

August 6, 2017

10th Anniversary Celebration August 12 (Pdx) and August 13 (Eug)

Happy Anniversary Sophia Christi!

Ten years doesn't seem long looking back. It must be one of those quirky things about time that the past can seem like yesterday while the future moves briskly forward one task, one decision, one hour and day at a time. I've been doing a lot of reflecting these last two months while sorting through photos and memorabilia of this communal journey we call 'Sophia Christi'. In those early days we didn't know we would become the community we now are. All we knew back then was that we wanted to celebrate Mass together as an inclusive, welcoming, open-table-committed assortment of mostly Catholics who were excited about the ordination of women to the Catholic priesthood. And right here in Portland a woman had been ordained, and here I am. I also had significant ties to Eugene since I had lived there for many years. I had been traveling a non-existent path to ordination all my life with little or no hope women would be ordained in my lifetime. And then it happened and my world changed in indescribable, life-altering ways. It was more like a dream than reality. In fact the institutional church insisted it was not reality at all. The hierarchy proclaimed it a grievous offense against the church, an appalling transgression of canon law (and its exclusively male image) punishable by automatic excommunication. And that could have been the end of things, the end of the path, the culmination of that ineffable call to priesthood, had it not been for everyone who continued to gather, month after month, around a Eucharistic Table tended and cared for by Holy Sophia through a woman priest. It is you who supported and nurtured the growth of this community by your presence despite institutional regulations. There would be no Sophia Christi without you. To those of you reading this newsletter, many of whom have written notes of gratitude for things said in this column over the years, though you may not celebrate Eucharist with the community or come to our retreats or show up for the summer picnic, thank you for supporting this ministry of hope and inclusion by receiving what is offered and, when so moved, letting us know what it means to you. It is a joy and an honor to serve you in this small way. And to all of you who gather with us around Christ's Table each month, who give your time and energy to hospitality, outreach, liturgical ministry, food preparation, music ministry, retreat planning, council meetings, web management, financial stability, etc. Sophia Christi could not exist without you. As we move into our second decade as a community I honor you, the flesh and bones of a progressive revolution within the Catholic Church. May Sophia continue to bless you abundantly as well as this community that faithfully gathers under Her wise counsel as the Body of Christ here in this place.

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

10th Anniversary Celebration in both locations! Come celebrate this milestone in the history of women's ordination in the Roman Catholic Church and in our ongoing ministry at Sophia Christi!

10th Anniversary Mass in Portland will be Saturday, **August 12**, 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.

10th Anniversary Mass in Eugene will be Sunday, **August 13**, at **First Congregational Church, UCC, 1050 E. 23rd**, 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:

Tenth Anniversary Celebration—August 12 and 13 Masses

Next weekend we celebrate Sophia Christi's tenth birthday at Masses in Portland and Eugene. Kathleen, John, Maryellen, and Judith have been working on photo displays honoring our history as a community. Dianna has created a tenth anniversary banner to grace the altar in Portland's sanctuary and Eugene's chapel. Judith and team have crafted a special memento of the occasion for every person who arrives to celebrate this milestone in our journey. Liturgy will be especially celebratory, as will our potluck dinner following Mass. We look forward to the possibility of seeing many of you we have not seen in awhile, some who were there in the very beginning to help launch this community. As we enter our second decade of progressive and inclusive ministry we remember our beginnings with joy and gratitude. Through our witness we take another step in affirming women's ordination in the Catholic church, as well as standing firm in welcoming all to the Table of Christ as sisters and brothers of the same God.

Next Council Meeting—September 16—and Call for New Council Members

Our next Council meeting will be Saturday, September 16, at Ike Box Café in Salem from 11:00 to 1:00. I invite you to pray and think about whether you are being called to serve on the Council. Helping guide our communal journey into a new decade is an important ministry in itself and the Council needs people with vision and a variety of skills to discern Spirit's guidance and forge a path forward together. Please prayerfully consider this invitation and come to the next meeting if you can. If unable to come, please give your thoughts to Council members before the September weekend Masses on the 9th and 10th. 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.

