching recommendation is to accept our current reality. Emotional healing happens in small steps. We are vulnerable, sensitive, and may fear our sadness will erupt into sobs. We feel like skipping Christmas. We think about and miss our loved one every day.

Author Marianne Williamson believes, "In every heart there is an inner room, where we can hold our greatest treasures and deepest pain." Experienced mourners believe *listening to our heart* and *honoring choices that fit our experience* can guide our resilience.

Our listening begins when we connect with our *inner room*, our interior self. We pause for five to 20 minutes for focused, intentional time. Classic choices include centering prayer, gratitude prayer, breath meditation, journaling, art, soothing music, or downloading a compassionate TED talk. If the adage, *motion changes emotion* is more appealing, we choose a nature walk, gentle yoga, centering dance, t'ai chi chin, or any favorite exercise.

When honoring choices that fit us, we plan and connect with a trusted friend who listens with compassion. We decide when a holiday party emotionally fits us. When needed, we ask for help to complete tasks. We share memories of our loved one. We discuss our family celebrations, our options, and our preferred Christmas.

Additionally, we may contact Pax Christi's BeFriender Ministry for one-to-one support.

We may contact the Southwest Grief Coalition (SWGCC) for education and small group support. We seek resources

provided by Brighter Days Grief Center.

During this Christmas season, may our heartfelt efforts to listen, to plan, and to make choices open our grief journey to moments of resilience, laughter, and merriment.

Christmas blessings.

Written by Carolyn von Weiss, Care and Support Council Member

**In every heart
there is an
inner room, where
we can hold our
greatest treasures
and deepest pain.**

(Marianne Williamson)

A Design for Community

Belonging. We all need to feel like we belong to one another; as though we are part of something greater than ourselves. We hopefully feel as though we belong to our families, our friends, our culture, and yes, our church.

The Arts, Campus, and Gardens Council has embraced the value of **STEWARDSHIP** through its continued focus on improving and enhancing both the inside and the outside of Pax Christi. We want our space to support the gifts that all of us bring to our community. We strive that the worship space, as well as the gardens, paths, and reflective spaces, will encourage spiritual growth and bring people together to help them feel as though they belong.

The Arts, Campus, and Gardens Council takes the idea of stewardship very seriously as we understand that our leadership is a temporary role which is outlasted by the life of Pax Christi. Through intentional stewardship, the Arts, Campus, and Gardens Council undertook a mission of establishing a Master Plan for the grounds of Pax Christi, focusing on taking the gardens and surrounding property forward for the next several years. The entire proposal from the design firm, Calyx, will be available for the community to view online. Some of these ideas include making small changes to the gardens to make them easier to tend, making some changes to the parking lot to create a safer way for people to come and go, and improving our lighting on the property to increase visibility and safety as well as to be more welcoming. Providing designated parking spots for first responders, veterans, or those visiting our parish may also be considered.

The Master Plan provides a road map that will serve the people of Pax Christi well into the future by drawing attention to and creating a greater sense of community. It is through our stewardship and commitment to share our gifts, whatever they may be, that we are able to continue to cultivate a space of inclusion where all are welcome and all belong.

Written by Julie Tyler, Arts, Campus, and Gardens Council Chair



Pax Christi Values

GOD-CENTERED ~ We hold God as the center of our daily lives and provide a place for spiritual rest and rejuvenation.

JUSTICE ~ We advocate for the marginalized and act as catalysts for systemic change.

INCLUSION ~ We build relationships and create an inclusive culture through our attitudes, actions, and activities.

SPIRITUAL GROWTH ~ We engage in a lifelong process of spiritual growth and continually learn how to live out our faith.

STEWARDSHIP ~ We acknowledge our God-given gifts and put them into action as we pray, serve, and share.

LAY LEADERSHIP ~ We co-lead and share in the responsibility of upholding the mission of the church.

