

WISDOM CALLS

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“Mystical Body of Christ”

Wisdom Calls

is the quarterly publication
of the Queen of Heaven
Gnostic Church.

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Gnostic Church

Regular Events

Gnostic Holy Eucharist

High Mass with Homily, Rt. Rev. Steven Marshall, Celebrant
Every Sunday 11 AM

Our real nature is divine. Because we are divine, we have infinite strength and wisdom at our command, provided we can free ourselves of the obstacles in our personality, which stand in the way of our conscious union with the indwelling God.

The Holy Eucharist [or Mass] is so designed that it may remove the barriers separating the human and divine natures in ourselves. The Queen of Heaven Gnostic Church of the Ecclesia Gnostica invites all who seek this mystic union, to partake of the Eucharist, and of the other mysteries [sacraments] which it administers. No barrier of creed, race, or status is erected around the altar of the Gnosis. Please join us for this traditional and inspiring service.

Monthly Sophia Service Devotion to Our Lady Sophia

This devotional service, unique to our rite, is a singularly meaningful and mystical experience dedicated to the Divine Feminine. The service includes the blessing of the rose, and culminates in the Litany of Love, in which love is sent forth to all, both the seen and unseen. (See schedule for details.)



UNLESS STATED OTHERWISE, ALL EVENTS THIS QUARTER WILL
TAKE PLACE AT THE CHURCH ADDRESS

WATCH EMAIL ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR SCHEDULE CHANGES

Queen.of.Heaven.Church.Portland@gmail.com

A Homily for Corpus Christi

Bread from Heaven: The Mystical Body of Christ as Inner Transubstantiation

Rt. Rev. Steven Marshall

The feast of Corpus Christi, celebrated on the Thursday following Trinity Sunday as a solemn commemoration of the Holy Eucharist, is a fairly recent festival in the development of the liturgy of the Western Church. It was officially adopted by the Roman Catholic Church under Pope Clement V at the General Council of Vienne in 1311. It later became an especially important date in the recognition of various esoteric orders and mystical developments, such as the Freemasons and the Rosicrucians. This date carries a particular importance in the Fama Fraternitatis, the seminal document of the Rosicrucian orders throughout the world.

During the late Middle Ages, the festival was observed with a grand procession of the exposed host in a pageant joined by religious orders, prelates, sovereigns, princes, magistrates and members of various craft guilds. The procession was followed by miracle plays put on by Guild members. Some have hypothesized that such ritual dramas were the beginnings of the degrees in Freemasonry. One of the reasons for its adoption by more Gnostic and mystically oriented movements throughout its history could be similar to the reasons for the veneration of St. Paul the Apostle by the early Gnostics, that being that this feast day was originally inspired by a spiritual experience.

Robert de Torote, Bishop of Liege, ordered its first celebration in his diocese in 1246 AD

through the inspired persuasion of the Blessed Juliana, a visionary and the prioress of the convent of Mont Cornillon. A devotee of the Most Blessed Sacrament ever since her youth, her feeling for the Eucharist increased even more after a vision in which she saw the Church under a full moon bearing one dark spot. She interpreted the dark spot on the moon as the failure of the Church to adequately revere the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist and the real presence of Christ in its elements of bread and wine, as the Body and Blood of Christ.

Some would ask, "Why then give reverence to a seeming piece of bread?" Such would seem to be the height of bondage to materiality, at odds with the spiritual orientation of Gnosticism. Yet, a sacramental practice designed around something as common and simple as a wafer of bread cannot be accused of materialism.

Material things are two-edged swords. They can be the symbols of transubstantiation that provide windows to transcendence, or they can be the closed blinds upon that window, which prevents us from seeing anything beyond the material. Gnostics do not deny the reality of matter. The crux of the problem is that a preoccupation with material things or a reductionistic materialism tends to swallow up or deny the experience of spiritual reality.

