

August 3, 2014

Happy 7th Anniversary!

This month Sophia Christi celebrates 7 years of community life and service in Portland and Eugene. Last November we happily welcomed Battle Ground into our extended family, so we now have a lovely trinity of communal viewpoints embracing and feeding the one community we form. Though we gather around separate altars each month, our single mission and identity emerged during those first two years as we met in local groupings then brought everyone together at retreats to share dreams, visions, longings and collective goals within a context of prayer. Opening to Spirit's guidance, we prayerfully pooled our energies and arrived at a mission statement that clearly expressed our calling and purpose as a community. Further reflection and discernment led to a decision to pursue legal standing as a non-profit and to call forth a Council to help guide Sophia Christi into the future. Our model is unique—one community, three locations; one community, three altars. No location is a "satellite". All are equal. By sharing one Council, one mission, one web presence and one spiritual identity we extend our roots and broaden our reach so as to expand our own faith while serving a wider spectrum of God's people.

I think of Paul's words to the Romans we hear at Mass next weekend. He is mourning the fact that his people, the Israelites, have in large part turned their backs on the Christ, "the one who is to come" of their own tradition—the Messiah—while the Gentiles are receiving the Gospel and embracing the Christ in growing numbers. Paul has been traveling from city to city, spreading the "good news" that God's promise to Israel has been fulfilled, the Messiah did arrive, and a new world has begun, a world and a Spirit that includes everyone as equals in Christ. His greatest sorrow is the fact that his own people, the Israelites, don't see things this way. Instead, for the most part they reject his message and reject the Christ. For him this is a tragic rejection of revelation itself, a rejection of the sacred gifts of their heritage, and it is a constant source of emotional and spiritual anguish.

We are in a similar situation today as we witness the tragic rejection of God's revelation at Vatican II and watch as those sacred gifts are repudiated or turned on their heads by some church leaders to reinforce the old and tired status quo. It is a great sorrow to see many of our own people, our own church family, turn their backs on this incredible legacy while others recognize and embrace it for the treasure it is. Like Paul we continue our work of spreading Christ's message, renewed in our time by the Holy Spirit who swept through the corridors of the Second Vatican Council. Christ's message of radical inclusivity can be simply stated in this way: all people are God's people and all are welcome at Christ's table where none are barred from participation or service based on categories or labels human beings use to marginalize or exclude. We live with the emotional and spiritual anguish of division, but we join our hearts around the vision of one God, one People, one common table and the one Christ whose compassion and Wisdom enfolds us all.

Readings for Liturgies can be found on the USCCB website at <http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/>.

Mass Schedule This Month

Mass in **Portland** will be Saturday, **August 9**, at **Northminster Presbyterian Church, 2823 N. Rosa Parks Way** at **5:00pm**. Potluck follows. Please bring your favorite entrees, vegetable dishes, salads and desserts in the spirit of our 7th birthday celebration. Depending on temperature, we will either be upstairs in the sanctuary or downstairs in the dining room. Choir rehearsal begins at 4:00 and all interested singers and musicians are invited to come and participate.

Mass in **Eugene** will be Pentecost Sunday, **August 10**, at **First Congregational Church, UCC, 1050 E. 23rd**, at **4:00pm**. A potluck follows Mass. Please bring your favorite dish to share at the anniversary potluck afterwards: entrees, veggies, salads, and desserts. If you are interested in being part of the choir as a musician or singer, please come at 3:00 for rehearsal.

Mass in **Battle Ground** will be Sunday **August 3 and August 24** at **10:30am**. Bring non-perishable food and hygiene items for St. Vincent de Paul as well as healthy food to share after Mass.

Upcoming Events:

Summer Events: Mark Your Calendars!

❖ Eugene Pride Festival – August 9, 12 noon to 7pm

If you are not involved in staffing the booth, please do come by for a visit and join the fun!

❖ Community Picnic – September 6, 1-4pm, at Carol's in Stayton, OR

Our third annual community picnic will take place at the beginning of September. Plan to join in on the fun again this year by putting this on your calendar NOW! **The Parish Council** will meet beforehand from 11:00 to 1:00. Everyone is welcome to attend this meeting. The agenda will be included in the next newsletter and posted online in the member portal.

Fall Events:

❖ Annual Meeting – November 2, 2-4pm

Our Annual Meeting will be held at Ike Box Coffee shop in Salem, OR. All are welcome and encouraged to attend. We will elect officers and set the budget for 2015.

