



JANUARY 2010, VOLUME 35, ISSUE 5

SERVING LGBT CATHOLICS SINCE 1974

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

## *Happy New Year to our entire Dignity Family!*

Thanks to all who attended  
the White Elephant Auction.  
Your generosity helped us  
raise \$1,200.00!!!

A reminder that March 1 is the deadline for membership for those seeking council elections this year. Up for election of a two-year cycle are President, Treasurer and Social Chair.

Details will be available at the January General Membership meeting. All interested members are encouraged to toss their hat in the ring!

**Retreat reflections...** The Dignity Detroit retreat held on December 5 at Visitation North pondered a question of what it means for us to be at home. Where do we feel at home? Some of the places included our house; with our family - biological and chosen; here at Dignity and, most interestingly, within our skin. How many of us can say we feel at home with ourselves? We all have insecurities to one degree or another. How does it affect us each day? Are there things we have learned to live with? What do we struggle with that makes it hard to look in the mirror? Do we invite God into our home, or have we put up a "no solicitors" sign at the door?

The discussions that took place raised an awareness that home is more than a building and material possessions. It also involves our memories, feelings, spirituality and our connection with other people. When we feel we belong, we can be at home. When we feel safe, we can be at home. When we feel we add value to our surroundings, we can be at home. When we recognise the true value of our surroundings, we can be at home. Home can be as much a physical state as emotional and/or spiritual.

Some expressed their grief for those who have gone home to God and left our home on Earth a little empty. The old saying "you can't go home again" was noted in memories of childhood. However, as we grow we have a chance to create a new home for ourselves and each other. To welcome and be welcomed. Indeed, this retreat gathering was a sense of home, too. It brought together twelve of us from Dignity, and two of the IHM's who help run Visitation North to share in the Holy Spirit. A feeling of home often includes food, which we enjoyed in the way of bagels, apple danish, cookies, coffee and a nice salad for lunch.

With the beginning of the Advent season upon us, we were reminded that Jesus is at home with us, and hopefully we with him. We at the retreat all seemed to agree that community plays a big part in our sense of being at home. Here at Dignity, we have an opportunity every Sunday, and on occasions such as this retreat, to engage in that feeling of home. For those who are homeless - physically, emotionally or spiritually - may our prayers and love be of comfort.

Special thanks to Sr. Mary McDevitt and Sr. Jean Booms for their hospitality and spiritual guidance.

*Steve White*

Living with a saint is more grueling than being one.

Those of us who have come out as gay, lesbian, transgender or bisexual; who have entered recovery; or who have found a spiritual path that gives meaning and purpose to our lives are deeply fortunate. Let's not make the mistake of alienating our fellow humans by insisting that they follow our example --- or worse, by assuming that ours is the only choice that will allow others to flourish.

Respect for difference is something we must accord others as well as ourselves. The decisions that are transforming our lives were not made in an instant; they are the result of many experiences, perhaps of trial and error, perhaps of "hitting bottom" physically or spiritually and having to turn our lives around for our very survival.

We continue to learn and to teach through our mistakes if we're honest about them. Our vulnerabilities and imperfections, far more than preaching or smug self-satisfaction, have the power to touch others. Each of us has our own healing path.

Today, I pray to be useful, as I follow my inner guidance.

## **Holiday Liturgy Schedule**

Friday, January 1<sup>st</sup>, 6 P.M. Solemnity of Mary

Sunday, January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6 P.M. Feast of the Epiphany

**The above Liturgies will take place in the Library Lecture Hall located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Liberal Arts Building due to renovations taking place in the Chapel.**

**Calendar of Events -**  
**January 2010**

- 1 - 36th Anniversary Theme Contest begins**
- 3 - Feast of the Epiphany  
Rosary Sunday**
- 10 - Feast of the Baptism of the Lord**
- 17 - 2nd Sunday Ordinary Time  
Council meeting — 4:30  
General Membership meeting,  
immediately following Mass**
- 24 - 3rd Sunday Ordinary Time  
Liturgy Planning meeting, 4:30**
- 31 - 4th Sunday Ordinary Time  
March Madness Ticket  
Distribution begins**

