

June 4, 2017

Dear friends,

*“We live in the midst of chaotic times. As crises continue to build, we may find ourselves confused or fearful. We may want to gather in the upper room of our lives with our closest friends and close the door on a troubled world just like the disciples. Yet chaos always calls for creative response, it always beckons us to open to holy surprise.”*

*--Christine Valters Paintner, PhD, Online Abbess of Abbey of the Arts [abbeyofthearts.com]*

I love those words about opening to “holy surprise.” Spirit is dancing in the dark corners of our world as well as in plain view each and every day but we are often so caught up in disturbing or humdrum details that we miss the signs of God’s activity and end up losing hope. Reading this morning’s paper I experienced that ‘holy surprise’ in seeing the Chief Executives from Microsoft, Apple, Tesla, Twitter, Disney Co., General Electric, Hewlett Packard and Goldman Sachs denouncing the U.S. president’s short-sighted withdrawal from the Paris Accord on climate change. And then again I felt that fluttering of hopeful joy as I later read that the Governors of California, Washington and New York had announced the formation of the U.S. Climate Alliance, a coalition of state governments pledging to step up their own efforts to prioritize the health of planet earth.

In my training as a counselor I learned that resolving any issue requires that all parties experience being heard. At the opposite ends of any continuum—we call them the ‘polarities’—there are strongly held beliefs that must be spoken and received. When these opposing perspectives are heard and accurately reflected back to each speaker changes begin to happen that allow distance between extremes to contract. Often what emerges is a surprising ‘third force,’ a creative new possibility no one had thought of before. It seems to come out of nowhere and is not merely a middle ground between opposing sides. The Spirit works within the heart of each speaker or set of speakers, evoking a vulnerable honesty as well as receptivity to the other. Out of this dynamic emerges the creative surprise of something completely new and unexpected. Our world is infused with Spirit even as Spirit resides in every human heart. The conversations taking place now are not only happening between individuals but between people who represent whole communities, cultures and nations. As we watch these interactions it helps to be aware that we are all participants in this large-scale drama in which certain individuals give voice to beliefs and perspectives, desires and needs residing within all of us at some level. God is with us in all this—the Creator is there continually creating; the suffering and crucified Jesus is there dying on the cross of our blindness, fear and aggression; the resurrected Christ is there displaying for all time that the deaths we experience give way to transformation and new life; and the Spirit is there inspiring us all, nurturing our hopes and dreams and leading us always into an experience of communion with the Divine in and through each other. As we celebrate Pentecost today, let’s look for that ‘holy surprise’ dancing in the darkened corners as well as on center stage. Spirit is alive and can even delight us if our inner eyes are open to see.

**Lectors: Sunday Mass Readings:** If you are interested in accessing the readings for our weekend Masses they can be found at <http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/> which is the US Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) website. We use the Sunday readings for both Saturday and Sunday Masses. Though the Church designates the New American Bible (NAB) translation to be used at liturgies, Sophia Christi uses the

translation created by Priests For Equality because of its commitment to inclusive language. Lectors will find some differences between the two but are still encouraged to prepare using the USCCB site since variations are somewhat minimal.

### Mass Schedule This Month

**Mass in Portland** will be Saturday, **June 10**, at **Northminster Presbyterian Church, 2823 N. Rosa Parks Way at 5:00pm**. Please bring an entree, salad or veggie dish 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, **June 11**, at **First Congregational Church, UCC, 1050 E. 23<sup>rd</sup>**, at **4:00pm**. A potluck follows our celebration. Please bring an entree, salad or veggie dish 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:

#### Next Council Meeting—June 24

Our next Council meeting will be Sunday, June 24, at Ike Box Café in Salem from 11:00 to 1:00. Please consider coming to the meeting or give your thoughts to Council members before the June weekend Masses on the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>. For carpool information contact Toni in Portland or Judith in Eugene. Portland Council members: Kathy, Joy and Jim. Eugene Council members: Judith, Carol, Bruce and Dianne.

#### Summer Picnic—July 15

Our annual Sophia Christi Picnic will again be at Carol's house near Stayton this year. The potluck picnic begins at 1:00 and ends at 4:00, with ample time for relaxing, visiting, and walking through the forest.

#### 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration—August 12 and 13 Masses

Please mark your calendar and plan to be present for our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations in August. We are hoping for a full house this year! More details to follow next month.

### Pastoral Update:

#### Ministry Partners:

##### Rose Haven—Update

*The women and children who find their way to Rose Haven **are always in need of soap, hygiene products, new socks, and underwear**. At this refuge in the heart of the city they find genuine acceptance and help with practical needs. One woman, Julie, says: "Words alone cannot express the depth of my thanks and gratitude for your loving compassion, faith and support." And another, Callie, says: "Your kindness, gentleness and sweetness are with me each day, filling me with a peace you offer not just me, but any woman who enters your open doors. Yours are really the most tender open arms that have ever offered to embrace me." And we, at Sophia Christi, are honored to be a small part of this open-hearted ministry. – Joy L.*

For a complete list of needed items simply go to <http://rosehaven.org/helping/donate-items/>

##### Eugene Catholic Worker—Charlie to visit on Sunday, June 11

*This time last year, Charles Smith, OFS, came and spoke to our Sophia Christi Community during our potluck. He spoke about Eugene's Catholic Worker houses and outreach programs, and their need for volunteers. At our upcoming Mass "Charlie" will return and give us an update on how the past year has*

gone. Some of us have been making sandwiches this year. Charlie may present other types of volunteer opportunities as well. I can tell you that we sandwich makers have very much enjoyed our time spent in the Catholic Worker houses. It has been good to know that our work is contributing to directly feeding the homeless and hungry in our community. Speaking of those sandwiches, **please remember our need for JELLY contributions. We use and appreciate each and every jar.** With many thanks, Kathy

If you are interested in volunteering with any of the activities at the Catholic Worker House, contact Anna. --Anna

## 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](http://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.

When we meet next weekend we will celebrate Trinity Sunday. Following on the heels of Pentecost, with its strong visual imagery (tongues of fire) and auditory drama (noise like a strong driving wind), the Trinity has little going for it—a shamrock maybe, a triangular portrayal like the one on back of the dollar bill. Though Christians tacitly accept the doctrine of the Trinity it has been gathering dust from mystified neglect while sitting on a theological shelf for generations. In 1991, Catherine Mowry LaCugna published a groundbreaking book entitled 'God For Us: the Trinity and Christian Life' in which she argues that "the doctrine of the Trinity, properly understood...is an eminently practical doctrine with far-reaching consequences for Christian life." She calls Trinitarian theology a "theology of relationship." Richard Rohr also takes this position as he uses the conceptual framework of the Triune God to underscore an image of the Beloved Community, which includes all of Creation, as striving to mirror the Divine Community of our Trinitarian God. Though we live in an expanding universe of increasing diversity, all of Creation is contained in the One God Who loves each and every particle created, nurtures tenderly, transforms continually and engages relationally always, everywhere, eternally. As an image of God, the Trinity performs a dramatic paradigm shift. It replaces the traditional image of a judgmental sky-god with the deeply relational image of a Community of Persons, holding us and all creation within the circumference of Its Singular Love-Field of Indivisible Reality. Everything God creates is part of God. So, as Paul says in Romans 8:35-39, "Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

May the Spirit of Pentecost inspire us all,  
Toni