

August 2, 2015

Dear Friends,

On the counter in my kitchen is a box of freshly harvested peaches, a bowl of plums from a friend's extravagantly abundant crop, several tomatoes from my garden and the first fruit from my beloved pear tree. August has arrived! Even the lectionary readings this month are about food, from tomorrow's passage from Exodus—"God said to Moses, 'I will now rain down bread from heaven for you'"—to our Gospel focus on John's 'Bread of Life Discourse' through the next four weeks. It seems appropriate that we should consider the subject of food this month as we welcome and enjoy the rich variety of this amazing season of plenty. As I look out my window at the sun filtering through a neighbor's fir tree, and the breeze rustling the leaves of the hydrangea, rhododendron and oak, I feel enormous gratitude for the simple yet profound beauty of this earth home that nourishes me. I am fed in so many ways that I fail to notice until I stop 'doing' in order to just 'be' in this grand sanctuary where every ray of sunlight, every dancing leaf, every spider web and rose petal speaks the name of God in its own native tongue. The 'bread of heaven' is all around us, feeding mind, heart and soul in ways impossible to fully capture and describe. Our churches tend to translate nature's original language with words and concepts that all too often obstruct rather than enhance direct experience of the Divine Spirit alive in our world. If we are to see Christ as Bread of Life, we must first taste and appreciate the hunger-satisfying properties of bread. If we are to recognize God's presence within and among us, perhaps we need to see that presence in willow and daisy, in sun, moon, stars and cosmos. Opening to that intrinsic, primitive language too subtle for words is a model given us by St. Francis, and it is a model that is especially suitable for our church and our world at this time.

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 8**, at **Northminster Presbyterian Church, 2823 N. Rosa Parks Way at 5:00pm**. Please bring entrees, 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, **August 9**, at **First Congregational Church, UCC, 1050 E. 23rd, at 4:00pm**. A potluck follows our celebration. Please bring entrees, salads, veggie dishes and desserts to share. 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 2 and 23**, at **10:30am**. Please bring non-perishable food items for the poor and hungry of North Clark County, as well as healthy food to share after Mass.

Upcoming Events:

Sophia Christi Picnic—August 16—Carol's in Stayton, OR

There is an old Sioux Indian prayer that goes "With all beings and all things we shall be as relatives." So, Sunday August 16 from 1:00 to 4:00, Sophia Christi Catholic Community will celebrate our chosen relatives with a potluck picnic. Everyone is invited

to bring family and friends to spend a special afternoon in a pristine quiet rural setting near Stayton. It will also be a wonderful opportunity to meet and visit with people who also have much joy and appreciation for everything God offers. Sophia Christi members are located from Cottage Grove, OR to Cougar, WA and all places in between. The strong bond that holds us together are our devoted women priests and the belief that everyone is loved and cherished by God. The picnic is one of the few times that we all get to meet and share time together. Please join us. If you wish to walk on the path in the woods please wear long pants, socks and shoes. Please bring a potluck dish and a chair. Everything else will be provided. - Carol

Parish Council Meeting, August 16—Carol's in Stayton, OR

The next Council meeting will begin at noon just prior to the picnic on Aug. 16. Everyone is both warmly invited and welcome to attend the meeting, so plan to come a little early to the picnic if you are interested in participating. The agenda will be posted in the member portal of the website in the week prior to the meeting.

Fall Event: Sophia Christi Retreat, November 1, 4H Camp in Salem

Save the date for Sophia Christ's annual retreat coming up in the fall. More information will follow as the Council continues its planning. If interested in helping plan the retreat, please contact Mitch, Judith, Leanne, Mary, Carol, Joy L, Helen or Toni.

Pastoral Update:

Portland Ministry Partner—Rose Haven—Continuing Needs

We will continue collecting the following items for Rose Haven's women and children at Masses in Portland. Eugene members of Sophia Christi are invited to participate in this effort until a Ministry Partner in Eugene is chosen. Please note what is currently most needed, as needs change seasonally:

- Large/Plus Sized Clothing
- Warm blankets (fleece or wool preferred)

Hygiene Needs:

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| - Feminine hygiene – tampons & pads | - Hand sanitizer |
| - Shampoo & conditioner (travel size is ideal) | - Deodorant |
| - Soap & body wash | - Body lotion |
| - Toothbrushes & toothpaste | - Combs/brushes |
| - Pocket Tissues | - Razors |
| - First aid supplies | - Incontinence pads |

Contemplative Prayer/Study Group—Eugene

*I'm so grateful that Dianne T. and Anna L. started a meditation group in Eugene! At present there are eight of us meeting monthly. Together we are reading Richard Rohr's *The Naked Now*, as a guide and inspiration. I also went to his website, Center for Action and Contemplation, and signed up for his daily meditations via email. I get a lot of insight and hope from his thoughts. In the group we discuss concepts like non-dual thinking, contemplative seeing, God-is-all, acceptance of what is, and spiritual maturity. All of us begin as children with dualistic thinking, deciding what's good and not so good, what's bad and needs to be rejected. In a lifetime of conflict, confusion, healing, broadening, loving, and forgiving reality, we slowly come to an alternative consciousness. More and more we can let go of our mind's need to solve problems, to fix people (this is a big one for me!), to fix ourselves, to rearrange the moment because*

it is not to our liking. The surest way to move toward this alternative consciousness is through a practice of meditation. We start our meeting with practice for 20 minutes then share our insights and grapple with questions, supporting each other and growing together. To me, this is the heart of being a Christian and expanding into more loving non-judgment, compassion, and humility. So much gratitude. --Judith

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.

This month we celebrate our 8th Anniversary as a community. Some days it seems only yesterday that a large group of us gathered at University Park United Methodist Church in Portland for what is now an extended community housed in three locations! It seems particularly appropriate that we will not only be celebrating our anniversary Mass next weekend, but that Carol will host our community picnic the following Sunday at her home in Stayton. As we re-affirm our commitment to welcome, embrace and feed all who come through our doors, we also set aside time to nourish our roots and the bonds that unite us to one another. Those roots are anchored in Christ and in the calling that brought us together. They are also anchored in a particular place and time, a location, a home, a table, to which we invite our extended family to come and be fed. It is fitting that we gather out in the country, on Carol's beautiful land, to experience the "ground of being" in an intentional yet fun and playful way at least once a year. It is another opportunity to join in the rich history of prophets and pioneers of every age who have walked the unmarked path of God's ubiquitous trail across the desert, following a dimly lit star with hearts full of trust.

Blessings for a rich harvest,
Toni