To the Gnostic both the outer material reality and the inner spiritual reality are real. The Gnostic perceives and participates in a connection between the outer and the inner, the above and the below. When experiences of the outer life symbolize events of the inner spiritual life then these experiences can be called synchronicities in Jungian terms. When

external actions mirror an inward and spiritual grace then these ritual actions are indeed sacraments or mysteries.

St Paul the Apostle in his *First Epistle to the Corinthians* writes down the earliest written account of the institution of one of these mysteries, the sacrament of the Eucharist:

“For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He brake it, and He said: Take, eat; this is my Body, which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of me. After the same manner also, He took the cup, when He had supped, saying: This cup is the new testament in my Blood; this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this Bread, and drink this cup, ye show the Lord's death till He come.”

“...Ye show forth the Lord's death till He come,” has particular significance from a Gnostic point of view, since the death recalls the release of the Christ from the body of matter and the taking on of his light vesture which is his true and spiritual body. Yet death also bears for the Gnostic an almost reversed meaning as the descent of the Life of Christ into matter in the incarnation and mystically in the sacrifice of the Mass.

Corpus Christi means “Body of Christ”, which expression has been misinterpreted in two different ways in mainstream Christianity. What most know as the Catholic view that the consecrated host becomes factually, physically human flesh—which view is not actually shared by most educated Catholics—is a misinterpretation of the Aristotelian philosophy regarding the term “substance” and therefore, transubstantiation. The term substance in Aristotle's philosophy actually refers to the ontological essence of

what a thing is, rather than its outward sensibility.

“A substance (Greek: ousia) is a fundamental entity that exists "in its own right, a self-standing being.”

So, transubstantiation refers to a change in the ontological essence of what a thing is, rather than how it is interpreted by the senses. A thing's substance can be changed into something else while its outward sensibility remains the same. In this case, the ontological essence of the bread becomes the “Body of Christ” through its consecration in the celebration of the Eucharist, while the host to all outward and ordinary senses remains a wafer of bread.

The other misinterpretation, widely known as the Protestant view, is that the whole expression, “Body of Christ” is purely symbolic, denying the mystery of transubstantiation altogether. By this interpretation the communion rite is only a symbolic commemoration of an historical event. Another view related to this is that of relating the “Body of Christ” to the Christian community, reducing it to a social paradigm, rather than elevating to a transcendent reality of the Cosmic Christ, in which, with the Divine Aid and with pure intent, we can be mystically subsumed..

The Gnostic view is not too dissimilar from the original Aristotelian meaning of “a change in substance” with one difference. The Gnostic would emphasize the spiritual or pneumatic interpretation of the term. Rather than transubstantiation into material flesh, the Gnostic apprehends the change as a transubstantiation into the *mystical* “Body of Christ.” This, in accord with the conclusions of St. Thomas Aquinas in his *Summa Theologica*, is a spiritual change, invisible to the ordinary senses. The *Gospel According to St. John* calls the sacramental host “the living bread that came down from heaven.” So, we

are pointing to the change of substance into a living or spiritual substance from a transcendent source, rather than an inanimate and physical one from the material earth.

“Amen, Amen, I say unto you: He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am that Bread of Life. This is the Bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the whole world.”

The transubstantiation of a wafer of bread into the Body of Christ is thus spiritual and subtle in nature, rather than wholly physical and sensible by our ordinary senses in our ordinary state of consciousness. What Jesus calls “my flesh” is then also of a spiritual nature and not physically human like ours, as indicated in the *Gospel of Philip*.

“The Lord rose from the dead. He became as he used to be, but now his body was perfect. He did indeed possess flesh, but this flesh is true flesh. Our flesh is not true, but we possess only an image of the true.”

The *Gospel of Philip*, which can be considered a source document for Gnostic sacramental theology, further describes the coming of Christ as the descent of the “Bread of Heaven” and the sowing of the truth, like a seed of grain, everywhere throughout creation.

