

August 8, 2016

Dear friends,

I have spent a good part of this last month sorting through, tossing out, moving and donating items accumulated throughout (mostly) my adult life. It is something I've wanted to do for years but there never seemed to be enough space on my calendar to do the job in an orderly, relatively stress-free way, so I waited for the 'right' time to come along. Whatever caused me to believe such a daunting task could be 'orderly' or that there would be a 'right' time to begin, I wonder? Simply said—the time is never exactly 'right' and the job is anything but 'orderly'! Planning and prioritizing challenge my more spontaneous nature, so devising or even following an organizational model that might help with such an overwhelming task is beyond me. So I've thumbed through files stored in boxes and drawers, sorted through a fair-sized library of books, and touched every object in cupboards, closets, attic and basement storage over the course of the last many weeks. I've found parts of my life, even of myself, I had forgotten existed, unhatched ideas as well as plans laid out and goals achieved. A lifetime of memories stored in boxes and unearthed painstakingly, divulging stages of life's joys, triumphs, failures and sorrows, all are there to be witnessed, revered, interwoven and blessed.

Something in that experience mirrors what I see happening in the world around me. The cluttered remains of philosophies that have served to guide public policy, the cartons of ideas that have fashioned our beliefs about the world, even our vigorously treasured cultural and religious practices—all are being sorted through by various hands and it is impossible to tell what will be discarded and what will be salvaged as we continue evaluating the accumulations acquired over generations of time. In our nation the excruciating process of discerning common values and groping our way toward a common sense of purpose has led us to search for buried treasure beneath the debris of individualistic, utilitarian and even well-intentioned goals and schemes that have debased the common good of a people.

In an effort to cleanse any home of useless and stifling debris we first encounter the overwhelming chaos of musty boxes emptied for sorting, dusty shelves spilling their contents onto all available surfaces, cobwebbed corners hiding long-forgotten papers, gifts, treasures from ancestors. Our national and planetary process is even larger, more chaotic, but essentially no different than any major house-cleaning, downsizing or de-cluttering activity any of us have engaged on a personal level. The process involves letting go some of what we have known and loved, some pieces of our own identity, as well as things we are more than ready to throw out to make way for new life-giving energies to come in, to transform who we have been into more of who we truly are. It involves grief as well as release, relief, a new spaciousness and joy. As the Letter to the Hebrews will tell us next week: "let us lay aside everything that impedes us and so easily entangles us." It is a tall order, a difficult and stressful challenge. But it is also freeing, empowering and satisfying—Spirit working in and among us to lighten the heavy accumulations of personal and human history.

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 13**, at **Northminster Presbyterian Church, 2823 N. Rosa Parks Way** at **5:00pm**. Please bring an entree, salad, veggie dish or

dessert for our 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 14, at First Congregational Church, UCC, 1050 E. 23rd, at 4:00pm.** A potluck follows our celebration. Please bring an entree, salad, veggie dish or dessert to share. If you are interested in being part of the choir as a musician or singer, please come at 3:00 for rehearsal.

Upcoming Events:

Parish Council Meeting, October 22

The next Council meeting will be at Ike Box Café in Salem from 10:00am to noon on October 22nd. All Sophia Christi members are invited to the meeting. Carpools can be arranged from both Eugene and Portland. If you are unable to come, and have questions or concerns you would like the Council to address at its next meeting, please contact Mitch, our Council president, at naloorider@gmail.com

Sophia Christi 9th Anniversary

We will celebrate our 9th Anniversary at August Masses next weekend. Please come and participate in this joyous occasion. We will begin planning for our 10th anniversary by soliciting ideas from community members at our potluck following the liturgy.

Pastoral Update:

Notes from August 7 Council Meeting

*We met at Carol's in Stayton, prior to the Sophia Christi Annual Picnic. Our President, Mitch, couldn't attend, so Dianne T. chaired. Others were Judith, Joy and Jim, Carol, Bruce T. Toni, and Kathleen. **Pledge Drive:** We discussed the Pledge Drive and our plans to promote it at the next couple of Masses, ensuring people know Sophia Christi is covering about 90% of our expenses through monthly contribution. If we want to contribute money to our ministry partners (Rose Haven in Portland and Catholic Worker House in Eugene) as we did last year we need to increase our donations. The obvious place donations fall short is when people miss Mass and forget to make their monthly pledge. We encourage people to set up an automatic payment through their bank in order to overcome this issue. **Outreach:** We are working on producing a Welcome Packet for people new to Sophia Christi. It will consist of a welcome letter, our brochure, a Sophia Christi bookmark, information about Roman Catholic Women Priests and a menu of ways to get involved in Sophia Christi. **Eugene and Portland Ministry Partners:** We discussed our progress with both ministry partners as well as their needs. We have new lists of most-wanted items and will publish these lists in this month's newsletter. **Tenth Anniversary:** It's not too early to begin planning our TENTH ANNIVERSARY next August, so we held a brainstorming session during the picnic, soliciting ideas from everyone who came. We'll also ask for ideas from those attending Masses this month. Everyone interested in helping to plan the celebration please contact Mitch at naloorider@gmail.com **Lenten Retreat:** We are continuing to plan our retreat for next year. We decided to ask Bill to facilitate once again, with some modifications, and hope to include his wife, Val, who does "Soul Collage." We have secured the 4-H Camp near Salem and set the date for March 17-18, 2017.*

--Judith, Secretary

Summer Picnic a Lovely Success

About 20 members of Sophia Christi, assorted members of Carol's family and 4 dogs met at Carol's in Stayton for an afternoon of visiting and enjoying a delicious potluck picnic under the giant oaks. It was a lovely afternoon with a slight breeze. All week rain was predicted but Sunday was a beautiful warm day. Most took the walk through the woods which has become a tradition.