Honoring Our Lady of Guadalupe

History of Our Lady of Guadalupe Celebrations at Pax Christi

In 2016, members of the Worship Council discussed strategies for better outreach to and inclusion of Pax Christi's growing diverse multicultural faith community. We decided to join with the Pax Christi hospitality ministry and began with a celebration devoted to Our Lady of Guadalupe, who is honored and revered by millions all over the Americas. Her feast day is on December 12, which in 1531 was one of the four times that Mary, the Blessed Mother, appeared to St. Juan Diego (canonized by Pope Francis in 2016)—a poor, newly-converted, illiterate, indigenous Mexican on Tepeyac Hill, above Mexico City. Now in the fourth year, our celebrations have embraced Pax Christi's values especially inclusion—to create an inclusive culture through our attitudes, actions, and activities. The celebration is led by Pax Christi's Latino/Hispanic community, who share with the rest of Pax Christi, examples of devotional practices that are rich in piety and unique to the Hispanic culture. Our celebration also includes art, music, pinatas, and authentic Mexican food that is lovingly prepared by our planning committee members. At our annual celebration we serve approximately 300 meals and are thrilled with the response and participation! In 2017, I met with members of Pax Christi's Indian community to assist them in planning their first annual celebration honoring Our Lady of Good Health, an important feast day in India. It is now in its third year. Pax Christi is succeeding in practicing our values of building relationships and including all people who seek a spiritual home.

Written by Cecilia Cervantes, Justice Council member



OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE CELEBRATION

Patroness of the Americas and Queen of Mexico

Saturday, December 14, at the 5:00pm Mass

Please join Pax Christi's Latino community for our fourth annual celebration. You're welcome to bring flowers, which we will place before Our Lady, especially roses like those that miraculously appeared on Tepeyac Hill in 1531 for St. Juan Diego to take to Bishop Zumarraga as a sign of Mary, the Blessed Mother's true presence that cold December morning. Mariachis will once again serenade Our Lady with Las Mananitas traditionally played at events such as baptisms, birthdays, and Mother's Day. They will continue adding to the festivities in Dorothy Day Hall as we dine on a home-cooked Mexican dinner. Once again, you'll be able to enjoy the Mesa de Honor (Table of Honor) with images of Our Lady brought from the homes of Pax Christi members. The children will also break a pinata! All are welcome!

Fr. Steve McMichael

A Call to the Franciscan Tradition

As a student at Minnetonka High School in the early 1970s, Fr. Steve McMichael was not known for intellectual pursuits, but rather for pursuing a good time. His singular calling was to have fun with his friends. His mindset changed his senior year when he saw his friends, many of whom were older, graduate and move on. Feeling left behind, he began to realize that he needed to figure a few things out.

A period of conversion and “figuring things out,” began in 1973 when Fr. Steve went on a spiritual retreat at his current residence, the Franciscan Retreat and Spirituality Center in Prior Lake. The retreat awakened a sense of curiosity that led him to read and study St. Francis, Thomas Merton, and even George Harrison. During the next two years he would also spend time in culinary school, work at a Chinese takeout restaurant, and cook at Byerly’s Golden Griddle in Edina. With a strong sense of curiosity and inspiration to follow the way of St. Francis, Fr. Steve moved to St. Louis to join the Franciscans and study at Saint Louis University. There, the individual who was once an unmotivated high school student, developed a love of learning and become deeply intrigued by a wide range of subjects. Fr. Steve was driven by a need to know more about the world so that he could better understand the teachings of St. Francis and how these ideas fit together with other religions. He became intrigued about Judaism and about the world of Islam in connection to Christianity.

Fr. Steve also began to understand the realities of the world by being out in it. He began living a community life in a formation house near an impoverished area. It was a rude awakening for someone who had grown up in the suburbs. But, along with his studies, the experience served to provide him a greater understanding of the Franciscan tradition and called him to keep feeding it. His improved relationships with others helped to validate the direction he was headed. Fr. Steve said that the call he felt was not to a particular vocation, but to the Franciscan tradition of simple living and way of life that provided “roots and wings.”

