



APRIL 2012, VOLUME 37, ISSUE 12

SERVING LGBT CATHOLICS SINCE 1974

Spirituality, Equality and Justice: Nurtured in a Welcoming Catholic Community

Happy Easter to everyone! Glory to God in the Highest!!

March Madness Huge Success

Our March Madness drawing was held on Sunday, March 25th. Congratulations to Denise Smith, Ric Frievalt/Peter Fedor and Duane Petroskey who were this year's 1st, 2nd and 3rd prize winners respectively. Through ticket sales and extra monetary donations, our total income was \$2,880.00. After subtracting our expenses, we raised just over \$1,600.00 which makes it our 18th most successful raffle since we started the fundraiser in 1987. Although no raffle was held in 1994, we have raised a total of \$45,296.00 over the years because of your generosity and others like you!

Once again this year, at least one-half of the \$1,600 will be donated to the IHM South African AIDS Ministry outreach program. The remaining funds have been deposited in our treasury for future use.

THANK YOU for your generous support!!!!

Easter Flower Donation Program

We are once again sponsoring an Easter Flower Donation program to help beautify the sanctuary during the Easter Season (Easter Sunday through Pentecost). You can donate a plant in memory or honor of someone, or just for the joy of adding to the beauty of the Sanctuary during this most special time of the year. For your convenience, an order form is included with this Newsletter. At the conclusion of our Liturgy on the date you selected, you will be invited to take you plant home with you.

We remind you that this is not a fundraiser and that all funds collected will be spent on flowers.

Thank you in advance for your generosity.

Calendar of Events - April 2012

- 1 - Palm Sunday
 - Rosary Sunday
 - Anniversary Dinner/Dance tickets on sale
 - Hygiene Drive Ends
- 8 - Easter Sunday
- 15 - 2nd Sunday of Easter
 - Council meeting at 4:30**
 - General Membership meeting, immediately following Mass**
 - Clothing Drive begins
- 22 - 3rd Sunday of Easter
- 29 - 4th Sunday of Easter

38th Anniversary Celebration

Plans continue to take shape for our upcoming 38th Anniversary celebration weekend.

We are very pleased to announce that Dr. John Corvino, noted author (several books and regular columnist for *Between the Lines*), speaker and philosophy professor at Wayne State University will be our guest speaker at our Annual Dinner Dance. Dr. John Corvino has been speaking and writing on moral subjects since the early 1990s. He has educated and entertained professional organizations, government contractors, churches, and hundreds of college and university audiences.

The planning committee has been very busy lining up items for the always popular Silent Auction and Raffle that will be part of the Dinner Dance. Besides the traditional “goodie” gift baskets, several first time unique items will be available for bidding on during the auction or winning in the raffle.

For your convenience, a ticket order form is included with this newsletter. We hope to see you at not only the Dinner Dance, but our Anniversary Liturgy on Sunday, May 20th, at 6 P.M. at Sacred Heart Chapel of Marygrove College.

The Eucharist Dilemma

The major problem of eucharistic theology in our century is not that people do not understand and value the meaning of Eucharist. The problem is that they do.

The Eucharist, every child learns young, is the sign of Christian community, the very heart of it, in fact. And who would deny the bond, the depth, the electrical force that welds us together in it? Here, we know, is the linkage between us and the Christ, between us and the Gospel, between us and the Tradition that links us to Jesus himself and so to the world around us. No, what the Eucharist is meant to be is not what's in doubt.

What's in doubt is that the Eucharist is really being allowed to do what it purports to do—to connect us, to unify us, to make us One. The truth is that as much as Eucharist is a sign of community it is also a sign of division. For the sake of some kind of ecclesiastical political fiascos centuries ago between the East and West, we close the table between Orthodox and Uniate—though the faith is the same and the commitments are the same and the vision of life and death are the same.

What's in doubt, too, is that the divisions posited between baptized men and baptized women can possibly witness to what we say is the faith: that men and women are equal; that women are fully human beings; that God's grace is indivisible; that discipleship is incumbent on us all; that we are all called to follow Christ.

At the end of one presentation after another, women make it a point to continue the discussion with me. 'I used to be Catholic,' they begin. 'I was a Catholic once,' they say. 'I'm a recovering Catholic now,' they announce. It's a sad litany of disillusionment and abandonment by a Church they once thought promised them fullness of life and then let them know that it is their very persons that deny them that. They are to get out of the pronouns and off the altars of the Church, they read in its latest dictums. They may want to follow Jesus but Jesus, they're told, does not want to be followed by them.

Call it 'holy' communion if you want, they tell me, but it's not. Not like that. Not under those conditions.

