

July 3, 2011

Green summer blessings to all of you,

Though we dipped into Ordinary Time for a short period between Christmas and the beginning of Lent, we now enter a long trek through the “green season” of the Church year. This journey will take us through all of summer and early Fall, ending with the feast of Christ the King on the cusp of the first Sunday of Advent.

It's interesting in these times to think about this “**green season**” of the Church calendar. Our cultural association with the word “green” has changed dramatically in the last ten years as global awareness of environmental issues has begun a slow ferment in human consciousness. What if our Church (and Christians themselves) began to embrace the liturgical color of Ordinary Time as a Spirit-guided invitation to ecological awareness and sustainable “green” practices grounded in honoring the earth and all of creation? What might we do liturgically to enhance our dedication to stewardship of this Earth, which is our home? Jill O'Brien, a doctoral candidate at Boston College, presented a paper at the College Theology Society's annual convention June 4, arguing that “the category of personhood may be larger” than humanity itself, and that the true disciple of Christ may be obligated to work to “help achieve salvation for all the world,” all of creation, and not just human beings. If we were to consider discipleship in these terms, what might our questions and challenges be during this season of Ordinary Time?.

Mass Schedule This Month

Our Mass in **Portland** will be Saturday, **July 9**, at University Park United Methodist Church, 4775 N. Lombard at **5:00pm**. If you are interested in being a lector, choir member or Eucharistic Minister at this Mass, please contact Marlise at 360-686-3342. Plan to stay for our potluck dinner after Mass. Please bring vegetable dishes, casseroles, desserts and early summer fare.

Our Mass in **Eugene** will be Sunday, **July 10**, at First Congregational Church, UCC, 1050 E. 23rd, at **4:00pm**. If you would like to be a lector, Eucharistic minister or would enjoy singing in the choir or playing a musical instrument at this Mass, please contact Kathy or Carol. Our potluck meal can include your favorite summer dishes and desserts.

Our annual Mary Magdalene Mass at Marlise's studio in **Battleground** will be **July 17 at 3:00pm** with Labyrinth walk at 1:00. The studio is located at 17814 NE Gabriel Rd., Yacolt WA 98675. **Directions** going North: Take the Battleground exit off I-5 and go East on 219th (Hwy 502). Continue several miles into Battleground past the Albertson's.

Turn left onto Highway 503 (north) toward Yacolt and Lewisville Park. Continue north on Highway 503 past Lewisville Park about 4 miles to just past milepost 14. There is a yellow flashing light to indicate the upcoming right turn onto Gabriel Road. Head east on Gabriel Road 1.6 miles. Driveway for 17814 NE Gabriel Rd. will be on your left, across

from a road sign for 178th and a group of mailboxes. The address is written on a board nailed to the plum tree at the driveway entrance. Orange cones will mark the driveway. If you get lost or need further directions please call Marlise at 360-686-3342.

Community Leadership Update

Once again I would like to ask those of you in the Portland community to prayerfully discern whether Spirit is inviting you to offer your time and your gifts as part of the leadership team of our community. If you have expertise, talent or interests that might help in developing the structure and vision of Sophia Christi your involvement at this stage would be of great benefit. I would be happy to answer any questions via email or phone (503-286-3584). The team will meet again July 31st. At this point we are pursuing our federal non-profit status as a 501(c)3, having already registered as a not-for-profit religious organization with the state of Oregon.

Pastoral Update

As many of you know, the Portland community has been looking for a **new location** for our monthly services during the last several months. The limitations on our use of space at University Park United Methodist Church have hampered the possibility for growth and expansion of our offerings to the community, and we have frequently discussed the need for another option. Two local pastors celebrated Eucharist with us in May and I have spoken with one of them several times this past month. It is very possible Sophia Christi will be moving to a new location in August or September. Please watch for an announcement about this in the weeks to come.

Work is continuing in earnest on a **website** for Sophia Christi. We have invested in a domain name and a couple of artists in our group are in the process of drafting ideas for a logo. If you would like to be involved in this project, please let me know. It is likely we will have a basic website by or before Labor Day!

The date for our spiritually-focused **Fall retreat** has been set for Saturday, **October 29**, from 10am to 6pm. Please save this date on your calendars. In September you will be asked to RSVP so we can determine how much food we will need for our mid-day meal. Cost of the retreat will be \$15.00 per person.

In the last newsletter I invited anyone interested in hosting a **home Mass** to contact me. I am extending this offer to those of you who would like to celebrate Liturgy in a more intimate setting. This will compliment our larger Liturgies and feed the community in a different way. You can also be as involved (or not) in choosing readings and music for the occasion. Email me if you are interested in pursuing this option.

In community meetings and retreats, some of you requested that we offer **groups** focused on faith-sharing, study, prayer or spiritual direction. In the last newsletter I said there would be sign-up sheets after Mass for those interested in one or more of these

groups. Unfortunately, the sign-up sheets failed to appear (my bad)! So please look for these again after Mass next weekend (they will be there this time). Depending on interest, we will begin offering at least one group this summer. If you aren't able to come to Mass next weekend and you are interested in one of these offerings, just let me know and I will add your name to the list. If there are other spiritual needs not addressed here that you would like me to be aware of, please don't hesitate to contact me at any time. You have my email address in this mailing, and my phone number is 503-286-3584.

Food for the Poor

Thank you to everyone for continuing to bring food and personal hygiene items for the St. Andrew Food Pantry each month. In May the Pantry fed 672 people, 322 of them were children. In a message to all of you, Kathleen Greene writes:

The donations this month were great. The boxes were heavy and filled with good items to help cooks expand the meals. Very thoughtful donations and we thank you so much. We also received toothpaste, toothbrushes, shampoo and baby diapers. Bless your kind hearts. Love from the pantry, Kathleen

Please remember to bring non-perishable food and personal hygiene items once again when you come to Mass this month. Look for the basket next to the entrance of the sanctuary when you come for Liturgy on Saturday or Sunday, and please continue to be as generous as possible.

We continue to move forward with many exciting ventures and creative tasks, as you can see. On this Sunday of the July 4th weekend, I hope all of you enjoy the sunshine and holiday celebrations. Summer stretches before us, inviting us outdoors into nature's green and the "ordinary" activities of this warm, open and welcoming season of the year. I hope you find opportunities to immerse yourself in the gifts and wonders nature has to offer, and let those gifts enter your lives and stir a sense of discipleship that includes all of creation.

May the joy of Christ fill your heart,

Toni