Following the Franciscan formation process, Fr. Steve went through stages of preparation and simple vows, which culminates in making an initial three-year commitment. This three-year commitment is followed by further commitments, which explains why Fr. Steve believes a calling is a continual choice a person makes. At no point in those early years did Fr. Steve expect that his choices would someday lead to living in Rome for several years working on a doctoral thesis. His doctorate in sacred theology eventually led to a

visiting professorship at the University of St. Thomas where he now works full time teaching, writing, and doing research. He attributes his desire to become a priest to teaching. “Preaching and teaching feed off one another,” he says. He was ordained as a deacon in 2001 and was ordained as a priest in 2002.

Fr. Steve’s calling to learn and live the Franciscan way has led to sharing his knowledge and faith with university students, parishioners at numerous Twin Cities parishes—among them Pax Christi, St. Mary’s Basilica, and St. Thomas the Apostle—as well as visitors of the Franciscan Retreat and Spirituality Center. Additionally, he has published several papers, authored a couple of books, and hosts pilgrimage trips which allow him to return to Italy on occasion.

Fr. Steve says that his work has provided not only challenge and meaning, but also energy from connecting with others. Parishioners, students, pilgrims, friends, and members of the Jewish and Muslim communities, also give him “roots and wings.” He delights in the interaction and dialogue that teaching, pastoral ministry, and interfaith activities offer. It was St. Francis who said, “For it is in giving that we receive.”

Written by Karin Poellinger, Staff Writer and Technical Editor





Christmas Memories

Pax Christi Staff Reflect on Christmas Past

While Advent is a time of anticipation and hope, it's also a time of reflection and memories. How can it not be when much of the season's preparation focuses on recreating those events and traditions from our past that bring us comfort? Memories of the Christmas season not only bring comfort, but also remind us of special events in our lives, or times when we felt a deep sense of connection to others. Members of the Pax Christi staff have a few of their own Christmas memories that they are sharing in this December edition of the *Pax Christi News*. And while these stories are a look back, they also serve to help us prepare for Christmas by reminding us of the hope, peace, joy, and love of the season.

Hope

This Christmas memory from Sue Fier, Pax Christi's Financial Manager, highlights how hope shouldn't be lost during a time of trouble:

Both of our families lived on farms in southwest Minnesota, so each Christmas included a drive to the Marshall area. During one of those first Christmases after we were married, we left for Marshall in the early afternoon on December 23. Snow was predicted for that evening, but we hoped to beat the storm. As the sun went down, the wind suddenly picked up, and in rural Minnesota just a few inches of snow can instantly lead to white-out conditions when the wind blows. We continued to inch

along until we could no longer see the road in front of us (and remember that this was before the days of cell phones). The only thing visible was a bright Christmas star perched high on a barn just ahead. We couldn't see the house but knew there must be a farm. We left our car and trudged through the snow up to the house and found a wonderful couple at home who very graciously welcomed us into their house for the night. There were nine of us travelers (and a dog) stranded at that farm that night.

This story is hopeful because it reminds us of the godness of others, as well as another time when a star led travelers to a barn.

Peace

Donna Kasbohm, Director of Music and Liturgy, fondly recalls the peace and connection she felt with her siblings during an Advent ritual:

As a young child, after the Christmas tree was in place and decorated, my brothers and I created the Bethlehem village underneath, carefully placing the many houses (with a light inside each one, shining through the cellophane windows. In addition to the two dozen or so houses, we had a church with a steeple, plus trees and lots of lakes and snow created with mirrors and cotton. When we agreed that all was in place, we built a fence of Lincoln Logs around the entire perimeter.