So they go away to where Jesus waits for them, arms open, in someone else's Christian church. There's something about it all that simply defies the lesson of Mary Magdalene or the Woman at the Well or Mary of Bethany or Mary of Nazareth. They go where every minister at the altar, every bishop, every lawgiver, every homilist, every member of every Synod on the planet is not male. They go where they can see 'the image of God' in themselves in another woman. They go where eucharistic theology, which we're told makes us one, is palpable.

– from “Eucharist” by Joan Chittister, . Volume 18, March-April 2012, No 101. Dominican Publications: Republic of Ireland.

A CATHOLIC BILL OF RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

To be human is to have rights. These include life and freedom, together with rights necessary to sustain them: shelter and nourishment, health and work, education and leisure. None of these rights is absolute. One may not exercise them so that other people are exploited.

Citizens of the United States are particularly conscious of their rights, written into our constitution: speech and peaceful assembly, dissent and due process, the choice to believe or not, freedom of the press and protection from cruel and unusual punishment, voting and the presumption of innocence.

When one decides to become a Catholic, one brings all these human rights into the Church. The Church has a solemn obligation to protect these and not to violate them. When one is a Catholic in the United States, the Church is obliged to safeguard those rights which define what it is to be a citizen—unless they are incompatible with Catholicism. One must not be told that one becomes a Catholic at the cost of being less an American. We cannot declare that fundamental rights have no place in the Church of Christ.

We often hear that the “Church is not a democracy.” This is not true: ecumenical councils, papal elections and the election of religious superiors occur regularly. The first Ecumenical Council in 325 declared that no priest was validly ordained unless the community made the selection. Popes and bishops were chosen by the people at large. Fundamentally, Catholic doctrine maintains that the Spirit is given to all and that baptism makes every Catholic equal.

Distinctions between clergy and laity are functional and arbitrary. Their value is always subordinate to the baptismal equality which gives all Catholics the priesthood, the right to the Eucharist, and full status in the community. Christ did not preach a Gospel of privilege and priorities, of entitlements, and of lesser or greater discipleships. Christ did not proclaim that the Reign of God was made up of those whose right to speech or due process or presumption of innocence would now be curtailed.

The Reign of God has its charter in the beatitudes, its constitution in the Gospels, and its mission in the Great Commandments.

In light of these principles and precepts, we, mindful of our baptism, eager to be fully citizens of the United States and thoroughly Catholic, articulate this **Catholic Bill of Rights and Responsibilities**.

1. Every Catholic has the right and responsibility to develop an informed conscience and to act in accord with it.
2. Every Catholic has the right and responsibility to participate in a Eucharistic community and the right to responsible pastoral care.
3. Every Catholic has the right and responsibility to proclaim the Gospel and to respond to the community's call to ministerial leadership.
4. Every Catholic has the right to freedom of expression and the freedom to dissent.
5. Every Catholic has the right and responsibility to participate in the fullness of the liturgical and sacramental life of the Church.
6. Every Catholic has the right to a good name and to due process.
7. Every Catholic and every Catholic community has the right to a meaningful participation in decision making, including the selection of leaders.
8. Every Catholic has the right and responsibility to share in the interpretation of the Gospel and Church tradition.
9. Every Catholic has the right to convene and speak in assemblies where diverse voices can be heard.
10. Every Catholic has the right and the responsibility to promote social justice in the world at large as well as within the structures of the Church.

...from the American Catholic Council

38th Anniversary Celebration

As we have done in the past, The Dignity Detroit Council sponsored a contest to name the theme for this year's Anniversary Celebration. Our 38th Anniversary takes place the weekend of May 19-20. The response to this year's contest was unbelievable with 17 possible themes submitted. After the names of the submitter were removed, the organizing committee met (electronically) and narrowed the 17 down to the top six. The committee then met in person and ranked the six with their 1st, 2nd and 3rd choices. The clear favorite...insert drum roll.....and our theme for this year's celebration.....***Changing Lives Together***, submitted by Chris Dixon.

Thanks Chris!!!!

DignityUSA and the Women of Dignity Sponsor Gathering for Catholic Women

DignityUSA, the Women of Dignity, and WATER, the Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics and Ritual, are sponsoring . This retreat and community-building gathering for women will be held May 4-6, 2012 at Techny Towers, in Techny, IL, just outside of Chicago.

For more information and to register, go to dignityusa.org. Scholarships are available. If you have any questions, please call 800-877-8797 or e-mail info@dignityusa.org.

Dear Dignity Detroit Family,

THANK YOU so much for our new banner. You are so unbelievably thoughtful and generous.

