

September 3, 2012

Happy Labor Day to everyone!

Through these past few months we've been hearing the voices of prophets at our Liturgies. The journey of the prophet is certainly not a glamorous one. Walking the road of prophecy requires strength and diligence of heart. The work is long and arduous. The call-to-justice is never received well by the dominant culture of any nation, church or organization. Messages challenging the status quo also challenge those who benefit from the-way-things-are, or who think they do. The job of the prophet is to rally the people that all may hear and heed the cry for justice and its imbedded demand for respect and care for the vulnerable within society. This rallying cry will inevitably challenge those upholding the status quo. It will also seek to challenge those who have given up hope and attempt to rouse the sleepers—those being “drugged” through media of all sorts to blindly follow the powerbrokers, even to the point of sacrificing the common good or their own best interests on the altars of church, state or corporate greed. On this Labor Day weekend, when we recognize the contributions of ordinary people to the well-being and prosperity of this nation, let's not forget that *justice* requires special attention to societal and ecclesial margins. The role of the prophet requires truth-telling, even when no one seems to be listening. Prophets themselves are called to trust the Spirit of Wisdom and Truth to find its own way into the hearts and minds of the people they encounter. It is that Spirit who keeps the flame of justice burning within the heart of humanity throughout time. We live in service of that Spirit of Love, Truth and Justice.

Our readings for September Liturgies: September 8 & 9 -- Isaiah 35:4-7; James 2:1-5; Mk 7:31-37. September 23 – Wis 2:12-17-20; James 3:16-4:3; Mk 9:30-37.

Mass Schedule This Month

Our Mass in **Portland** will be Saturday, **September 8**, 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. Choir rehearsal begins at 4:00 and all interested singers and musicians are invited to come and participate.

Our Mass in **Eugene** will be **September 9**, at **First Congregational Church, UCC, 1050 E. 23rd, at 4:00pm**. Please bring your favorite dish to share at the 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, **September 23**, 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

Please remember that 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. All members of the Eugene and Portland communities are invited and encouraged to attend these meetings. This month we will be planning for the election of new members to the Parish Council and discussing ideas for a community-wide retreat in the Fall. If you are interested in carpooling to Salem please let me know and I will help arrange transportation.

Parish Council Nominations

We will be soliciting nominations for the Parish Council at Masses this weekend as well as in October. Nominations need to be received by October 20. Please carefully and prayerfully consider whether you feel called to help lead Sophia Christi toward a deeper fulfillment of its mission to the marginalized and abandoned within our Church, as well as toward the renewal of the Church in the spirit of Vatican II. Nominate yourself or someone else by filling out the form (also below) at Mass or by sending it to me tjtortor@aol.com or Dianne Turner diannepd@hotmail.com. The Parish Council is seeking to fill two positions, each for a two-year term beginning January 2013 and ending December 2014. Feel free to talk with any of the current members about their experience serving on the Council this past year. They are: Dianne Turner: Council President; Leanne Kerner: Council Treasurer; Judith Manning: Council Secretary; Carol Zolkoske: Council member; Joy Wallace: Council member. Elections will be held in the fall at the annual Sophia Christi retreat (Date TBA). If you would like to submit your nomination via email, please fill out, copy and paste the following into a Word document, then send it to me or Dianne Turner at one of the email addresses above.

Name: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Please take a few minutes to tell us why you or the person you are nominating would be a good fit and what skills, gifts and talents you/they would bring to the Council.

(use as much space as you need)

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.

Eugene Celebration a Success

Our first-ever booth at the Eugene Celebration (August 25 and 26) provided a great opportunity to answer questions and talk with people about their experiences with the church, spirituality and religion. I spent Saturday at the booth and had the privilege of visiting with several people raised Catholic who were intrigued to learn that a progressive movement actually exists within the Church! I'm always amazed at the number of disillusioned and disenfranchised Catholics who have simply given up and walked away, never having been exposed to progressive elements within Catholicism.

So many times I've watched faces light up and eyes sparkle when someone hears, for the first time, that the rigidly dogmatic voices coming out of Rome and Diocesan offices do not speak for the entire Church. The documents of Vatican II trump pre-Councilar Tridentine theology (the Second Vatican Council being the true "magisterium" according to Canon Law), and so the out-dated theology being mass-produced and fed through traditionalist channels is not true Catholic theology any more. It is a throw-back to the 19th century, and people who have walked away from it have, sadly, also vacated their pew, their rightful place, in the assembly of the People of God. If all those who have walked away from restrictive, confining "bad" theology were to return and take up their position in the "Body of Christ" the face of the Church would change dramatically. This is part of the vision that gave birth to Sophia Christi. We reach out to members of our faith-family and let them know we're here, we need and want them, and there is hope. We offer what we can to debunk theological falsehoods and inspire interest. We are a small voice in a large religious wilderness. Moving minds and hearts is Spirit's job, not ours. We leave the outcome in her wise and loving hands.

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.

Food for the St. Andrew Episcopal Food Pantry

This month we received the following message from Kathleen Green, Director of the St. Andrew Food Bank:

We just received the wonderful food drive from Sophia Christi today. It is most grand and so very thoughtful. You sent us laundry soap, baby diapers, shampoo, bar soap, cake mixes with icings, tuna, fruit, hearty soups, razors, spices, salt and pepper and dinners in a box. I so thank all of you so very much. The baby diapers are so very needed as well as the soaps and laundry liquid. We keep our water bottles and fill them with laundry soap. If you don't keep your water bottles, we could really use them. And if any of you have extra time to volunteer we could use your help. We need volunteers to greet and sign in clients, shred the piles of papers, help in our Household Closet and help clients in our food pantry. If you think you might want to volunteer,

you came come by the pantry for a tour Friday or Saturday before we open at 12:00 or on a Sunday at 12:00 before we open at 1:00. Again thanks for all the wonderful, thoughtful donations. God's love and blessings to you.

Kathleen 503-247-3511

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.**

In the midst of ubiquitous information overload and non-stop sound bites demanding attention from every conceivable corner of the globe, I often forget that tiny molecules of melting ice accumulate to form rivulets, streams and rivers that feed our oceans, each droplet doing its part to maintain life on this planet we call home. I need to remind myself periodically that this incredibly complex 21st century world has a larger purpose than I can fathom and is guided by Spirit in ways I will never even begin to understand. I remind myself of this when I want so badly to “make a difference” or to see justice win out over disrespect and greed. Sophia Christi seems so insignificant in the face of so much needed change in church and society. What we do as a community, the gift we offer to those who have given up on church, given up on God and Gospel, can seem so small until someone shows up in tears, unable to speak, grateful to know that Spirit, though hidden, is alive and moving under the surface of church and world. We walk by faith, trusting that the One we serve uses the truth of our lived experience and the courage of our voiced expression to nurture all that is Holy. Ours is a labor of love and devotion. May Sophia Christi continue to serve those hungry for hope in an ailing world.

Labor Day blessings,

Toni