

ADVENT 2022

WEEK TWO

# Hospitality:

HEAVEN IS AT HAND



# Hospitality is the heart of who we are as Catholic health care.



It welcomes us to receive its richness as much as it calls us to share it with others. As we continue to be formed through the healing ministry of Jesus in the commitments of our founders this Advent, the Catholic Health Association invites you to discover the spiritual practice of hospitality as a deep, subversive act of love — where in every encounter, God's transforming presence always dwells.

The weeks leading up to Christmas, known by Christians as Advent, is a time of spiritual preparation. In Advent, we anticipate Jesus' coming to bring glad tidings to the poor, to

proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, and to let the oppressed go free. (Luke 4:18)

We are pleased to offer a weekly spiritual smorgasbord that will encourage you to live with more intention into this radical practice — in your heart, your home, your workplace, and your community. May you and your health care colleagues find nourishment and hope in the days ahead through our offering of prayers, scriptures and reflections, stories, recipes, podcast episodes, and music.

*Come, Lord Jesus, come.*

**“The God who is love and family, who was born in a barn, is a God who is found, first of all, in our homes, in our families, at our tables, in sunrises, in our joys, and in our arguments.**

**To be involved in the normal flow of life, giving and receiving, as flawed and painful as this might be at times within any relationship, is to have the life of God flow through us.”**

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**RONALD ROLHEISER**

**“The Holy Longing: The Search for a Christian Spirituality”**

WEEK TWO

# Hospitality: Heaven is at Hand

In, "A Call to Care," Sr. Mary Jane Henning of the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth recounts the request she and three Sisters received to care for influenza patients in 1918. Journeying 40 miles deep into the Kentucky wilderness over stones, ridges, gullies and across a hanging bridge off Wallin's Creek, they came to a boarding house for miners. In a letter to the sisters back home, Henning wrote, "We were still under the impression that we were going to a hospital, when we were informed that we were to start a hospital here and that patients would be in on the next train, which was due at 2 p.m. It was then 10 a.m. You never saw a hospital gotten ready so quickly in your life..."

The Gospel of Matthew articulates a similar urgency in this week's Advent reading. For a thousand years the people of God longed for the

promised Messiah to come, a Redeemer, the one who would restore David's throne. Prophecy after prophecy they awaited the Promised One, but their hope remained unfulfilled. Matthew depicts John the Baptist arriving flamboyantly in apparel and speech: "Repent, for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand." It was not a message of passivity. John demanded action of the religious leaders, where the Kingdom of heaven would be visibly on display through the fruit of their ministry.

Regardless of your role in Catholic health care, we share a call to care, to urgently meet the needs of the person before us - just as they come to us. In every encounter, whether with patient, family, or associate, the Kingdom of heaven is at hand. The way in which we respond will be our fruit.

*Come, Lord Jesus, come.*

**This week, take some time to consider hospitality in your heart, your home, your workplace, and your community.**

- How would you describe the call on your life to care for others in need?
- How willing are you to offer care with urgency, particularly to those who come to you in unexpected ways?
- How might God be inviting you to respond so that those around you would know the Kingdom of heaven is at hand? What might that look like in the week ahead?



## Scripture

John the Baptist appeared, preaching in the desert of Judea and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" It was of him that the prophet Isaiah had spoken when he said: A voice of one crying out in the desert, Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths. John wore clothing made of camel's hair and had a leather belt around his waist.

His food was locusts and wild honey. At that time Jerusalem, all Judea, and the whole region around the Jordan were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the Jordan River as they acknowledged their sins. When he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce good fruit as evidence of your repentance. And do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you, God can raise up children to Abraham from these stones. Even now the ax lies at the root of the trees. Therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire. I am baptizing you with water, for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is mightier than I. I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fan is in his hand. He will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire." | **MT 3:1-12**



"Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths."