**DignityUSA:**  
**P.O. Box 376**  
**Medford, MA 02155-0376**  
**Phone: 800-877-8797**  
**E-mail: info@dignityusa.org**

**2009/10 Dignity Detroit Council**  
**President:** Frank D'Amore  
**Vice-President/Liturgy Coordinator:** Claudia Welbes  
**Secretary:** Sr. Therese Kearney, IHM  
**Treasurer:** Glenn Crane  
**Community Involvement Coordinator:**  
 Denise Smith  
**Social Chair:** Michelle Snyder

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!!**

For many years, Dignity Detroit has served our less fortunate brothers & sisters at the Soup Kitchen on Detroit's east side.



Our volunteer participation needs your help on the 2nd and 4th Friday afternoons each month between 3:30 - 6:00.

Please see George K. or Denise S.

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](mailto:dignitydetroit74@yahoo.com)  
**Website:** [www.dignitydetroit.org](http://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

## Archdiocesan regions, vicariates realigned

by Robert Delaney of The Michigan Catholic Published December, 2009 (via aodonline.org)

DETROIT — In line with his intention to make addressing the presence of the Church in the city one of his priorities, Archbishop Allen Vigneron has announced a reconfiguration of archdiocesan regions and vicariates that brings all Detroit, Highland Park and Hamtramck parishes together in a region of their own.

The reconfiguration, presented to the Presbyteral Council two weeks ago and outlined in a Dec. 11 letter to pastors, establishes four "geographically stable" regions – meaning they will not be changing each time the leadership changes.

Eastside and westside Wayne County suburban communities that had been part of the Central Region are now included in adjacent suburban vicariates. "My hope is that the establishment of the Central Region will provide additional leadership and support for this key part of our archdiocese, with a focus on its unique needs," Archbishop Vigneron said. Other priorities named by Archbishop Vigneron as focus points for his administration are education and reinvigorating the priesthood. Besides the redrawn Central Region, he announced changes affecting the South, Northeast and Northwest regions.

With the impending departure of Bishop Daniel Flores to become bishop of Brownsville, Texas, the Detroit Archdiocese will be left with only one active auxiliary bishop, so the title regional bishop has been changed to regional moderator. "While I do anticipate the Holy Father gracing us with additional auxiliary bishops at some time in the future, it seems wise to designate those who provide leadership in these regions by a common title as regards those responsibilities, whether they are bishops or episcopal vicars," the archbishop said.

Msgr. Donald Hanchon, pastor of in southwest Detroit, has been named an episcopal vicar (a priest to whom some episcopal administrative functions has been delegated) so that he can serve as regional moderator for the Central Region. Msgr. John Zenz, already an episcopal vicar under the old regional configuration, is regional moderator for the new Northwest Region. Auxiliary Bishop Francis Reiss is moderator for the South Region, while Bishop Flores will serve as moderator for the new Northeast Region until his permanent departure for Brownsville in early February. An episcopal vicar will be named to succeed him.

Also as part of the reconfiguration, the total number of vicariates has been reduced to 16, from 17, with four vicariates in each region. The changes include:

In the Northwest Region, a new vicariate as yet unnamed has been created from the merger of the Birmingham-Bloomfield-Troy and Southeast Oakland vicariates with 10 parishes (in Farmington, Farmington Hills and Southfield) from the Farmington-Southfield vicariate. Until its new name is decided sometime in the next few weeks it is being referred to as the To Be Named Vicariate.

In the Northeast Region, the SERF (St. Clair Shores, Eastpointe, Roseville, Fraser) Vicariate has expanded to include the six non-Detroit parishes (in Grosse Pointe Park, Grosse Pointe Farms, Grosse Pointe Woods and Harper Woods) that had been in the Renaissance Vicariate.

Also in the Northeast Region, the Central Macomb Vicariate has expanded to include the 10 non-Detroit parishes (in Warren and Center Line) that had been part of the Genesis Vicariate.

