

May 6, 2015

Dear Friends,

I have been out of town the last week and a half visiting extended family in Philadelphia. While I was there riots erupted in Baltimore following the funeral of Freddie Gray, the 25-year-old black man who died from a severe spinal injury after being arrested and brutally transported in a police van. After a night of rioting an uneasy peace returned to the city while protesters crowded the streets insisting on police accountability in Gray's death. Rallies and marches organized in solidarity with Baltimore were held in cities across the country. Many in the crowd I witnessed carried signs stating "black lives matter," "my life matters," and "I am Freddie Gray." Most of the marchers I saw were young. Some were young mothers pushing strollers. And each individual face held, for me, the look of determination and hope—determination to be seen and heard, and hope that their collective voices and presence could usher in a new era of consideration for the dignity of everyone and an unbiased system of justice.

The readings for our Masses this weekend focus attention on love that acknowledges and sustains human equality. After Cornelius drops to his knees and bows before Peter, Peter helps him to his feet saying, "Get up! I am just a human like yourself! I'm beginning to see how true it is that God shows no partiality." And in John's Gospel Jesus applies this image of universal human equality to himself as he tells his disciples, "You are my friends. I will no longer speak of you as subordinates; instead I call you friends."

This basic equality has yet to be fully acknowledged and incorporated into the legal, social and financial structures of our society. Vast sectors of the population have remained impoverished for generations because of institutionalized racism, economic injustice and culturally sanctioned discrimination. The Gospel—the good news of Jesus—calls us to look closely at the many ways inequality is allowed, even fostered, within the circles of family and society we inhabit. Awareness is the first step. With awareness we can begin to recognize the vulnerability and needs of our sisters and brothers and respond with laws that further equality across the spectrum of our collective reality. Faithfulness to the Gospel leads us there.

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, **May 9**, at **Northminster Presbyterian Church, 2823 N. Rosa Parks Way** at **5:00pm**. Please bring entreées, salads, veggie dishes and desserts for a delicious potluck meal. Choir rehearsal begins at 4:00 and all interested singers and musicians are invited to come and participate.

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

Masses in Battle Ground will be Sunday **May 3rd and 24th** 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:

Spring Event:

- ❖ **Parish Council Meeting, May 31, Ike Box Coffee Shop, 299 Cottage St. NE, Salem, 2-4pm**

If you have items for the Council agenda you can send them to me or to Mitch, our Council president.

Summer Outreach Events:

- ❖ **Portland PRIDE Parade, June 21.** Sophia Christi members will be walking with our banner in the Pride Parade again this year, though we will not have a booth in the Festival. We will also have a truck for those unable to walk the entire route. Please let us know if you will need to ride so we can save a place for you! Watch for Parade details in the June newsletter and plan to help expand the Catholic presence this year by marching with the Sophia Christi contingent!
- ❖ **Eugene PRIDE Booth, August 8, Alton Baker Park.** Please plan ahead for this event. We will need several volunteers to person the booth, answer questions, and show the LGBT community in Eugene that there are Catholics who love and support them exactly for who they are.
- ❖ **Eugene Celebration Booth, Downtown, August 22 & 23**

Pastoral Update:

Report—Ministry Partner Update

Following April Masses in Eugene and Portland, community members shared information about their volunteer activities with various social justice programs. We agreed that our ideal ministry partners would be smaller non-profits focused on serving the immediate, basic needs of homeless and/or low-income populations. We also agreed that our choices would be limited to organizations where one or more Sophia Christi members were already volunteering or were eager to become involved. We want to form relationships and we want to make a difference. We also want to involve our entire community in helping to support the ministries we collectively choose as partners.

Several members in both Eugene and Portland paired up to do further research about non-profits put forward as options. They committed to visiting these organizations and reporting their findings during Mass this month. Please plan on staying for the potluck and discussion in Portland/Eugene next Sunday and help make the decision about Sophia Christi's ministry partner in your area.

Contemplative Prayer/Study Group Forming—Eugene

Two Eugene members of Sophia Christi are currently organizing a Contemplative Prayer/Study group that will initially meet once a month in a member's home. They plan

to incorporate meditation and conversation during each gathering. The group will read books by Richard Rohr, as well as others, learn and practice forms of meditation such as Centering Prayer and Lectio Divina, and support one another on the spiritual path. If you are interested in being part of this group you may talk to Toni, Dianne T. or Anna L. after Mass next Sunday.

Website

Remember that the newsletter, current homily, and Council minutes are posted on the website each month, as are all upcoming Sophia Christi events along with directions to those events. Our web address is www.sophiachristi.org.

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

Blessings of spring,

Toni