



APRIL 2011, VOLUME 36, ISSUE 12

SERVING LGBT CATHOLICS SINCE 1974

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

Calendar of Events -

April 2011

3 - 4th Sunday of Lent

Rosary Sunday

10 - 5th Sunday of Lent

Council Meeting, 4:30

Membership meeting,
immediately following Mass

17 - Palm Sunday

Hygiene Drive ends

24 - Easter Sunday

We all know Dignity Detroit is a volunteer-run organization. From our own membership come those who step forward to help lead this ministry.

The constitution requires that your membership to have been current by March 1 to be eligible to run. The only other need is that you want to ensure Dignity's success by giving of your time and ability.

Council Elections will take place in the month of May. Nominations will be accepted beginning Sunday, April 3rd. The nomination period concludes on Easter Sunday, April 24th.

Up for election are the two-year terms for the offices of Vice-President, Secretary and Community Involvement.

Congratulations to the winners of our annual March Madness Raffle!!!

\$500 Mel B.

\$250 Jim C.

\$100 John Z.

An unofficial count lists the proceeds raised at over \$1000! "Thank you" to all who donated to the raffle!

Due to the scheduling of other events this month, the Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament will not take place in April.

We will resume this ministry of faith on May 8.

63% of American Catholics Support Same-Gender Civil Marriage

Catholics in a New ABC News/Washington Post Survey Poll 10% Higher Than National Average and Show Faster Growing Support Than Nation at Large

WASHINGTON - Catholics for Equality, a national organization of Catholics who put their faith into ethical and effective political action on behalf of the LGBT community and their families, applauds an ABC News / Washington Post poll released today showing that 63% of American Catholics believe it should be legal for gay and lesbian couples to marry. This is 10% higher than the national sample and shows a more rapid rate of acceptance by Catholics than most Americans.

In the poll, conducted by Laver Research Associates, 53% of Americans now support civil marriage for gay and lesbian couples. This is a dramatic increase of 21 points from the same poll's 32% finding in 2004. In both the 2004 and today's polls, American Catholics show a higher rate of support and more rapid rate of acceptance. Today's report that 63% of Catholics support civil marriage marks a 23 point increase from the 2004 poll's 40% finding.

The poll also shows American Catholics consistently support same gender marriage more than other Protestant faith communities and Evangelicals. Evangelicals in the poll showed only 23% supporting, and while non-Evangelical Protestants polled higher than the national average, but their 57% support fell 6 points shy of the 63% of Catholic support.

"The findings of today's poll are heartening, but not surprising," said Catholics for Equality Executive Director Phil Attey. "American Catholics consistently poll higher on progressive social justice issues - including the freedom to marry for all. Our Catholic faith tradition is strongly based on social justice and our duty to take care of those who are unjustly oppressed and marginalized."

"Our families have already dealt with this issue at a personal level and Catholics largely base their moral understanding of the world through their personal relationships, not by the dictates of institutional forces; be they from our church hierarchy in Rome or conservative political groups. We see healthy, happy gay and lesbian families within our families, parishes and communities and we know love and commitment when we see it. On the issue of civil marriage equality, we Catholics support the freedom for gay and lesbian couples to marry. Period."

The Anniversary Dinner Dance committee is seeking donations of new gift items and gift cards for the Silent Auction. If you have an item to donate or have any questions, please see Jim Carlin or Allen Wierzbicki

I WENT TO A BOOKSTORE AND ASKED THE SALESWOMAN, "WHERE'S THE SELF-HELP SECTION?" SHE SAID IF SHE TOLD ME, IT WOULD DEFEAT THE PURPOSE.

The 2011 DignityUSA Biennial Convention will be held in Washington, DC this year from July 1 thru July 4. D/USA is organized to unite gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender Catholics, as well as our families, friends and loved ones in order to develop leadership, and be an instrument through which we may be heard by and promote reform in the Church. Basically, D/USA is our voice on many issues of importance to us, and it deserves our support.

Registration material for the convention has recently been sent out to D/USA members. Online registration is available and encouraged.

The convention hotel is the Marriott Renaissance Washington DC Downtown Hotel on 9th Street near the DC Convention Center. D/USA has negotiated an amazing room rate for the convention. The Dignity rate for a standard room during the period June 28 thru July 7 is \$125 single or double, plus taxes. On Expedia.com, the current rate for July 4th is \$369! So even if you are attending few or none of the convention activities, this is a great opportunity to enjoy a mini-vacation for a night or two in downtown DC. You are not required to register for the Convention to get the DignityUSA Convention room rate from the hotel.

DignityUSA has to guarantee Marriott the sale of a specific number of rooms. The number of rooms at the \$125 rate is limited. In only a week, over 25% of the available rooms have already been reserved. So if you are interested, you should not wait too long to make your reservations and guarantee that low rate.