“Before Christ came there was no bread in the world, just as paradise, the place where Adam was, had many trees to nourish the animals but no wheat to sustain Man. Man used to feed like the

animals but when Christ came, the Perfect One, he brought bread from heaven in order that Man might be nourished with the food of Man. ... Truth, which existed since the beginning, is sown everywhere. And many see it as it is sown, but few are they who see it as it is reaped.”

This sowing of the Truth everywhere is no more admirably expressed than in the communion prayer of our *Gnostic Holy Eucharist*:

“Unto Thee, O Perfect One, the Lord and Lover of Mankind, do we commend our life and our hope, for Thou art the Heavenly Bread, the Life of the whole world: Thou art in all places and endurest all things, the Treasury of endless good and the well of infinite compassion.”

In the final portion of the passage from the *Gospel of Philip* we receive a clue to the mystery of transubstantiation. The seeing of the truth as it is sown might be equated with the ordinary sensing of the ritual of the Eucharist, while the seeing of the truth as it is reaped might be equated with the non-ordinary sensing of the spiritual change, both inwardly and outwardly, as we partake of the light-power and spiritual sustenance offered to us in the Eucharistic meal. Likewise in the Egyptian Mysteries to which the Alexandrian Gnostics were heir, the risen Osiris is symbolized by a shock of wheat carried on a litter in procession. Thus, bread and the wheat from which it is made becomes a symbol of resurrected Life and restoration to the Light.

The Epiclesis of the *Gnostic Holy Eucharist* describes the role of the Holy Spirit in manifesting these spiritual mysteries through material elements.

“Which oblations do Thou, O Father, deign with Thy Holy Spirit and logos to bless, to approve, and to ratify, that they may become His most precious Body and Blood.”

The Holy Spirit, who is acknowledged by the Gnostics to be the spiritual Mother of Christ, in concert with the Logos, makes the change of substance, the transubstantiation, that sanctifies the bread to become the Body of Christ. Even so, in the esoteric teachings of the Eleusinian mysteries, Kore, mythologically related to Sophia and Isis, while she is in the Underworld, weaves the garment of light for the soul and cooks up the ambrosial food that nourishes it in its “flight into the sun.” The change of substance in the Eucharist, just as the transformation of the soul in the Eleusinian mysteries, is accomplished through a feminine power, the power of the Holy Spirit, our Celestial Mother and Consoler.

We might find further elucidation of the mystery of transubstantiation in breaking it down into its Latin roots and stems. Transubstantiation Literally means “a change in what stands under.” That which “stands under” is the foundation or fundamental essence of a thing, as in the Opening Canticle of the Gnostic Holy Eucharist, “Christ is our Foundation and our Chief Corner Stone.” The Corner Stone or the “Head of the Corner,” bears an important symbolic meaning in the orders of Freemasonry.

Another associated meaning for “that which stands under” is “understanding,” as in the portion of the Hymn of Jesus from the *Acts of John* included before the reading of the Lesson, “I am a mirror to thee who

understandest me.” A change in our understanding of the mystery of the consecration can change our experience of it, both as celebrant and communicant. Even so, as our experience is illumined, so is our understanding expanded and elevated to a new level.

What is more important than diddling over sacramental theology is that something in the substance has changed and thus we can experience the same change in ourselves, as we participate in the mystery of this transubstantiation of the oblations of bread and wine into the Body and Blood of the Christos. One of the difficulties of seeing the miraculous in the plain is the materialism and reductionism of our contemporary culture. By this we do not proscribe having material things or maintaining a practice that includes physical symbols of a transcendent reality. The message intended is that through an overvaluing of the material world, we have forgotten how to use symbols and mysteries as windows to transcendence; we have lost the eyes to see and the ears to hear.