Joy

The third Sunday of Advent is Gaudete Sunday, which comes from the Latin word for joy. Donna Kasbohm shares another memory—this one a joyful moment on Christmas Eve. It's not surprising that this cherished memory involves music:

A personal memory was playing Silent Night when I was five as a piano prelude to the Christmas Mass, wearing my yellow "organdy" dress hand sewn by my mother for the special occasion!

And Melissa Nault, Communication Arts Director, recalls the joy she felt in anticipation of a simple gift, and playing the role of Mary in the Christmas pageant:

One of my favorite memories was of the tiny country church I grew up in. Every Christmas, all the children were gathered a few weeks prior to Christmas and given a "part" to speak in the pageant. Since we were such a small community, I frequently played the part of Mary. It was the responsibility of each child to come with a proper costume. I usually wore a soft nightgown my mother made. The boys who played the kings always wore their mothers' robes of jewel tone colors that were way too long. Our grandparents, aunts, and uncles would all come to watch. After the Christmas Program, as each person left the church, they were given a brown paper lunch bag filled with peanuts in their shell, an apple, and an assortment of candy. I really looked forward to those brown paper bag gifts each year—it was a very simple gift, but the memory of that image still warms my heart.

Love

This story from Andrea Ward, Parish Administrative Assistant, reminds her of the love that her parents demonstrated one Christmas morning, not with gifts, but with where they placed the gifts.

When I was about four years old, my family was living in the Poconos area of northeastern Pennsylvania. I was very excited for Christmas but must have just learned about "stranger danger" in preschool and became terrified of the idea of Santa Claus entering our home. My parents, being the wonderful and caring people that they are, played along. They got up even earlier than normal on Christmas morning and cleared an area on the back porch of the house so that Santa could leave our presents outside. They then woke me up to show me that Santa never came in the house before quickly moving everything inside because it was starting to snow.



For Renee Reardon, Care Ministry Coordinator, her Christmas memory involves the love she felt as she became a parent for the first time:

On Christmas morning 1997, God blessed my husband and me with the most precious gift, the birth of our first born, Liam. Words cannot describe the love and joy we felt that morning as new parents surrounded by family and friends celebrating Christmas in our hospital room.

May this Advent be a time for everyone to prepare their hearts and remember the many joys and blessings of the season.

Written by Karin Poellinger, Staff Writer and Technical Editor



Ministries of Presence

CARE CENTER VISITORS

Throughout each week, lives of Catholic residents in area care centers are blessed by the presence of regular visitors from Pax Christi. Some shared ministers bring communion and pray one-to-one, and others lead communion services for small groups at various care centers. Monthly celebration of Mass at three area care centers is also supported by Pax Christi care center visitors.

BEFRIENDER MINISTRY

BeFriender ministers are trained laypersons who are available to offer a listening ear to those who are experiencing a difficult or transitional situation. BeFrienders are here to listen and care; BeFrienders do not give advice or judge, and all conversations are kept confidential.

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTER TO THE HOMEBOUND

If you or someone you know is homebound and unable to attend Sunday Mass, we have trained shared ministers who can bring communion and offer prayers of support.

PAX PETS MINISTRY

Pax Pets ministers are a group of animal lovers who know and appreciate the ability of pets to demonstrate God's unconditional love. Certified pet teams visit area care centers and make hospice visits. Pet teams meet periodically to gain knowledge and build community with one another.

Training specific to each ministry is provided; ongoing monthly enrichment/education opportunities for shared ministers are offered.

For additional information visit
www.paxchristi.com/careandsupport.



RING THOSE COLORED BELLS - RSVP ONLINE
1st through 6th graders invited!

Children, grades 1 through 6, are invited to be a bell ringer for the Christmas Eve 2:00pm Family Mass. No experience needed—the bells are color-coded. Rehearsal is scheduled for Sunday, December 15, 10:00am in the chapel. If you can be at the rehearsal and present at 1:15pm on Christmas Eve, please register online. Deadline is December 6. Come ring the bells!!