[READ THE FULL SCRIPTURE.](#)



[LISTEN TO OUR ADVENT PLAYLIST.](#)

## An Invitation to Lectio Divina: Listening with the Ear of the Heart

Rooted in the Christian monastic tradition, Lectio Divina is a way of awakening our hearts and coming to an experiential awareness of God. Latin for "divine reading," it is the process of discerning a word of revelation from God through Scripture directly to the individual.

Using the scripture above, follow the four-fold movement listed below. Pause and listen deeply to what God might be saying to you this Advent. Begin by recognizing the presence of God. Settle, and intentionally release the chatter of your mind to God.

### **Lectio** | Listening

Read the passage slowly and prayerfully, listening for a word or phrase that catches your attention — God's word for you today.

### **Meditatio** | Reflecting

Hear the passage a second time. This time notice any thought or reflection that emerges — listening for something that perhaps touched you a bit deeper.

### **Oratio** | Responding

Listen a third time to the passage. Become aware of any prayer that rises up as you respond to the movement of God's Spirit in your heart or mind.

### **Contemplatio** | Resting

One final time, hear the passage again. Allow yourself to rest in sacred stillness with God, the One who simply loves being with you.





# Advent Prayer

Holy Presence of God,  
you shimmer in every stranger I encounter  
whether in the world or in my heart.

When you came in human form  
you sat at table with all those who walked the edges  
of life and knew their presence as sacred.

Create in me a space to welcome in  
all that is hard and disorienting,  
those moments when I feel lost, angry,  
heartbroken, overwhelmed, ashamed,  
joyful, grieving, or in love with life.

Help me to honor the guests who arrive at the door,  
to usher in the grace that newness offers  
and find Christ's compassionate presence there.

May your infinite compassion grow in me  
the way sunlight spills across a field,  
and include everyone in that loving embrace.

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**CHRISTINE VALTERS PAINTNER**

# The Virtue of Hospitality



As a child of Filipino immigrant parents raised in the US Territory of Guam, Paulo Pontemayor, CHA's Senior Director of Federal Government Relations, has felt a deep connection to the practice of hospitality for as long as he can remember. His Filipino culture, growing up in a multicultural community, the welcoming nature of tourism on the Island of Guam and his journey through Catholic education made the virtue of hospitality almost second nature.

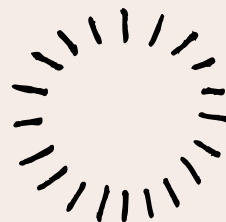
At home, Paulo remembers his parents and grandparents extending hospitality by always ensuring their guests had eaten. Sushi bake, a recipe Paulo learned from his older sister, brings influences from multiple cultures. As easy to prepare as it is satisfying, this meal made of rice, imitation crab, mayonnaise, and various spices is served with dried seaweed for wrapping and is a deconstructed sushi experience. To hear how Paulo practices hospitality in his personal life and his work on Capitol Hill, listen to this week's Advent conversation by [clicking here](#).



**RECIPE SUBMITTED BY PAULO PONTEMAYOR**

Senior Director of Federal Government Relations, Catholic Health Association

# Sushi Bake Recipe



**SERVES 3-4 PEOPLE**

**COOK TIME: 10 MINUTES**

## Ingredients:

3 cups rice, cooked  
1 pound imitation crab meat, finely chopped  
3/4 cup Kewpie mayo  
1/2 cup sour cream  
1 1/2 tablespoon Sriracha  
Nori sheets, small

## Assembly:

Preheat oven to broil. In a large bowl, combine imitation crab meat, kewpie mayo, sour cream, and sriracha. Mix thoroughly.

In a large casserole dish, lightly press rice into an even layer. Liberally sprinkle furikake across the top of the rice layer. Evenly spread the crab mixture on top of furikake layer. Sprinkle more furikake on crab mixture.

Broil for approximately 5 minutes or until the top is lightly browned. Scoop and place a slice of sushi bake on a sheet of nori, wrap and enjoy.







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