A profound difference exists between the symbols and ritual of a mystery and the signs and doctrines of mainstream religion. Most mainstream religion has forsaken the symbols and the mystery and have clung to signs and dogmatic beliefs in their place. Then all that remains of the rituals are but replicas without life, without the Spirit, without the capacity to induce Gnosis, as the intimate acquaintance and intuitive knowing of an interior and spiritual reality. The effort of our Gnostic sacramental work is to revivify the symbols and the myth, the mystery and the magic of our spiritual and religious heritage.

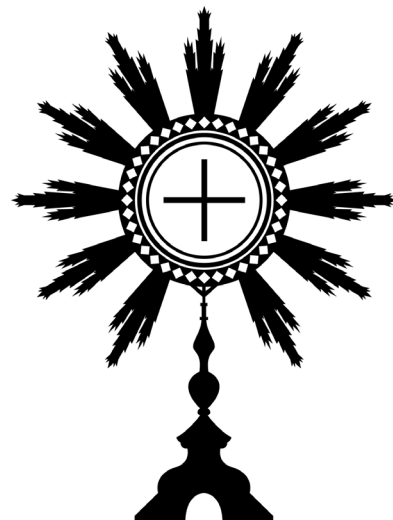
Transubstantiation is not a doctrinal belief or a dogma of faith to the Gnostic but an inner experience, leaving an indelible stamp upon our consciousness. Instead of dogmatic theology we receive a mystical mystical communion with the Divine.

The host enthroned in the monstrance or elevated in the Mass is to the physical eyes of one in the ordinary state of consciousness, nothing but a wafer of wheaten bread. Yet a change has occurred in our participation in the mystery of the Eucharist. It is no longer the same as before our experience of the mystery. Something has changed both in the substance and in ourselves. The “eternal life” that we receive is the recognition of the immortal spark of light within us, and by its increase we bring more light into the world. As the Christos hath said, “the bread that I give is my flesh, which I give for the life of the whole world.” Our light and our consciousness increases by our partaking of the divine light embodied in its changed substance. The transubstantiation is as much in us as it is out there; in the deepest and truest core of our being the ontological substance of who we are is changed. By our consciously, and I emphasize “consciously”, connecting the recognition of our interior spark of the divine light with the real spiritual presence, the transcendental reality embodied in the sacramental Host, it truly becomes for us that Most Precious Gift, a gift from the Treasury of the Light, The Heavenly Bread, the Life of the whole world.

When we participate in such a mystery our spiritual eyes are opened; we see and feel the light in the Host, because we find the same light in ourselves. We see the “truth as it is reaped.” When we give reverence to the

consecrated Host as the embodiment of the real presence of Christ, we reverence the spark of light that dwells in all of us. When we experience the divine mystery, we become conscious of our true and royal Self; we apprehend that Self, which as in a mirror, is the image of the Christ within.

The Host becomes a body for the Divine Light that “lighteth every one that cometh into the world,” so that, as we partake of that light and participate in its increase of our own light and consciousness, it becomes the way-bread of the weary pilgrim on the spiritual journey back to the Light, the Light from which we and the Mystery have both originated. It becomes the Heavenly Bread, the Bread of the Angels, the partaking of which cannot replace the journey, but which is the necessary sustenance on that journey, without which we would not have the nourishment, the strength, the life or the consciousness to endure. It becomes both mystically and cosmically, for us and for all the worlds, the Bread of Life, the Living Bread that came down from heaven, the Corpus Christi, the Body of the Christ within.



Calendar of events

Summer 2025

MAY

SUNDAY, May 4, 2025 10:30 am

Roodmas Sunday

The Cross of Light

“Rood” is the Old English word for “rod” or “cross”, referring most closely to the processional cross used in our formal liturgies.

Crowning of our Lady, Sophia

Queen of the May

Please bring one of your favorite flowers to honor Our Lady.