Readings for December 2019

Available online at www.usccb.org/bible/readings

READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 1, 2019

Monday: Is 4:2-6; Ps 122:1-9; Mt 8:5-11
 Tuesday: Is 11:1-10; Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17; Lk 10:21-24
 Wednesday: Is 25:6-10a; Ps 23:1-6; Mt 15:29-37
 Thursday: Is 26:1-6; Ps 118:1, 8-9, 19-21, 25-27a; Mt 7:21, 24-27
 Friday: Is 29:17-24; Ps 27:1, 4, 13-14; Mt 9:27-31
 Saturday: Is 30:19-21, 23-26; Ps 147:1-6; Mt 9:35 – 10:1
 Sunday: Is 11:1-10; Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17; Rom 15:4-9; Mt 3:1-12

READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 8, 2019

Monday: Gn 3:9-15, 20; Ps 98:1-4; Eph 1:3-6, 11-12; Lk 1:26-38
 Tuesday: Is 40:1-11; Ps 96:1-3, 10ac, 11-13; Mt 18:12-14
 Wednesday: Is 40:25-31; Ps 103:1-4, 8, 10; Mt 11:28-30
 Thursday: Zec 2:14-17 or Rv 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab; Jdt 13:18bcde, 19; Lk 1:26-38
 Friday: Is 48:17-19; Ps 1:1-4, 6; Mt 11:16-19
 Saturday: Sir 48:1-4, 9-11; Ps 80:2ac, 3b, 15-16, 18-19; Mt 17:9a, 10-13
 Sunday: Is 35:1-6a, 10; Ps 146:6-10; Jas 5:7-10; Mt 11:2-11

READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 15, 2019

Monday: Nm 24:2-7, 15-17a; Ps 25:4-5ab, 6, 7bc-9; Mt 21:23-27
 Tuesday: Gn 49:2, 8-10; Ps 72:1-4ab, 7-8, 17; Mt 1:1-17
 Wednesday: Jer 23:5-8; Ps 72:1-2, 12-13, 18-19; Mt 1:18-25
 Thursday: Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a; Ps 71:3-4a, 5-6ab, 16-17; Lk 1:5-25
 Friday: Is 7:10-14; Ps 24:1-4ab, 5-6; Lk 1:26-38
 Saturday: Sg 2:8-14 or Zep 3:14-18a; Ps 33:2-3, 11-12, 20-21; Lk 1:39-45
 Sunday: Is 7:10-14; Ps 24:1-6; Rom 1:1-7; Mt 1:18-24

READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 22, 2019

Monday: Mal 3:1-4, 23-34; Ps 25:4-5ab, 8-10, 14; Lk 1:57-66
 Tuesday: 2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Ps 89:2-5, 27, 29; Lk 1:67-79
 Wednesday: Vigil: Is 62:1-5; Ps 89:4-5, 16-17, 27, 29; Acts 13:16-17, 22-25; Mt 1:1-25 [18-25]
 Night: Is 9:1-6; Ps 96:1-3, 11-13; Ti 2:11-14; Lk 2:1-14
 Dawn: Is 62:11-12; Ps 97:1, 6, 11-12; Ti 3:4-7; Lk 2:15-20
 Day: Is 52:7-10; Ps 98:1-6; Heb 1:1-6; Jn 1:1-18 [1-5, 9-14]
 Thursday: Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59; Ps 31:3cd-4, 6, 8ab, 16bc, 17; Mt 10:17-22
 Friday: 1 Jn 1:1-4; Ps 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12; Jn 20:1a, 2-8
 Saturday: 1 Jn 1:5 – 2:2; Ps 124:2-5, 7cd-8; Mt 2:13-18
 Sunday: Sir 3:2-6, 12-14; Ps 128:1-5; Col 3:12-21 [12-17]; Mt 2:13-15, 19-23

READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 29, 2019

Monday: 1 Jn 2:12-17; Ps 96:7-10; Lk 2:36-40
 Tuesday: 1 Jn 2:18-21; Ps 96:1-2, 11-13; Jn 1:1-18
 Wednesday: Nm 6:22-27; Ps 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8; Gal 4:4-7; Lk 2:16-21
 Thursday: 1 Jn 2:22-28; Ps 98:1-4; Jn 1:19-28
 Friday: 1 Jn 2:29 – 3:6; Ps 98:1, 3cd-6; Jn 1:29-34
 Saturday: 1 Jn 3:7-10; Ps 98:1, 7-9; Jn 1:35-42
 Sunday: Is 60:1-6; Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-13; Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6; Mt 2:1-12

Parishioner News for October 2019

Baptisms

Sloane Sylvia Dolenc	10/6/2019
Justin Kulandhairaj	10/6/2019
Jocelyn Anne Sorensen	10/20/2019
Charlotte Mae Steinmeyer	10/20/2019
Ella Catherine Vortherms	10/20/2019
Josiah M. Banez	10/27/2019
Athena Rose Janson	10/27/2019

Weddings

Judsina White & Christopher Arvin	10/5/2019
Kelly Clement & William Gaddis	10/12/2019
Elizabeth Larson & Matthew Swanson	10/19/2019
Kelli Lindsey & Mitchell Hercules	10/26/2019

Funerals

Mary (Eich) Stryker	10/4/2019
Floyd Martin Charest	10/8/2019
Robert Eugene Barrett	10/25/2019

New Members

Mark and Elizabeth Baron
Timothy and Susan Blotz
Megan Delaney
Kristopher and Laura Kapitan
Jordan Ostrowski and Paola Hernandez-Luebbert
Miriam Porter & Ralph Bailey
Jack Rhode and Paula Forté
Grant and Rebecca Ringdahl
Nicholas and Jenna Sebolboro
Matthew Sira and Sara Stoks
Janet Staples
Devon & Chelsea Steinmeyer
Andrew and Megan Todd
Joseph and Leslie Witterschein
Robert and Patricia Wolter

Whats going on...

TWELVE BASKETS SHARE THE JOY

Stop by Signup Displays in Dorothy Day Social Hall

Weekends November 30/December 1 and December 7/8 following Mass

The Twelve Baskets Ministry invites you once again to "Share the Joy" this holiday season! As we take time to count our many blessings and give thanks, may we also remember that so many of our brothers and sisters, including children, are living in great need. Here at Pax Christi we have many wonderful opportunities for giving—St. Stephen's Mens' Shelter, Blessed Kateri's Faith Formation Children, Little Earth Seniors, YouthLink, Launch Ministry, and Risen Christ School are returning again. Please stop by to chat with a Twelve Baskets Minister and to see the many creative opportunities to participate. We look forward to another wonderful season of "Sharing the Joy!"
DROP OFF DATE: Drop off gifts at Pax Christi, at doors one and three in the designated bins, by Sunday, December 15.

FIRST FRIDAY COFFEE AND CONVERSATION

Friday, December 6 beginning with Mass at 8:30am

PAX CHRISTI PARISHIONERS ART EXHIBIT

Artist reception, Sunday, December 8, following morning Masses

Stop by and experience amazing artwork by talented Pax Christi parishioners. View paintings, sculpture, oil pastels, photographs, and prints. Meet the artists during the opening reception, and have some delicious treats and engaging conversations. Details will be shared at the exhibit. Exhibit runs through December 15.

