

November 8, 2020

**NOTICE:** Our new Facebook page is up and running thanks to the Communications Team. People are posting information and conversations are beginning. See below for instructions about how to participate.

Dear Community,

I had just tuned into MSNBC yesterday morning minutes before NBC, and subsequently all major news outlets, announced Joe Biden and Kamala Harris had won the most agonizing election this country has been through in living memory. Almost immediately people began to gather in cities across the nation, celebrating the prospect of a return to leadership grounded in values fundamental to our constitutional democracy, as well as fundamental to our core spiritual beliefs across traditions. Relief rippled through the land and people began pouring into the streets. Among those of us so wounded by four years of unprincipled, even cruel behavior on the part of elected and appointed officials in Washington, D.C. the response was immediate and jubilant. Relentless effort and ongoing prayers for justice, truth, and peace had resulted in momentous change. Excitement and relief spread across the nation. But the near 50/50 divide in those election returns disturb and challenge any complacency that might tempt us in the weeks, months and years ahead. That word “United” which has defined our identity as a nation for generations was openly and vigorously shredded before our eyes in the last four years. Holding on to hope required daily, sometimes hourly effort. And though relief arrived early Saturday morning, it is clear we have a long road ahead in our quest for unity and in our promise of “liberty and justice for all.”

There is synchronicity between this week’s election results and the five wise and five foolish attendants in today’s Gospel who, with their lamps, are awaiting the joyous arrival of the bridal party, symbolizing union, love, truth and peace. Five wise, five foolish. The wise had enough oil to last them through the long, dark night while the foolish seemingly believed their wait-time would be short and didn’t prepare for potential delays. Exhaustion overtook everyone as the night wore on and all fell asleep. At the very moment a new day was beginning the bridal party began to arrive. The foolish were out of oil and their lamps were dying. They asked the wise to share what they had, but it is impossible to share the “oil” Jesus is referring to since it is a spiritual substance grown and cultivated within the heart over time. It is the quality of faithful adherence to those values embedded in the core of our being, values that call us toward loving our neighbor even when we are angry, values that lead us toward truth when it is easier to bury our heads in the sand, values that require recognition of privilege and changes in attitude in order to build “the beloved community.” These are the values that wake us from sleep and set our feet on a path toward justice in the darkest hours before dawn. They are values we recognize in the life and history of the man we’ve elected to lead this country through the turbulence ahead, and in the woman he selected as his running-mate, whose history is emblematic of the issues we face today. I invite you to join me in praying for these two leaders, and in praying for us, u.s., in the transitional days ahead.

**Readings for Liturgies** can be found on the USCCB website at <http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/>.

### **Online Mass Schedule Continues This Month**

**Mass via Zoom** will be Saturday, **November 14**, at **5:00pm**. Our Masses are online every 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday-of-the-month until meeting in person no longer threatens the lives and health of our communal family.

### **Pastoral Update**

If you have regularly participated in Sophia Christi liturgies either in Eugene or Portland during the past year or have recently requested a Zoom invitation to our online Mass, you will automatically receive a Zoom invitation this month. It will be sent to you Friday, November 13, for our November 14<sup>th</sup> Liturgy. If you have not been involved in the past but would like to participate in the online Mass, let Toni know by responding to this email no later than Wednesday, November 11<sup>th</sup> and a Zoom invitation will be sent to you Friday as well.

### **Continue your Thanksgiving weekend celebration—Join our monthly Sophia Christi Zoom Get Together on Saturday, November 28**

**Thanksgiving** is a time for family and friends to come together in gratitude for the blessings we enjoy. This year celebrate Thanksgiving weekend with your **Sophia Christi** family and join our next **Sophia Christi Zoom Get Together!** This virtual gathering is informal, relaxed, and has proven a wonderful way for our spiritual community to remain connected during this time of physical distancing. All are welcome to attend! This month's Zoom gathering is **Saturday, November 28, from 5:00 to 6:00 pm**. Toni will send out the Zoom invitation and link a few days before the 28th. In the meantime, if you have questions please contact Josie at [Josephine.miranda64@gmail.com](mailto:Josephine.miranda64@gmail.com). –*Josie Miranda, Sophia Christi Communications Team*

### **Thanksgiving Reflection from Our Council President**

*November is the month of Thanksgiving and I truly believe that we have much to be thankful for. I firmly believe that we are lucky to live in a relatively enlightened state, and for that I am thankful. Oregon is certainly not perfect, but it is definitely more enlightened than many, and there is very little chance that this election will reverse that progress. I am thankful for Pope Francis's recent thoughts on civil unions for gay people. He specifically did not endorse gay marriage; he means civil unions in the legal and secular sense only, with no real change in the attitude of the Catholic Church. However, what pleased me was that it demonstrated a level of compassion and understanding toward gay people that is often lacking in conservative "Christian" circles, where one often finds thinly veiled animosity toward gay people. We need to keep Pope Francis in our prayers, that he will be able to continue his good work within the Catholic Church. I am thankful for the Sophia Christi Parish. Some of the best people I have ever had the pleasure to worship with. And lastly, but most importantly, I am thankful for Toni's inclusive ministry. Toni's ministry is inclusive, compassionate and intelligent. And it is a ministry that recognizes that the world around us needs improvement. And for all of the above, I am thankful. –Mike Newton, Council President*

### **Sophia Christi Facebook Page and "Group" Page for SC Members**

The SC members are connecting with each other and posting resources on the "Group" page. To join the conversation:

First, if you are already a Facebook user consider visiting the Sophia Christi Catholic Community Facebook page (at this link: <https://www.facebook.com/Sophia-Christi-Catholic-Community-223153761191386>) and "liking" it by clicking the blue button labeled "Like." This will allow you to receive news and announcements from Sophia Christi on your own Facebook feed.

Second, consider joining the "Group" page (at this link: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/806948603569813>) by clicking the blue button labeled "Ask to Join." This is a private page, so will consist only of SC members who want to share information and conversation about our own lives and concerns.

### Care Team

If you are interested in being a part of the Care Team or you have a need that the Care Team might respond to, please let Rachel Wheeler or Pastor Toni know. Rachel can be reached at [rastonwinchel@hotmail.com](mailto:rastonwinchel@hotmail.com) --Rachel Wheeler

### Member's Corner – Sharing Reflections

This space in the newsletter is available for sharing of our stories, insights and experiences. Consider sending a short paragraph of your own for inclusion in next month's edition. Deadline is December 4<sup>th</sup>.

### Website

Outreach has always been part of the mission of Sophia Christi. We are grateful for the website monitoring and management skills being offered at this much-needed time. If you are interested in being involved in this project, please contact Toni. Also remember that the newsletter and current homily are generally posted on the website each month, as are all upcoming events. Our web address is [www.sophiachristi.org](http://www.sophiachristi.org)

**A continuing pastoral invitation**—In the normal course of life I have the opportunity to meet with you personally when a pastoral issue arises, or you want/need spiritual support. But we are somewhere outside the range of 'normal' now. Please let me know if I can assist you in this strange time we are living through. I am still available by phone (503-286-3584) and you can still reach me through this email address. Feel free to use either one.

Thanksgiving is just a little more than two weeks away. There is so much to be thankful for as we look toward the beginning of a new year with new leadership and the potential for hearing words of wisdom from the highest office in the nation. I know the challenges we face are overwhelming, but I also know we carry within us a Light that can't be extinguished. Faith in the Wholeness of God's creation, faith in the Presence of Holy Wisdom, faith in our being One People, the family of our Mother God, can and will carry us through. I have faith in you, dear holy People of God. I am so grateful for you.

Thanksgiving blessings to all of you,

Toni