

November 5, 2017

Dear Friends,

It is a gray and dreary fall day, the sort of day sunshine lovers tend to dread. Those of us who yearn for quieter, more peaceful lives, who enjoy the coziness of warm, interior spaces, often find days like these to be a blessing. With more of the bustling city sequestered indoors, we experience a kind of permission to read by the fire, to reflect on where we are in our lives and what is important to us, perhaps to draw, write, create or simply putter. Time may feel a little slower, a little less demanding. The sun itself isn't insisting that we come outdoors where the masses are scurrying from one activity, one task, one responsibility to another. It isn't that obligations cease as we move into the twilight of fall and hover on the brink of winter, it is simply that our unconscious cellular instinct is to let our own leaves drop, to turn inward, and allow ourselves to stop producing so we can harvest what is essential to feed our spirits through the darkness to come. As Advent looms on the horizon, a time of quiet, a time of waiting, it seems appropriate to step into the stillness of late autumn and face the ending of another year. The lectionary readings in these final weeks of Ordinary Time, as well as All Saints Day and All Souls Day which stand at the entrance to November, focus our attention on 'end times.' As we enter the swan dive of a painfully divisive year Holy Wisdom invites us to review the contents of memory searching for signs of Her presence in our own lives and in the life of the world throughout the turbulent days of 2017. She was there, She assures us, extending reasons for hope, offering comfort when we were distraught, nudging an insight, prodding an idea, offering an unexpected gift or opportunity, arranging a fortuitous connection, creating serendipity that perhaps softened, perhaps excited a course of action that felt solid in the end. She is with us, always with us. There is more to our experience than ever reaches the light of consciousness, and it is in that underground pool of existence that She works tirelessly, drawing us and the world back to Her heart—to Wisdom, to Love Itself. So take some time this month to explore your experiences this year, looking for those crystalline gems of grace, those surprising moments of joy, the unexpected gifts, times of laughter and rest that threaded through your days. Look back through lenses of gratitude: you and I and 'we' made it through an extraordinarily alarming and difficult year. It is time to reap the harvest of our joys and wisdom gained as we put the last of the 2017 garden to bed.

**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, **November 11**, 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, **November 12**, 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:

### Our 'Annual Meeting'—November 18

The prescribed Annual Meeting of our Council will be next Saturday, November 18, at Ike Box Café in Salem from 11:00 to 1:00. **If you haven't already, please take time to pray and think about whether you are being called to serve Sophia Christi by becoming a member of the Council.** Helping guide our communal journey into a new decade is an important ministry. 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 meeting if you can. If unable to come, please give your thoughts to Council members at or before the November weekend Masses on the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<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, Dianne and Jessica.

### Annual Retreat 2018 – February 16 and 17

Ash Wednesday is February 14 next year and our annual Lenten retreat will begin two days later on the 16<sup>th</sup> and extend through Saturday afternoon, the 17<sup>th</sup>. In her book, *The Gift of Years*, Joan Chittister writes: "Even with easy access to other people, we take time to be by ourselves, to close out the rest of the world, to concentrate on the inside of us rather than wrestle with everything going on around us....When the outside world, its clutter and volume, its pressures and pesterings go silent, then we are alone with ourselves. Then the silence outside enables us to go inside." A retreat calls us 'inside' the Temple that we are where God lives, so we can hear that 'still, silent voice' yearning to greet us and love us into being more of who we really are. In 2018 we begin at the very beginning of Lent tuning our ears and hearts to Spirit's voice calling us home to ourselves.

## Pastoral Update:

### New From Our Treasurer

*At the October Masses a council member talked about the importance of everyone making a monetary commitment in the form of a pledge so that Sophia Christ could count on having enough funding to carry us through 2018. The Board is now in the process of making the 2018 budget that will be finalized at our Annual Meeting on the 18th. Please fill out a pledge card, no matter the amount, and turn it in this month. Remember also that once you make a commitment*

*the council will depend on that amount every month. Sophia Christi has been in existence for more than 10 years. It has filled a void and given hope to many. I am very proud of our loving, progressive and inclusive church, and grateful to all of you who have already submitted your pledge. As treasurer I set a budget to cover our projected expenses based on contributions we expect to receive from pledges. Please prayerfully consider your financial commitment to maintaining Sophia Christi as a vibrant alternative Catholic community. --Carol Z. Treasurer*

### **Extending our Care for the Poor**

Please look over the list of needed items and bring them with you to Mass this month. We will collect your donations and deliver them to the Catholic Worker House in Eugene and Rose Haven in Portland. The needs are even greater with cold weather approaching.

#### **Rose Haven—Requests**

Rose Haven is currently accepting fall clothing (new and like-new items only) and waterproof items. They are also very low on panties (new only), wipes, travel-sized toothpaste, deodorant, bras, and leggings. They also need light jackets, new socks, rain jackets, umbrellas and general supplies such as backpacks (with and without wheels), shopping bags with handles (grocery store bags are perfect), rolling suitcases and carts, sleeping bags, reading glasses and sewing kits. For an additional list of needed items simply go to <http://rosehaven.org/helping/donate-items/>

#### **Eugene Catholic Worker--Requests**

The list of needed items includes: warm clothes and socks (including mismatched socks), travel size hand sanitizer, soaps, shampoos and grooming items. Articles always welcome as well are backpacks, blankets and sheets. If you have any questions please speak with Kathy Pekarsky, Rhoda Kirwin or Dianne Turner.

### **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.

Our liturgical calendar ends over the Thanksgiving holiday weekend this year with the celebration of Christ the King November 26. Advent begins the following Sunday. Time passes so quickly for me these days that a month's advance notice is becoming necessary if I have any hope of being prepared at all when the actual time arrives. Unlike Lent which offers reminders to attend to my inner, spiritual life for a full six weeks, Advent barely arrives before it is drowned out by 'holiday events' around every corner and the pervasive pressures around Christmas shopping and end-of-year giving requests. Advent is buried in a cultural cacophony of persistent demands. More and more I recognize the need to begin preparing myself, not for Christmas, but for Advent. I

need continual reminders to begin slowing down. I need to allow the gray skies and swirling leaves to reach into my soul and quiet the rush and bustle I have interiorized to simply keep up with the 'madding crowd." So I take this time to remind you along with myself to breathe in the autumn fragrance of crushed leaves, wet bark and saturated earth, to scuff through the piles of oak, maple, ginkgo and redbud leaves as we did as children. Let nature transport us all to that quiet, inner space where Wisdom resides, ever ready to refresh our Spirits and ready our hearts for the Light that is to come.

Sophia's wisdom be with you all,

Toni