SUNDAY, May 4, 2025 11:00 am

2nd Sunday after Easter

Intent: Divine Grace

Celebrant: Rt. Rev. Steven Marshall

SUNDAY, May 4, 2025 2:30 pm

Sophia Service

A Devotion to our Lady Sophia

Officiant: Rev. Quinton

SUNDAY, May 11, 2025 11:00 am

3rd Sunday after Easter

Intent: “Divine Protection”

Celebrant: Rt. Rev. Steven Marshall

SUNDAY, May 18, 2025 10:30 am

The Gnostic Holy Rosary

A pre-eucharistic recitation and singing of the Gnostic Holy Rosary/Sophia Rosary

SUNDAY, May 18, 2025 11:00 am

4th Sunday after Easter

Intent: Divine Aid toward Liberation

Celebrant: Rt. Rev. Steven Marshall

SUNDAY, May 25, 2025 11:00 am

5th Sunday after Easter

Intent: The Human Potential for Liberation

Celebrant: Rev. Quinton Ask

JUNE

SUNDAY, June 1, 2025 11:00 am

Ascension Sunday

Intent: *Return to the Light*

Celebrant: Rt. Rev. Steven Marshall

Ascension Sunday commemorates the culminating event in the story of Jesus – his ascent into the Pleroma. This event symbolizes the promise of our own return to the light as well. Gnostic sources tell us that the most potent mysteries and teachings of the Savior were transmitted not only after the Resurrection but after the Ascension. On this day we extinguish the Paschal candle to remind us that the light to which we aspire is a light beyond this world, unto which we may go when we too ascend on high.

SUNDAY, June 1, 2025 2:30 pm

Sophia Service

A Devotion to our Lady Sophia

Officiant: Rev. Quinton

SUNDAY, June 8, 2025 11:00 am

Pentecost Sunday

Coming of the Holy Spirit

Celebrant: Rt. Rev. Steven Marshall

Pentecost is a traditional date for

Confirmation, which refers to the Gnostic Sacrament of Holy Chrism. *See special events flyer for details.*

SUNDAY, June 15, 2025 10:30 am

The Gnostic Holy Rosary

A pre-eucharistic recitation and singing of the Gnostic Holy Rosary/Sophia Rosary

SUNDAY, June 15, 2025 11:00 am

Trinity Sunday

Devotion to the Triune Deity

Celebrant: Rt. Rev. Steven Marshall

SUNDAY, June 22, 2025 10:30 am

The Blessing of an Icon

The Holy Archangel Uriel

Please join us for this pre-Eucharistic Liturgy

SUNDAY, June 22, 2025 11:00 am

1st Sunday after Trinity

The Transforming Power of the Holy Spirit

Celebrant: Rt. Rev. Steven Marshall

SUNDAY, June 22, 2025 2:30 pm

Corpus Christi

The Mystical Body of Christ

Benediction of the Most Holy Sacrament

With Service of Healing

SUNDAY, June 29, 2025 11:00 am
2nd Sunday after Trinity
God as Light
Celebrant: Rt. Rev. Steven Marshall

JULY

SUNDAY, July 6, 2025 11:00 am
3rd Sunday after Trinity
God as Ruler of The Angels
Celebrant: Rev. Quinton Ask

SUNDAY, July 6, 2025 2:30 pm
Sophia Service
A Devotion to our Lady Sophia
Officiant: Quinton

SUNDAY, July 13, 2025 11:00 am
4th Sunday after Trinity
God as Love
Celebrant: Rt. Rev. Steven Marshall

SUNDAY, July 20, 2025 10:30 am
The Gnostic Holy Rosary
A pre-eucharistic recitation and singing of
the Gnostic Holy Rosary/Sophia Rosary

SUNDAY, July 20, 2025 11:00 am
5th Sunday after Trinity
Intent: God as Peace
Celebrant: Rt. Rev. Steven Marshall

SUNDAY, July 27, 2025 11:00 am
6th Sunday after Trinity
Intent: Steadfast Dedication
Celebrant: Rev. Quinton Ask

Magdalene Sunday, 2:30pm
Vespers of Sophia and Magdalen
Intent: The Consort of the Logos
Officiant: Rev. Quinton



This special service celebrates the Feast of the Holy Mary of Magdala. Gnostics have esteemed Mary Magdalen above all other disciples, as an embodiment of Sophia and the beloved Consort of Christ.