BOOMERS AND BEYOND
PAX CHRISTI SENIOR MINISTRY

**Sign-up at www.paxchristi.com/boomers
to receive info on upcoming events.**

Upcoming events include:

December 6: First Friday Coffee and Conversation
January 11: Holiday Party for the New Year

MOMS ROCK: SPEAKER LORI VANDER POEL

Wednesday, December 11, 9:30–11:30am, Room 212, \$10 RSVP

When we live from a place of self-compassion, we honor and love our imperfectly perfect human self, creating space to invite in mindfulness and curiosity to our inner critic and meet it with love, kindness, and grace. Simply put, it is remembering to be our own best friend—especially in moments of struggle. Moms ROCK welcomes all parents, parents to be, and anyone else interested in joining. Gatherings include brunch and relaxing social time, followed by uninterrupted time to focus on the day's guest speaker. Complete details at www.paxchristi.com/momsrock.

HOLIDAY TEA

Stillness in the Midst of Frenzy

Saturday, December 7, 9:00am–12:00pm RSVP

As the season of Advent begins, the Pax Christi Holiday Tea draws together women of the parish and the greater community for a morning of prayer, fellowship, and hospitality. Single tickets are available on a limited basis. Contact Lisa Cox, Community Life Coordinator, 952-405-7204, or lcox@paxchristi.com for additional information.

BAKE SALE: BAKED GOODS NEEDED

Drop-off: December 6, 4:00–8:00pm or December 7, 7:30–8:45am

Bake Sale: Saturday, December 7, 9:00am–3:00pm

Bake your favorite cookies, breads, or pies, and bring them to the bake sale. Baked goods can be dropped off at the church in Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Room 111, in the lower level Friday or Saturday at times posted above. Proceeds will be used to purchase an air hockey table for the youth room as well as some large outdoor games for our summer bible camp.

HOLIDAY BOUTIQUE

Saturday, December 7, 9:00am–3:00pm

If you're looking for a one-of-a-kind gift, you'll find it all at the Pax Christi Holiday Boutique. Fifty quality crafters and artisans will offer unique holiday gifts for everyone on your list. There is no fee to attend the boutique. Lunch and baked goods available for purchase.

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF MARY

Monday, December 9, 8:30am Mass

Since December 8, 2019, is the Second Sunday of Advent, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary is transferred to Monday, December 9, 2019. The obligation to attend Mass, however, does not transfer.

TAKE BACK YOUR HOLIDAYS**Thursday, December 12, 7:00–8:30pm, St. Richard's Catholic Church**

Our neighboring Depression Support Coalition is hosting an important holiday event this December. Holiday expectations, family gatherings, and cultural expectations can be stressful for all of us. How can we celebrate while caring for our minds and emotions? Come to reflect on your experience, and leave having created a personal strategy for your coming holidays. There is no fee to attend. For further information, contact Jolaine Liupakka, Director of Pastoral Care, St. Richard's, 612-869-2426, or jliupakka@strichards.com.

HONORING OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE*Patroness of the Americas and Queen of Mexico***Saturday, December 14 beginning with 5:00pm Mass**

Please join Pax Christi's Latino community for our fourth annual celebration. Complete details on page XX.

CHRISTMAS CAROLING AT CARE CENTERS**Sunday, December 15, 2:00–4:00pm, meet in Room 111 RSVP**

Come join the fun and brighten the day for our senior friends and neighbors. Faith Formation and Care and Support Ministries are joining together to go Christmas caroling and distribute handmade cards at local senior care centers. Creative holiday attire is encouraged! After caroling, we'll return to Pax Christi for hot chocolate, cookies, and an opportunity for a family photo. RSVP online by December 10 so we can plan for an adequate number of care centers to visit.

SIMBANG GABI*Filipino Catholic Community***Monday, December 16, 7:00–8:30pm, Thomas Merton Chapel RSVP**

All are welcome to join the Filipino Catholic Community for evening Mass followed by a traditional Filipino dinner. Please RSVP so we can plan for the dinner.

The Origin and Meaning of Simbang Gabi:

Traditionally, Christmas Day in the Philippines is ushered in by the nine-day dawn Masses that start on December 16. These Masses are also considered as a novena to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Simbang Gabi has become one of the most popular Catholic traditions in the Philippines. It is a significant moment not only because it strengthens relationships among the family members and parishioners but also because it is the time where our faith is intensified. Maligayang Pasko at Manigong Bagong Taon sa inyong lahat. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all.