Pastoral Update:

Summary of July Parish Council Meeting

When the Parish Council met in Salem, Oregon on July 20th, we had quite a productive meeting! I submitted my resignation, as I will be moving to California this month. Mitch Moore joined the Council and was elected Interim President! The Council identified a need to talk about money with the wider Sophia Christi community, both as a way of providing information about the budget and to allow members to weigh in about priorities, desires, and concerns regarding community money. Look for an insert in

the September Liturgy aid with information about money in the Sophia Christi community. The Council is still following up on the priority identified in the community survey: outreach to disaffected Catholics. If you have ideas and/or would like to be part of the outreach effort, please contact a Council member. The Council is hoping to have a Parish Council/Board retreat, to allow time to evaluate the current community structure and to have space to vision for the community, though a date has not been set. The next Parish Council meeting will be at Carol's house in Stayton, Oregon before the community picnic on September 6th, meeting starting at 11 am. The Annual Meeting of the Parish Council will be held on November 2nd from 2 - 4 pm at Ike Box Cafe in Salem, Oregon. All are welcome to attend! -- Danielle

Website

The "member portal" is ready for launching this month! Those who regularly participate in Sophia Christi Masses and events, and have also given permission for their contact information to be posted in the portal directory, will be handed a password "key" providing access to this section of the website. Because some community members require anonymity for personal and professional reasons, the names and contact information in this section are confidential. Please be respectful of each member's privacy and remember the Directory is for internal use only. Do not reproduce or share email addresses or phone numbers with people outside the community unless you have explicit permission from the member involved.

Lectors, Eucharistic Ministers, Ushers, Altar Servers, Greeters, and Gift Bearers please note that Liturgical Ministry Schedules will also be posted in the "member portal" each month and will be available three months in advance. Contact information for ministers will also be available for ease of access should you need to find a substitute for any given month.

The website itself continues to grow as new information is added every month. This includes the current homily and information about upcoming events. I encourage you to check it out and send your own comments to the 'News and Events' page for posting. Please bookmark this page www.sophiachristi.org for easy access.

Newsletter Update

We are in the process of working on an upgrade of our newsletter design through an online email service called mailchimp. Some features will allow us to better understand how the newsletter is or isn't serving the community. Some will allow individuals to subscribe or unsubscribe more easily. Others will permit us to streamline the process of sending the monthly newsletter while also providing an easier method for sending "targeted" messages. For example, when snow forces us to cancel Mass in Eugene, people in Portland and Battle Ground probably don't need to be notified.

We will be experimenting with the new system in the months ahead and hope it will enhance communication as we become more familiar with the available tools. Your feedback is crucial in this process, so please let me know what you think as time goes on. We're hoping to shift to the new format next month if all goes well.

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, the sacrament of reconciliation or anointing, home Masses, weddings, funerals, memorial services or other pastoral care needs.

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.**

There is a recognizable stability that comes with completing a 7-year cycle. God rested on the seventh day; Creation was complete! With Sophia's guidance and God's grace we planted the foundational stones of our community's existence throughout the past 7 years, and now arrive at a place of rest, celebration and prayer. It is time to appreciate what we have accomplished and to give thanks for our many blessings. It is also time to listen more deeply for Spirit's direction as we prepare to embark on the next phase of our journey together.

I think of Jesus sending the disciples away in a boat before dismissing the crowd he has just fed in next weekend's Gospel. He makes time to go up the mountain alone to pray after a day's work healing the sick, teaching the disciples and feeding the crowd. Before the crowd found him that day, he had just learned of the death of his cousin, John the Baptist, and had been trying to find a deserted place to be alone. When that didn't happen, he served the needs of those who came. But when his time for retreat finally arrived he sought the quiet to be alone with God.

While Jesus prayed a storm arose offshore and battered the little boat carrying his disciples. It's one of those things, isn't it? Pauses typically last a very short time and the next task, the next human need, springs up requiring attention. Then off we go, continuing the journey of life, sometimes entering a new phase or beginning a new chapter. What happens in that short pause between tasks, cycles or phases, though, is all-important.

If we follow Jesus' example, in this pause between past and future we are called to prayer. For us this prayer is filled with gratitude for the opportunity to serve the mission of Sophia Christi, this ministry we've been given. We don't need to understand why it's been entrusted to us, or even what it's really about. All that's required is that we pause and take time to listen while standing or sitting in the presence of God. And so, my friends, we end our 7th year with a celebrational pause...and we pray...

In gratitude for the last 7 years of blessings received, and prayers for all of you as we move together into Sophia Christi's future...

Blessings and peace,

Toni