Pastoral Update:

Summer Picnic—Great Food, Great Relaxation

About 20 people, including one dog, were in attendance for the Sophia Christi picnic at my house on July 15. It was a lovely, warm July day. We sat under the ancient oaks, many of us

watching the swallows tend to their young. Some took the path through the woods where for the rest of the year only the creatures of the forest are in residence. The day was made even more enjoyable by all the great food to eat. Spending a summer afternoon in the country, sharing the day with kind caring people, eating wonderful food may not sound like much to some people, but to many of us it was a day that God made. Let us give thanks and be glad. --Carol, Council Treasurer

Contemplative Prayer Group – Eugene

Just a few thoughts about the Contemplative Prayer group meeting at Bruce & Dianne's house: We have started reading and discussing a recent book by Richard Rohr called "The Divine Dance" and we have some new attendee's who have contributed immensely to the group. In the most recent chapter we explored the following sentences: "So God is not first of all a "being" that loftily decides to love good people and punish bad people; instead, Absolute Love stands revealed as the very name and shape of Being itself. Love constitutes the very nature of being, as opposed to a seemingly demanding and whimsical being occasionally deciding to love or not to love, which gives the human psyche a very fragile and shaky foundation." All in all, it is such a great experience, because the book is so thought provoking, and the discussions afterward are lively. We are all reminded that seeking a spiritual path is pleasing to God. --Bruce, Council President

Ministry Partner:

Rose Haven—Update

Rose Haven has launched its "Back to School Backpack Drive" and "is collecting school supplies to help children in need succeed." Their intention is to send every child to school with a brand new backpack. For the first time they are also attempting to collect brand new clothing and shoes for children and teens. Here is the list of NEW items they are wishing to collect by Thursday, August 24 at noon: 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, New Children/Teen Clothing, New Shoes. OR you can make a financial gift to help support Rose Haven services and their school supply drive.

In addition, they are always needing backpacks for the women who come to them, so used bags will also be gratefully accepted and given to women in need. They ALWAYS need new underwear and socks, deodorant, bras, sleeping bags, travel sized toothpaste/hand sanitizer and bags with handles, rolling suitcases/carts.

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

Eugene Catholic Worker--Update

As a result of changes at the Catholic Worker house in Eugene we won't be collecting donations this month. We hope to have an update in the September newsletter.

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.

In our Gospel reading next weekend Jesus invites Peter to step out of his boat which is being tossed around by heavy winds. Seeing Jesus out there on the water, walking as if he's on dry land on a perfectly windless day, he and the other disciples conclude it must be a ghost. What else could it be? No 'body' can walk on water! So Peter challenges that voice claiming to be Jesus and hears the simple command: "Come!" Trusting the invitation, impulsive Peter steps out of a perfectly good boat onto the water. He walks a few paces and begins to realize what he has done! Fear takes over. He immediately begins to sink. "Save me!" he cries. In the midst of both doubt and terror those two words express faith. If he is speaking to a ghost, it is a ghost whose voice resonates in his soul. Jesus stretches out his hand and catches Peter then asks why he doubted at all. But it is human to doubt, natural to second-guess ourselves, normal to question whether we have heard right or can trust what we think we have seen. In fact it is the lack of doubt, the hubris of certainty, that takes us into the treacherous waters of rigidity where changes are opposed because they threaten the comfortable 'norm' and/or threaten who we have believed ourselves to be. The stormy sea of ambiguity and unpredictability is chaotic and terrifying. We know the dangers of stepping out of proven, sea-worthy vessels into turbulent waters. We take a huge risk in leaving them behind. Yet when we experience that summons coming out of the dark waters, unbidden, when the echo chamber of the soul resonates to that ghostly voice, the impulse of the heart is to respond, to follow. Faith builds on that resonance. It allows us to move forward even when we are afraid. Faith doesn't eliminate doubt, which is a construct of the mind and a reaction to fear. Instead it calls us into the depths of our souls where resonance with Spirit vibrates our very being, streaming life and light into subterranean chambers our minds rarely access let alone grasp. Peter's immediate response to Jesus' command emerged from that deep resonance. We too, as Sophia Christi, resonate to Jesus' command: "Don't be afraid." Don't let fear stop you from moving forward with hope and trust into this new decade. So we let our hearts resonate to the voice of Holy Wisdom as She guides our steps into the future with faith that God is ever present in our lives, our community and our world.

Bless you, Sophia Christi, and happy anniversary!

Toni