SOULCOLLAGE® CARD MAKING**Wednesday, December 18, 6:00–8:30pm RSVP**

Originated by Seena Frost, SoulCollage® is a fun, easy, and creative way to express your inner world. It is a gentle, playful, and often joyful way of exploring your life and your deep self. It's a creative process that anyone can do. Using intuition, imagination, and your willingness to explore, you will create collage cards that represent various and unique aspects of who you are that can help guide you on a journey of self-discovery. Materials provided.

THE SOLEMNITY OF MARY**January 1, 9:00am in the Sanctuary**

The Solemnity of Mary acknowledges and celebrates Mary's role as the mother of Jesus Christ. It is a holy day of obligation.

JUST MATTERS*Faith and Racial Equity: Exploring Power and Privilege***OPENING RETREAT: Saturday, January 4, 8:30am–5:00pm RSVP****CHOOSE A SESSION: Wednesdays, January 8–February 26, 1:00pm OR Thursdays, January 9–February 27, 6:00pm**

Faith and Racial Equity: Exploring Power & Privilege is an eight-week module that awakens groups to the economic systems, public policies, cultural norms, and hidden biases that empower some and oppress others. Complete details on page 8. NO FEE: This program is made possible through the generosity of the Catholic Community Foundation.

SHARED MINISTRY APPRECIATION**Saturday, January 25, 2020 6:00pm**

Your "Call to Ministry" is much appreciated. All are welcome as we celebrate your gifts of prayer, service, and sharing. Watch for more details to come.

LABYRINTH WALK**Tuesday, January 27, 6:30–8:30pm RSVP****ANNUAL CANA DINNER – SAVE THE DATE****Saturday, April 25, 6:00–9:30pm**

All couples are welcome to celebrate the "Gift of Love" when spring is in the air. Watch for upcoming details of the 15th annual Pax Christi Cana Dinner.



Staff Contacts

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Grades 9 through 12 Jessie Johnson 952-405-7210

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COMMUNITY COUNCIL

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Jane Schmitz, Parish Director
Fred Baumer, Chair
Nicholle Check
Mike Kennedy
Andy Leet
Mary Frances Messer
Dale Nelson
Phyllis Olson
Ricardo Ortiz-Nava
Dave Putrich
Mike Schneider
Cindy Schuh
Julie Tyler

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Bruce Koehn
Carolyn Zucker

FINANCE COUNCIL CHAIR

Mike Kennedy

December

See page 18-19 for details
or visit us online at www.paxchristi.com.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
First Sunday of Advent Share the Joy Signup Displays	Parishioners Art Exhibit on Display		Tot-Time Open Gym Faith Formation Sessions		First Friday Social	Holiday Boutique, Bake Sale, and Tea Share the Joy Signup Displays
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Artist Reception Share the Joy Signup Displays Faith Formation Sessions	Parishioners Art Exhibit on Display		Moms ROCK Faith Formation Sessions			Our Lady of Guadalupe Mass and Celebration New Member Sign-up Weekend
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Art Exhibit Ends New Member Sign-up Weekend Share the Joy Drop-off Caroling at Care Centers Faith Formation Sessions	Simbang Gabi Mass and Dinner	Leadership Meetings	Tot-Time Open Gym Faith Formation Sessions SoulCollage	Compassionate Care Listening Circle		
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
		Christmas Eve	Christmas			
29	30	31	1	2	3	4
The Holy Family of Joseph, Mary, and Jesus		New Year's Eve	New Year's Day Solemnity of Mary			Just Matters Retreat





Church of Pax Christi of Eden Prairie
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Merry Christmas

Your generosity spreads joy
 throughout the year!
 Merry Christmas from Fr. Mike
 and the entire Pax Christi staff.

