

February 6, 2012

Blessings to all of you in Sophia Christi and beyond,

In these Ordinary Time Sundays between Epiphany and Lent we have been immersed in the healing ministry of Jesus. First he heals a man with an unclean spirit, then Simon's mother-in-law followed by many "possessed by demons", a leper and, on the last Sunday before Ash Wednesday, a paralytic. These readings invite us to ponder our own need for healing, to humbly face those painful places in our lives where illness resides and "demons" lurk so that we might open our hearts and minds to the Healer within and among us. As we approach the beginning of Lent just two weeks away, this is a good time to make the subtle shift from a culturally typical post-holiday, new year's focus on "health and fitness" to a deeper, spiritually anchored focus on "healing". In order to facilitate that shift, next weekend's Liturgies will include the Anointing of the Sick. In defining "sickness" look beyond physical ailments to include aching hearts, anxious minds and depressed souls. Illness broadly defined is lack of ease in body, mind, heart or spirit. If you would like to meditate on the readings for next Sunday they are: Lev 13:1-2, 44-46; 1 Cor 10:31-11:1 and Mk 1:40-45.

Mass Schedule This Month

Our Mass in **Portland** will be Saturday, **February 11**, at **Northminster Presbyterian Church, 2823 N. Rosa Parks Way** at **5:00pm**. As of this month we are completely shifting to a potluck arrangement for our dinner after Mass. Please consider bringing entrées, casseroles, vegetable dishes, salads and desserts to celebrate our final Liturgy before Lent begins on the 22nd. Choir rehearsal begins at 4:00 and all interested singers and musicians are invited to come and participate.

Our Mass in **Eugene** will be Sunday, **February 12**, at **First Congregational Church, UCC, 1050 E. 23rd**, at **4:00pm**. Bring your entrées, vegetable dishes, salads and desserts for the potluck following Liturgy, and **please plan on staying** for the **Community meeting after Mass!** If you are interested in participating as a singer or musician please come at 3:00 and join in on the rehearsal.

On **February 22, Ash Wednesday** we will celebrate Mass and distribute ashes at **Northminster Presbyterian Church, 2823 N. Rosa Parks Way** at **7:30 pm**.

On Sunday, **February 26**, at **10:30am** we will celebrate Mass in **Battleground**. The address is 26605 NE 96th Ct. For further information or directions call Helen at 360-687-7475 or email her at umphrey@ipns.com.

Community Meeting in February

The community meeting in Portland was held January 21, and the meeting in **Eugene** will take place after Mass this coming Sunday, **February 12**. To prepare for the Sunday meeting, members in Eugene are asked to envision where you would like Sophia Christi to be five years from now. What should our goals be in 2012? Think in terms of outreach to the larger community, pastoral needs of members, spiritual nourishment, prayer and liturgy, faith formation and development, structural and administrative needs as well as what steps we might take to meet our goals? What does it mean to you to be a member of Sophia Christi and how do you see yourself contributing to the mission of the community? What interests and/or skills do you have to offer as we take these next steps in our growth?

Pastoral Update

The entire leadership team was present for our community meeting in Portland on January 21st. We looked again at the dreams articulated in community meetings 3-plus years ago and heard brief reports from each of the 5 parish council members about progress made in 2011. Since the community meeting in Eugene will take place next Sunday, I will wait to provide more detail until members there have a chance to share and discuss this information, as well as consider goals for 2012.

A pastoral reminder--if you or someone you know has a pastoral need that isn't being met, please don't hesitate to give me a call. You have my email address in this mailing, and my office phone number is 503-286-3584. Feel free to use either one. You can contact me anytime for conversation, home visitation, sacraments of reconciliation or anointing, home Masses or other pastoral care needs.

Food for the St. Andrew Episcopal Food Pantry

We received the following message from Kathleen Greene this month thanking us for our December contributions:

Wow!! Your donation of 92 pounds was wonderful, and heavy. So many needed cleaning products, shampoos, razors, soaps, liquid soaps, cake mixes, rice, tuna, dry beans, soups. . .

Great job and I am (we are) so thankful.

A family came in for food and had just moved to their first home in over a year. That day was the first night they would sleep in their new apartment. The apartment was clean, but they needed dish soap, shampoo, toilet paper, pepper, laundry soap and deodorant. Do you know that your donation had all of their needed items? We had frozen chicken and I added mashed potatoes, chicken gravy, green beans and a brownie mix to their basket. The last four food items were from your donations. Their first dinner in the new home was going to be great.

She cried. He teared up. The kids were very happy with the candy canes. Because of your kind donations, you helped us feed 8,323 people in 2011, including 3,472 children. God bless your sweet, thoughtful hearts. -- Kathleen Greene, and St. Andrew's Episcopal Pantry!

Look for the basket at the entrance to the sanctuary when you come for Liturgy on Saturday or Sunday, and please be as generous as possible.

At the end of our gospel reading next weekend, the author of Mark says "Jesus remained outside in deserted places and people kept coming to him from everywhere." We, too, continue coming to Jesus from everywhere, begging for healing on so many levels and in so many areas of our lives. Ordinary human experience is full of joy and pleasure as well as challenge and adversity. We fall and rise repeatedly, learn to cope, "take our lumps," find ways to move on when blows to body, heart and ego are crippling. Somehow we usually manage to integrate life's lessons (God's teachings) over the course of our lives. Sacraments provide avenues for opening to God's grace in times of celebration and in times of need. We stand before God as newly hatched sparrows, mouths wide open to receive nourishment for our hungry souls. As the liturgical calendar inches toward that time of deep reflection and metanoia (change of heart and mind, spiritual transformation) we will approach the season through a Mass of healing.

May the healing hand of Christ be with you all,

Toni