Nature is ever changing and for some this walk is a chance to see how much can change in just a year. Judith also led a discussion on suggestions to best celebrate our 10-year anniversary in August 2017. Our picnic is a time for people from Eugene and Portland to come together, visit and fully understand what a unique and loving gift we all share no matter where we live—and that is to belong to Sophia Christi. --Carol

Portland Ministry Partner—Rose Haven—Update

Rose Haven is located at 627 N.W. 18th Ave. in downtown Portland. It is a day shelter for women only (and their children) and is open 5 days a week, Monday through Friday, from 8:30am to 4:30pm. It is closed for a break between noon and 1:00. Food is served from 8:30 to noon. On their first visit women can choose three outfits of clothing plus add at least one more outfit to their wardrobe every month. They are given shoes and blankets as needed. Women looking for work are helped in creating a resume. They can also have a manicure by volunteer nursing students. There are many volunteer positions available. In addition to kitchen help and meal service, you can facilitate a book club, assist women in choosing an outfit in the clothing shop, or help women with budgeting and with job searches. You can also simply plan a fun activity. A popular offering, for example, is Wednesday Bingo where the women can play, socialize and relax while having a chance to win small prizes. It allows for connection in an otherwise isolating experience of living on the street. Rose Haven volunteers are invited to offer their skills in art, writing, organizing, sorting, fundraising, computing, and medical consulting, or to help in creating a class for the new wellness and empowerment program. There are a variety of needs and many ways to get involved. We are always looking for more people to volunteer and join us in serving the needs of these women and their children. –Joy L.

Fresh from Rose Haven's August Newsletter: "Rose Haven's Back-to-School program is underway. We are collecting school supplies to help children in need to succeed! Please drop off school supplies by Thursday, August 18, at noon. Our #1 need is new backpacks. Please see the list below and give what you can":

Backpacks, Lunchboxes, Calculators, 3-Ring Binders, Notebooks, Paper, Dividers, Folders, #2 Pencils, Black and Blue Pens, Glue and Glue Sticks, Tape, Scissors, Markers, Crayons, Colored Pencils, Combination Locks, Highlighters, Index Cards, Rulers, Hand Sanitizer, Pocket Tissues

"We are always in need of backpacks for our women, so used bags will be gratefully accepted and used for women in need. Additionally, we ALWAYS need new underwear and socks, bras, blankets, sleeping bags, travel sized shampoo/conditioner/hand sanitizer and handled bags (paper sacks from the grocery store are great)."

Eugene Ministry Partner—Eugene Catholic Worker—Update

We continue to make 400-600 sandwiches per week, which are then distributed to those without food in the parks and on the streets in the evenings. Currently we gather on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons. We have enjoyed streamlining our production system so that we can manage to make and bag a large amount of sandwiches within an hour to an hour and a half! There is much to be said for teamwork. At times the individuals residing at Poverello House, where we work, assist us, and as our time goes on there, we get to know them and feel a part of their community. I might add that Brother Charlie accommodates us with great music so we can sing and sway as we work. A nice perk! Because of our work to provide the additional sandwiches each week and the soup on Sunday morning at Occupy Medical, the average monthly food service count was 4800 meals which includes the meals served at the Poverello House and the Wednesday-Saturday breakfast at Washington-Jefferson park. Our seemingly small contribution actually assists to increase the overall food that then is received by Catholic Worker from Food For Lane County. We are making a difference. Thanks to all who give of their time, donations of food, clothing, toiletries and household items.

Sophia Christi members can become involved in the following ways, and as needs change this list will be updated accordingly:

Tang breakfast drink, coffee, sugar, sandwich bags (fold lock top instead of zip lock), jelly, paper towels, toilet paper, toothbrushes, socks, women's toiletry items. Donations of your time are also appreciated to make sandwiches, soup for Sunday morning, cooking a meal at Poverello House one evening a week, or serving breakfast one morning at Washington-Jefferson Park.

If you have questions or want to schedule a time to volunteer you may contact me at 541-683-1936, or email at lankutisa@gmail.com. --Anna L.

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.

It is our ninth anniversary as a community. At Masses next weekend Sophia Christi enters her 10th year of living into the Spirit's burnishing fires, and her dive into those infinitely transforming baptismal waters of release and redemption. We have been on a journey following Eucharistic breadcrumbs across a desert of ancestral history carved with human yearning into the sands and stones of the planet we love. We have been and continue to follow our desert Parents' lantern, Holy Sophia's light—the flickering Easter Candle—and to emulate our esteemed brother, Jesus, as he gave his whole heart in love for God and God's people on earth. This year we have stepped even further into service of the Good News through our outreach to women without shelter and resources in Portland, and their counterparts, the men without shelter and resources in Eugene. People extending a hand to other people is always good news, and it is the Gospel's mandate—love and serve with Spirit's guidance and the heart of Jesus, and do this in your neighborhood, in your cities and counties and nations all over the world. We have heard the call. We have prayed and played, relaxed and sang together. I am grateful to all of you for following your hearts and forming this small community that spans a vast area of the Willamette Valley corridor.

As we enter our 10th year I am reflecting on the Gospel reading for our anniversary liturgies next week. Jesus tells the disciples: "I have come to light a fire on the earth." It is a burnishing fire, a fire that polishes and strengthens the character of those who follow his Light, his Path. We continue following with a sense of promise and of joy.

Blessings of peace and beauty to you all,
Toni