We shared a table at Motor City Pride last year, and someone noticed how "moldy" our old banner was. The new one is just beautiful. We really appreciate your kindness. If there's ever anything we can do for you, please let us know.

Love you all,

Chris Dixon

and the rest of the Steering Committee
of PFLAG Ann Arbor

We will not host the Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament this month. It will resume on May 13

Dignity Detroit is a group who loves to socialize. The opportunities we have to gather, chat, and introduce ourselves to “new-comers” are numerous: in the foyer before liturgy, the after-mass social, Anniversary Dinner/Dance, and the various pot-lucks. Some folks have even participated in discussion groups or go out for a meal after liturgy. And although we do love to socialize, our primary mission is to gather as Catholic Christians to worship our Creator who loves and sustains us.

Dignity Detroit is “Spirit-filled community, striving to live a vision of spirituality, equality and justice in welcoming Catholic Community.”

Our Liturgy Planning group kept all of this in mind when we gathered prior to the Lenten season. Our Lenten liturgies began a little differently; we began in silence, eliminating the elements of “welcoming those around us” and the Gathering Song. Now that we’re into the Easter season, we sing the triumphant “Alleluias” with enthusiasm and joy. However, we are not resuming the greeting we’ve done as liturgy begins. While it is important, indeed crucial, to be a welcoming community, we can extend hospitality in the foyer before and after mass. This change is not meant to stifle us, but to assist us in preparing to celebrate the Eucharist. Another equally important item is that we ask that you please be seated before the 6 o’clock start of Mass. It is easy to get caught up in conversation, but for Mass to start on time, we need you in the chapel !

The Liturgy Planning group also discussed the Rite of Peace and the singing of the *Lamb of God*. Our pastoral musician, Kevin, takes his cue to begin the *Lamb of God* from the priest-president. When he is at the altar, after exchanging the greeting of peace, Kevin begins the music. Yet, we are still busy with our own greetings...continuing to do so even after the music has stopped. Please, out of respect for the priest-president, take your cue from Kevin. When the music for the *Lamb of God* begins we should move back to our place within the assembly.

As we continue to gather and celebrate the Easter season, let us recall these words from the *Acts of the Apostles* proclaimed to us on Easter... “*You know what has happened.*”

Night surrendered to day, dark to light, fear to courage, death to resurrection.

Peter, who was afraid to admit he knew the Lord, now fearless, proclaims you boldly, across the barren hills, each place he goes in every action he takes.

**Lord, Give us your Spirit too, give us your life as you gave it to Peter.
Let us show your story with our lives.**

**Pastoral, Liturgical, Teaching, and Social Justice Moments brought to you by
www.DignityUSA.org.**

During my final Licentiate exam 47 years ago, I started sweating when my Gregorian University professor (and world's expert on Jesus' divinity) Bernard Lonergan pushed a copy of the Christian Scriptures across the table and asked me to prove Jesus is God from one of the three Agony in the Garden passages.

I couldn't.

After I finally confessed, "I can't prove he's God from this passage," Lonergan smiled and said, "Correct! No one can. In Gethsemane Jesus is a human being."

After Lonergan's segment of the exam ended, he shook my hand, asked where I lived in the States, then gave me an unexpected piece of advice. "When you get home, forget a lot of the stuff I taught you about the Trinity and Jesus' divinity. Preach Jesus' humanity, it's the only part of Jesus with whom your people can identify."

We who preach during this holiest of weeks should keep Lonergan's words in the back of our minds. Most of the authors of the Christian Scriptures we'll hear during the next few days agree with him. We especially see Jesus' humanity breaking through in today's second and third readings.

Notice first how, once our four gospel Passion Narratives begin, Jesus' miraculous powers cease. Except for restoring a servant's lopped-off ear in Luke's Gethsemane account, Jesus works no miracles during a time we'd expect him to work lots of miracles. He faces suffering and death as any of us would face them - with only his humanity to fall back on.

Second, though we still have Deutero-Isaiah's reflection on his physical torture ringing in our ears, we're given a different picture of Jesus. No one doubts he endured great physical pain during his passion, but our evangelists rarely zero in on that aspect of his suffering. In today's Marcan account, for instance, the first mention of any physical pain comes only half-way through the narrative when his Jewish guards strike him and say, "Prophecy!" His actual crucifixion is described in just four words, "Then they crucified him. . . ."

On the other hand, Jesus' psychological suffering is constantly front and center. He's betrayed by one of his Twelve, all his disciples desert him in the garden, his own people reject him, and the leader of his small band of followers caves into pressure and swears, "I do not know the man." When push comes to shove, the Jerusalem Passover crowd even chooses a murderer over him.

