

April 1, 2012

A Blessed Holy Week to each of you,

We begin the week today with Jesus' final walk into Jerusalem to celebrate his last Passover with friends and disciples. People come out to cheer, laying their cloaks and leafy branches along the road before him. "Hosanna!" they shout. "Blessed is he who comes in God's name! Blessed the coming kingdom of David!" But Jesus rides on a donkey, the favored transportation of messengers of peace, not a horse, as would a king's son. He comes to face persecution and death for insisting that humility is power, and that David's legacy lives on through service to others and not through self-serving activities that cause others pain and suffering. Physical torture and betrayal lie before him, yet he walks toward his final hour with single-minded focus as though the love he carries within him can only be released if the package of his body is broken open allowing love to spill out and shower the world. We continue our walk with him today, tasting those desires for triumph and victory, desires for fulfillment of our greatest hopes, and then recognizing in our own lives, in our world, the dashing of hope and death of illusion as he stands before Pilate, picks up his cross and stumbles toward death. As we face into the Passion before us this week, let's prepare for the transformative vision of Easter, shifting our base of security from the manifest physical reality that seems so concrete and reliable, to the spiritual plane where all life is ultimately renewed. If you would like to meditate on the readings for Easter they are: Acts 10:34, 37-43; 1 Cor 5:6-8; and Jn 20:1-9. Readings for the following week, the Second Sunday of Easter will be: Acts: 4:32-35; 1 Jn 5: 1-6; Jn 20:19-31.

### Mass Schedule This Month

Our Mass in **Eugene** will be **Easter Sunday, April 8, at First Congregational Church, UCC, 1050 E. 23<sup>rd</sup>, at 4:00pm. We will celebrate** with gusto! Bring your favorite dish to share and desserts a-plenty. If interested in being part of the Easter choir as a singer or musician, please come at 3:00 and join the rehearsal.

Our Mass in **Portland** will be Saturday, **April 14, at Northminster Presbyterian Church, 2823 N. Rosa Parks Way at 5:00pm.** We will celebrate the Easter season with our favorite entrees, vegetable dishes, salads and desserts! Remember also that choir rehearsal begins at 4:00 and all interested singers and musicians are invited to come and participate.

On Sunday, **April 29, at 10:30am** we will celebrate Mass in **Battleground**. The address is 26605 NE 96th Ct., Battle Ground, WA. For further information or directions call Helen at 360-687-7475 or email her at [umphrey@ipns.com](mailto:umphrey@ipns.com).

### Pastoral Update

We have received great news from the IRS. **Sophia Christi is now a tax-exempt, not-for-profit organization!** The parish council had been told to expect further questioning from the IRS and to be prepared for a more lengthy process, so we were surprised and elated to receive the letter stating that our 501(c)3 status had been readily granted without further ado! So yes, all donations are now fully tax-deductible!!

If you have not yet turned in your **pledge card** please do so as soon as possible so the parish council can keep tabs on our budget for the year. Our Mission Statement places a high priority on outreach to disenfranchised, disaffected and marginalized Catholics and these outreach efforts comprise a major portion of the budget. Printing and advertising can be costly, so we need to look at options that fit within our financial outlook for the year. You will find pledge cards near the liturgy aids and song books at each Mass.

The Council is also asking that you fill out a **registration/ministry form** to update your contact information and identify where you would like to use your gifts and interests for the benefit of the community. These forms will be available at all Masses and I ask you to complete the form and drop it in the basket provided along with your pledge card.

There has been some discussion about Sophia Christi having a presence at the **Pride Northwest 2012** events this year. Portland Pride is the weekend of June 15-17, with the Pride Parade Sunday, the 17<sup>th</sup>. Eugene Pride is Saturday, August 11. If you are interested in helping with planning, creating a banner, designing and/or staffing a booth, or participating in some other way please let me know.

If you have skills and/or interest in helping develop Sophia Christi's **website**, I would love to hear from you! Take time to check out the website at [www.sophiachristi.org](http://www.sophiachristi.org). Your feedback, suggestions, requests, ideas and photos are always welcome.

**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.

### **Community Meetings Scheduled for June**

Looking ahead, the Parish Council is scheduling our next Community meetings after Masses in **Portland, June 9**, and **Eugene, June 10**. We were very successful in combining dinner and meeting in Eugene in February and decided to try this approach in Portland as well. This gives the larger Sophia Christi community an opportunity to listen together for Sophia's guidance on the same weekend, and to discuss what we are hearing, envisioning, needing from and offering to each other in the largest possible context of our family gatherings. So please mark your calendars for those dates

## Food for the St. Andrew Episcopal Food Pantry

Please remember to bring food and personal hygiene donations for the Food Pantry when you come to Mass these next two weekends. In her 2011 Annual Report, Kathleen Greene, Pantry Manager, cited these details about those served last year, details which continue to apply this year.

*“The majority of clients served are two parent families, with 3.3 children, three or four other adults and a pet. The largest families have 11 members. Most clients worked two or three part-time jobs, lost medical insurance, sold their car and moved to a rental, a motel, someone’s couch or camped out in 2011. With two or three part-time jobs their income total prevented them from qualifying for food stamps. Many are still looking for work and have lost unemployment benefits. Many have no income at all. Many lost jobs due to illness or an accident. The total number of family members fed by this one pantry in 2011 was 8,323!”*

**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.**

Take time to reflect on your Lenten journey during the week ahead and notice the spiritual benefits that have come about as a result. Consider increasing the amount of time you spend in prayer from now until Easter. Allow Jesus to take you by the hand and lead you through the last days and hours of his life as a means of deepening your sense of the sacred in all the challenges, events and encounters of your life. May your curiosity and appreciation grow for what lies beneath and beyond all that passes for “reality” in the concrete details of everyday living. In all this, my hope is that you and I might catch a glimpse of what Jesus saw as he walked that devastating road of suffering that allowed him, in the end, to be able to say “forgive them, father, for they know not what they do.”

May this holiest of weeks gift you with the heart of Jesus and Easter eyes,

Toni