

August 4, 2012

Happy 5th Anniversary, Sophia Christi!

This month we celebrate 5 years of community life. Thanks to all of you we continue to offer an alternative Vatican II Catholic liturgy for those seeking an inclusive faith community in Portland and Eugene. There is so much to be grateful for as we begin our 6th year. Our task is to stay the course and build momentum. I am grateful to those of you who have made time each month to gather for Mass and dinner, to contribute your gifts as musicians and singers, liturgical ministers, greeters and ministers of hospitality and environment, organizers and community builders. Thank you to everyone who has prepared food, helped with set-up and clean-up and made our church-home a place of whole-hearted welcome. We are growing because of the generosity and dedication of everyone of you.

It's easy to forget that what we do each month is a response to the Spirit's call to prophecy. In our time and in our Church the progressive voice is officially ignored, for the most part, when not literally silenced. It is understandable that many have become discouraged over the last 50 years of counter-Vatican II policies and statements coming out of Rome. The Spirit that emerged during John XXIII's call for renewal of the church is as alive as ever in the hearts and minds of progressive Catholics (and non-Catholics) everywhere. We keep the flame burning, and tend the fire best, when we gather in community remembering **we are church**, and then recommit ourselves to spreading the **good news** of liberation, primacy of conscience, radical inclusivity, gospel justice and welcome for all. This is our mission and our prophetic call as Sophia Christi. I invite you to continue the good work begun in us as community, as church, by gathering this weekend to celebrate and remember who we are and to what we are called.

Mass Schedule This Month

Our Mass in **Portland** will be Saturday, **August 11**, at **Northminster Presbyterian Church, 2823 N. Rosa Parks Way at 5:00pm**. Potluck meal follows. Please bring your favorite entrées, vegetable dishes, salads and desserts in the spirit of our 5th birthday celebration. Remember that choir rehearsal begins at 4:00 and all interested singers and musicians are invited to come and participate.

Our Mass in **Eugene** will be **August 12**, at **First Congregational Church, UCC, 1050 E. 23rd, at 4:00pm**. Please bring your favorite dish to share at the anniversary potluck afterwards: entrées, veggies, salads, and desserts. Please come at 3:00 for rehearsal if you are interested in being part of the choir as a musician or singer.

On Sunday, **August 26**, 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.

Parish Council Meeting in September

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be Saturday, September 15, from 3:00 to 5:00 at Almost Home (a restaurant just off I-5) in Salem. Salem was chosen as our meeting location in order to equalize the distance for Eugene and Portland members as much as possible. We tried Conference Calls and found them useful when non-profit paperwork was the main focus of our time together. However, as we moved toward gaining an understanding of the bi-location reality of Sophia Christi it became apparent that Council members could best serve the larger community by getting to know one another. That goal is best served through face-to-face contact. Our annual retreats have helped us move in that direction, but too few have been able to attend. So we start with the Council as a way of expanding the connections between Eugene and Portland community hubs. It would be wonderful to have members from both Eugene and Portland attend these Council meetings and all are welcome and encouraged to do so. We can work out carpool arrangements for those interested in participating in the September meeting.

Pastoral Update

If you haven't already filled out a **registration/ministry form** please remember to do so when you come to Mass this weekend. You may also receive and return this form, as well as pledge cards, via email. Let me know if you prefer this method and I'll be happy to send one or both to you. Both are also available at all Masses.

The Eugene Celebration is August 24-26. Volunteers are needed to staff the Sophia Christi booth August 25th and 26th at the Eugene Celebration. Please contact Judith at jodyboody@gmail.com if you are willing to help. We will have brochures on hand for people to take with them and will be collecting email addresses of those interested in receiving this newsletter. This is a wonderful opportunity to make our community more visible to those seeking a progressive, Vatican II church home, so please let Judith know if you are able to help.

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, weddings, funerals, memorial services or other pastoral care needs.

Support the Sisters

Many of you have been following the story of the Vatican's "doctrinal assessment" of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious, a group representing 80% of Catholic nuns in the U.S. The Vatican has accused the group of promoting "radical feminist themes incompatible with the Catholic faith," undermining church teachings on

homosexuality and birth control, hosting speakers that “often contradict or ignore” church teachings, and making public statements that “disagree with or challenge the bishops.” LCWR will be holding its annual meeting in St. Louis next week, Aug. 7 to 11, and will be discerning a response to Vatican accusations. To express solidarity with the nuns and show support for LCWR there will be a prayer vigil this Wednesday, August 8, at St. Francis of Assisi, SE 12th and Oak, from 7:00 to 7:45pm. You are asked to bring family and friends and to spread the word. Such vigils will be held next week in cities across the country. I have no information as yet whether a vigil is being scheduled in Eugene. Terry Gross of NPR interviewed Sr. Pat Farrell, LCWR President, on Fresh Air July 17. If interested, you can listen to that interview by clicking on: <http://www.npr.org/2012/07/17/156858223/an-american-nun-responds-to-vatican-condemnation>. For continuing information on how to support the nuns please visit the Nun Justice Project at <http://www.nunjustice.org/>.

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 next weekend. **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.**

Opening the mailbox on any given day I inevitably find at least one, if not several, requests for my energy, time or resources. It's as if my individual response determines whether justice or injustice will prevail in the world. Just reading the mail can be exhausting. Recently a friend reminded me that justice-making comes in large and small packages, and that even the smallest package is important. There is no way of knowing whether the impact of Sophia Christi will be large or small. I only know it is work you and I have been given as we call for a return to Vatican II principles, Vatican II theology and ecclesiology, and respect for the Spirit's call to women to provide leadership in a Church so heavily identified with male-dominant practices and perspectives.

The vision of the prophet focuses the lens of society and its leaders on the cry for justice. U.S. nuns are on that prophetic edge at the national level and within the corridors of institutional church structures in unexpected ways. In our own small corner of society, the “parish” of Sophia Christi focuses the vision of many on the cry for justice, for renewal and reform within that church. It is a cause worthy of time, energy and resources. As we begin this 6th year of ministry, may our mission be aligned with the dreams and intentions of Vatican II, and may Sophia guide our steps in the months and years ahead.

Happy Anniversary,

Toni