There can be only one reason for this consistent emphasis on Jesus' psychological suffering: that's the kind of pain most of his followers endure every day in their imitation of him. Rarely does being another Christ demand physical suffering. But we can never avoid the mental pain and stress which accompanies our giving of ourselves to others. And, like the gospel Jesus, we can't expect God to miraculously take it away. Only by going through it do we eventually reach the life Jesus attained. Instead of thanking Jesus for dying for us, we should be thanking him for showing us how to die for others.

We should listen to our well-known Philippians against this same background. Instead of hearing this early Christian hymn in the context of John 1, which speaks of Jesus' pre-existence as God, we should be hearing it in the context of Genesis 1, which speaks of all humans being created in the image and likeness of God. Jesus never falls back on a prerogative all of us share: our likeness to God. On the contrary, only by taking the "form of a slave" - by identifying with the most powerless - does Jesus eventually receive the "name above every name:" Yahweh.

Unless we humans mentally become one with Jesus this week, his being one with us won't make any sense.

Dignity Detroit meets every Sunday evening at 6:00 pm

Sacred Heart Chapel at Marygrove College

8425 W. McNichols @ Wyoming

Contact us at:

Postal Mail: P.O. Box 558, Royal Oak, MI 48068-0558

Voice-mail: 313-278-4786

E-mail: dignitydetroit74@yahoo.com

Website: www.dignitydetroit.org

We are a 501 (c) 3 organization

Dignity Detroit meetings:

Our meetings are open to all

Council -

Third Sunday every month @ 4:30 pm

General Membership -

Third Sunday of January, April, July and October,
immediately after Mass

DignityUSA:

P.O. Box 376

Medford, MA 02155-0376

Phone: 800-877-8797

E-mail: info@dignityusa.org

Dignity Detroit offers community outreach for our less fortunate brothers & sisters at the Capuchin Soup Kitchen in Detroit

Our volunteer participation needs your help on the 2nd and 4th Friday each month between

3:30 - 6:00.

Please see George K. or Denise S. if you can help. Thank You!!!



Our annual hygiene drive this year will benefit the Community Health Awareness Group (C-HAG). It is a non-profit, community based organization that addresses current health issues and concerns of the African-American community and promotes the reduction of transmission of HIV through education, counseling testing, etc.

As has been the practice, we request donations of personal-sized items such as shampoo, deodorant, dental care, women's hygiene products, and so forth.

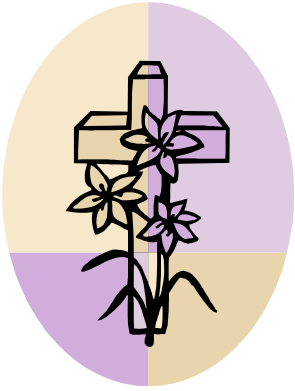
Thank you very much for your support of this very important ministry! Please see Denise if you have any questions.

Dear Dignity Detroit Family,

Thank you from the bottom of my heart for remembering the first anniversary of my husband's death by having Masses said by the Capuchin Friars. I can't believe one year has passed. I appreciate your thoughtfulness and kindness. You are the best!

Love,

Chris Dixon



Dignity Detroit 2012 Easter Season Flower Donation Program

Please select the type of arrangement you would like donate (we will do our best to accommodate your choice)

_____ \$15.00 Potted Plant

_____ \$20.00 Potted Plant

_____ \$50.00 Altar Piece

_____ \$100.00 Floor Piece to sit in front of altar

Date Requested:

_____ April 8th (Easter Sunday)

_____ April 15th

_____ April 22nd

_____ April 29th

_____ May 6th

_____ May 13th (Mother's Day)

_____ May 20th (Feast of the Ascension of our Lord and
38th Dignity Detroit Anniversary Liturgy)

_____ May 27th (Feast of Pentecost)

1 **In honor of** _____

2 **In memory of** _____

3 **No specific reason.**

4 **Your name** _____

Note: All monies collected will be spent on flowers, this is not a fundraiser.

Dignity Detroit 38th Anniversary Dinner Dance

May 19, 2012

Changing Lives Together

Park Place Banquet Hall

23400 Park Street

Dearborn, MI 48124

Guest Speaker: Dr. John Corvino, PhD

Philosopher, Moralist, Gay-rights advocate, noted author, *Between the Lines* Columnist and Wayne State University Professor/Department Chair

Cocktails: 6:30 p.m. Dinner: 7:00 p.m.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ **Number of tickets requested @ \$50.00** _____

Make checks payable to and mail to:

Dignity Detroit

P O Box 558

Royal Oak, MI 48068