AUGUST

SUNDAY, August 3, 2025 10:30 am
Lammas Sunday
The blessing of altar breads for the church

SUNDAY, August 3, 2025 11:00 am
7th Sunday after Trinity
Purity as a Condition for Union with God
Celebrant: Rev. Quinton Ask.

SUNDAY, August 3, 2025 2:30 pm
Sophia Service
A Devotion to our Lady Sophia
Officiant: Quinton

NOTE:

In addition to our monthly Devotion to Our Lady Sophia with the Blessing of the Rose, We have scheduled two special Sunday afternoon services this quarter: the Benediction of the Most Holy Sacrament with Healing Service on the Sunday following the day of Corpus Christi and the Vespers of Sophia and Magdalen with Healing Service on the Sunday following the feast day of Holy Mary of Magdala. See Calendar for specific dates and time.

In addition to our monthly, pre-Eucharistic call and response recitation and singing of the Gnostic Holy Rosary/Sophia Rosary, we have scheduled two 10:30 am pre-Eucharistic Sunday morning services this quarter: an observance of Roodmas with a May Day Crowning of our Lady Sophia on the Sunday following the first of May and a Blessing of an Icon on the Sunday of the Feast Day of the Holy Archangel, Uriel. See Calendar for specific dates and time.

For more information please visit the Gnostic Archives: www.gnosis.org

Queen of Heaven Website
www.gnosticchurchportland.org

Pentecost Sunday

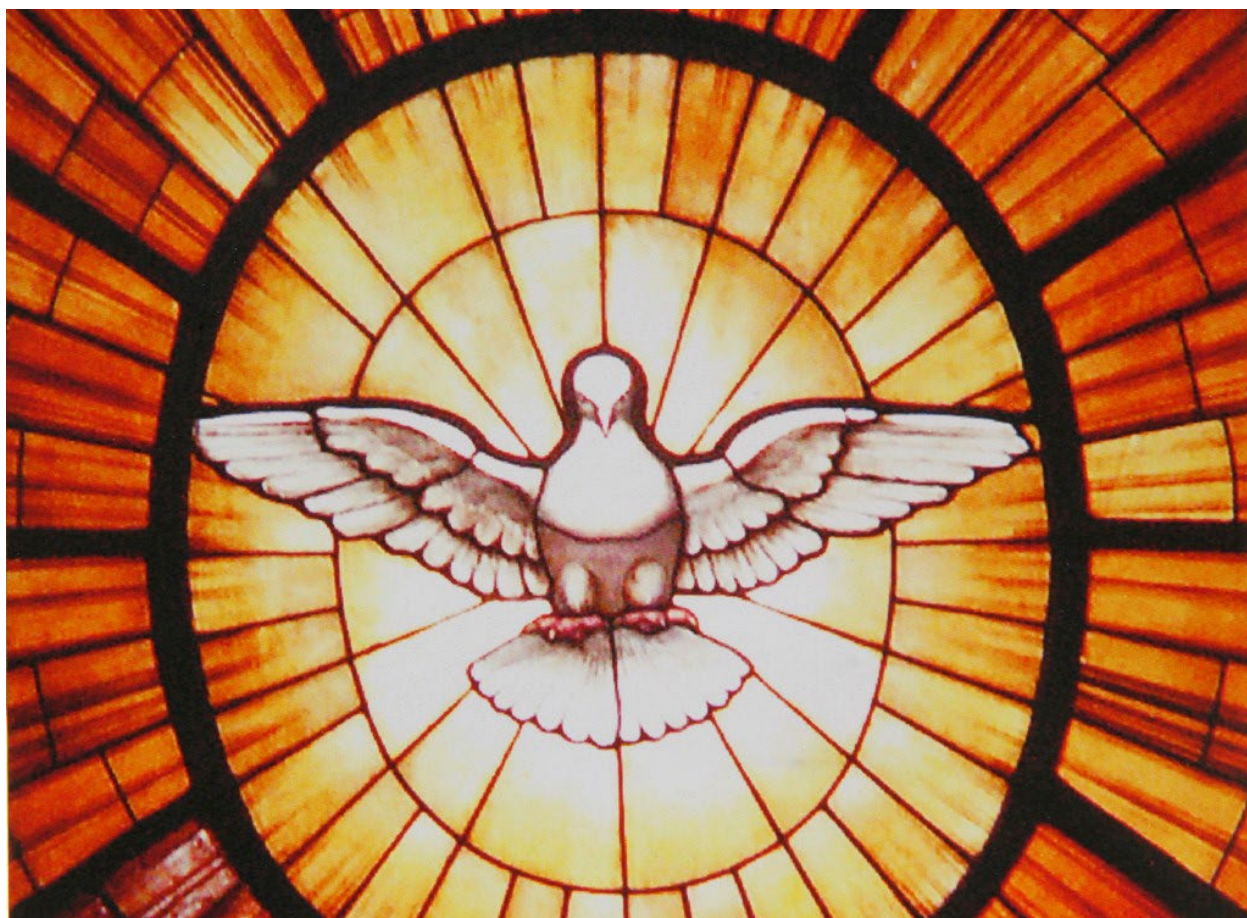
June 8, 2025

Holy Gnostic Eucharist at 11 am

At Pentecost we celebrate the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles and into communion with all Gnostics, as the Source of Wisdom, the Sanctifier and Comforter, and our Celestial Mother and Consoler. Gnostics have always recognized the Holy Spirit as a feminine power of the Holy Trinity.

Confirmation also called the sacrament of Holy Chrism will be administered to those who have requested it and prepared themselves to receive it.

(Call Father Steven at 503-233-0854 for requirements.)



Church News