In connection with the convention, they want to illustrate Dignity's 42 year history. For this they are soliciting photos of special times and events in Dignity's history. They are looking for pictures of chapter anniversaries, conventions, chapter participation at pride events, national marches, candle-light vigils, papal visits, etc. High resolution electronic copies would be ideal. If you have any pictures, please send them to DignityUSA. Also identifying the event, location and approximate date of photos would be helpful. These would be needed by the end of March.

At the convention, they remember those lost since the last convention. So they are asking for the names and dates of Dignity members who have passed away in 2009-11. Again photos would be great--electronic ideal. Also a descriptor--e.g. chapter founder, chapter leader, community activist, faithful member, etc.--would be great. These would be needed by April 30, 2011--though if you have these now, the sooner the better. Please comb your archives, antics, photo albums and junk drawers for photos.

For more information on the convention and hotel registration, visit www.dignityusa.org

If you have any questions about being a part of a Detroit contingency, please see Frank D'Amore

Dignity Detroit and Race for the Cure

It's time to register and become a team member of Dignity Detroit in the annual *Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure* held at Comerica Park. The event is scheduled for Saturday, May 21. To register online, simply go to **team registration** at karmanos.org/raceforthe curedetroit/index.asp and follow the instructions.

If you do not have access to a computer or need additional details, please contact Denise Smith at dsmith0698@wowway.com or 586-202-0300.

DignityUSA and its communities have proven people can be a "parish" without the sponsorship of a Bishop who has rejected us. Is it possible we are that "stone which has been rejected and has become the cornerstone"? I think it is indeed possible. This is our future – to come forward in pride, honesty, inclusion, forgiveness, compassion, and witness to the God of Love, rather than blame. . . .

We must come out of our "tombs" of security and welcome all who seek this inclusive Church. My respected friends, that means enlarging the tent to include more than LGBT people. We can only be enriched by doing so.

Mark Matson, President, DignityUSA
in Lead Article "Mark's Vision"

Our annual Personal Hygiene Kit Collection is underway and will end on Palm Sunday, April 17th. Shampoo, conditioner, toothpaste, tooth brushes, deodorant, shaving cream, disposal razors (male and female), feminine hygiene products, baby powder, etc. are all welcome. If available, the travel sizes of these items seem to work the best. Items can left in the last pew of the chapel and we will take it from there.

Thank you very much for your help!

What Kind of Faith Do We Need?by Sister Joan Chittester

It is so easy to make God to our own image and likeness. It is so easy to see only the images we make of the Unimaginable, to the exclusion of all others. It is so easy to make God small and call that faith.

The evidence in every sector of human life makes the point all too well: open-mindedness, breadth of vision, the universal mind rise all too rarely in the human heart. Fundamentalism, biblical literalism, reactionism and ideological extremism — all dispositions designed to freeze spiritual and social development to a given period — ride high now. The condition is not uncommon during periods of great social change and deep social stress. The situation begs for it, in fact. Given the loss of past absolutes and the shift in the social consensus on national values that come with technological development, major cultural transformations and new social realities, people cling to old certainties like shipwreck survivors to lifeboats.

It is precisely in times like those a world in flux needs a prophetic commitment to principle in the face of practices long since gone awry or begging to be reviewed again. What the world needs then is openness to the Holy Spirit and a commitment to basic tenets of truth and justice and goodness and to the Will of God for all humankind. We need a faith than can function in the present, not a religion that mirrors the past.

It is not an easy task, this openness to the Spirit. It demands that we let go of our own ideas to make way for new manifestations of the presence of God in time. It is not a comfortable call, this invitation of God to a dark walk toward a distant future, but it is the ultimate manifestation of response to the Spirit.

It takes vision...to see good will where we do not see a similarity of ideas. It takes courage...to admit the weaknesses within us that corrupt our strength and erode our hearts. It takes openness of heart to see God everywhere and in everyone when we assume that godliness is common only to us, to our groups and our nation and our church and our ideas.

Vision and courage and openness to the Spirit call us to breadth of vision, to softness of heart, to the expansion of our souls beyond our parochial worlds and chauvinistic politics and segregated social lives and intellectual blandness that mask as faith and parade as religion.

Dignity Detroit meets every Sunday evening at 6:00 pm
Sacred Heart Chapel at Marygrove College

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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 envisions and works for a time
when Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and
Transgender Catholics are affirmed and
experience dignity through the integration of
their spirituality with their sexuality, and as
beloved persons of God participate fully in
all aspects of life within the Church and
Society.*

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VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!!

**Dignity Detroit offers community outreach for
our less fortunate brothers & sisters at the
Capuchin Soup Kitchen on Detroit's east side.**

**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!!!**



The theme for our 37th Anniversary celebration has been chosen!

A Light in the Darkness

Remember to save May 21 on your calendars for our annual Dinner/Dance festivity. Also, don't forget our Anniversary Mass on May 22!!!