This year we observed Holy Week with a fine complement of clergy. Father Steven conducted the rituals of each night, assisted by Quinton, Afonso and Bran. Quinton performed admirably in the priest's role for the Good Friday Round Dance of Jesus. Many thanks to Bran and Afonso for always being where they were needed and assisting and moving smoothly and seamlessly through every ritual. Katya from Berkeley, California joined us again this year. Many thanks to her for helping with the set up and preparations for Holy Week. Thanks go to all those who contributed to the success of the Three Holy Days preceding Easter Sunday. The people in attendance greatly enhanced the inspiration brought forth with each service.

On Easter Sunday, we celebrated a glorious Resurrection of the Light with an Easter Mass and social event following. Thank you, Katya, for playing the Easter Bunny and providing us with such a wonderful Easter party with Easter eggs full of treasure and a splendid feast. A fabulous time was had by all in attendance.

Please note that we are adding a new service to our schedule this quarter: the Benediction of the Most Holy Sacrament. This was Father Joe's (of blessed memory) favorite service. See Calendar for specific date and time.



Note: The Queen of Heaven Gnostic Church is the Portland parish of the Ecclesia Gnostica, a Christian Gnostic Sacramental Church with its headquarters based in Los Angeles, California. As a sacramental, liturgical church, we employ chant, candles, incense, bells, vestments, and other accoutrements for the purpose of elevating consciousness out of the ordinary. The structure and content of our liturgies are age old and inspired by the practices and metaphorical writings of the early Gnostics of the 1st through 4th centuries.

We continue an established and recognized, apostolic tradition without moralizing judgments or dogmatic statements of belief in a setting that fosters mystical inquiry and spiritual understanding. We retain the early gnostic practice of ordaining women on an equal basis with men and revere the feminine aspect of Deity in the fashion of our Gnostic forebears.

For more information please visit the Gnostic Archives: "gnosis.org"
And the Queen of Heaven homepage at: "gnosticchurchportland.org"