In the South Region, the Northwest Wayne Vicariate has expanded to include three parishes (in Novi and South Lyon) from the previous Farmington-Southfield Vicariate.

The Central Region now includes the Genesis Vicariate, formerly in the Northeast Region, and Genesis has expanded to include two Detroit parishes from the Renaissance Vicariate and five parishes, also in Detroit, from the Trinity Vicariate.

Also in the Central Region, as outlined above, the Renaissance Vicariate loses two Detroit parishes (to Genesis) and six non-Detroit parishes (to SERF), while the Trinity Vicariate loses five Detroit parishes to Genesis.

Among other changes, the Office for Priestly Life and Ministry was reorganized to include the former functions of the delegate for religious, and is now the Office for Clergy and Consecrated Life. Also, the Council of Vicars was merged into the Presbyteral Council.

Further changes are expected in 2010, with the reconstituting of the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council.

## Gay Catholics Welcome Unexpected Vatican Statement Opposing Use of the Death Penalty/ Imprisonment Against Gay People

Submitted by duddyburkem on Wed, 12/16/2009 - 12:03 (reprinted here via the DignityUSA website)

Leaders of the US's largest group of gay Catholics expressed surprise and satisfaction at the release of a Vatican statement that opposed the use of the death penalty and other severe violations of the human rights of gay people. They noted that the statement was particularly welcome in light of an effort by the government of Uganda to pass a law imposing the death penalty for being gay, and the reported impending execution of twelve gay men in Iran.

At the UN last week, the Vatican's Permanent Observer issued a statement that said, in part,

"The Holy See continues to oppose all grave violations of human rights against homosexual persons, such as the use of the death penalty, torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment. The Holy See also opposes all forms of violence and unjust discrimination against homosexual persons, including discriminatory penal legislation which undermines the inherent dignity of the human person."

As raised by some of the panelists today, the murder and abuse of homosexual persons are to be confronted on all levels, especially when such violence is perpetrated by the State. While the Holy See's position on the concepts of sexual orientation and gender identity remains well known, we continue to call on all States and individuals to respect the rights of all persons and to work to promote their inherent dignity and worth.

Marianne Duddy-Burke, Executive Director of DignityUSA, said, "We commend the Vatican for stepping forward to condemn the harsh criminal penalties – including the death penalty – imposed on gay people by some governments. Based on the most fundamental Catholic principles of respect for human life and fundamental human rights, we have long urged the Vatican to accept its responsibility to help safeguard the lives and human dignity of gay people in countries around the world. This statement is an important step in gaining universal protection for an often oppressed population. We urge the Vatican to continue to recognize the fundamental human rights of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people, and to do so consistently and forcefully, as it did last week at the UN."

<p>January history throughout Dignity</p>	<p>This month in 1970, Dignity places its first ad in the Advocate:</p>
<p>Dignity/USA is looking for people to assist with making recommendations to use new and evolving technologies more efficiently. We are looking for skilled people who can advise and guide us on how to use the technologies and what we need to have in place to move forward in electronic media - Drupal, Web, Twitter, Facebook and other evolving interfaces.</p> <p>If you are interested in volunteering for this committee, please email Alice Knowles at: alice_knowles@comcast.net</p>	<p>On January 16, 1976, the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith issues a document entitled Declaration on Certain Questions Concerning Sexual Ethics. In response to the document, Dignity issues a press release reaffirming "its call to the Church and the U.S. Bishops to appoint a committee of theologians, social scientists, and gay persons to more adequately study the question of homosexuality, its implications for Church and society."</p> <p>At their winter meeting in January 1995, the national Board of Directors establishes the Kevin Calegari Leadership Award to recognize individuals for their "outstanding contributions and many years of dedicated service to the Dignity family." On February 12, Dignity would lose a great leader and beloved friend with the death of Kevin Calegari, just one month shy of his 37th birthday. Kevin served as president of DignityUSA from 1991-1993.</p> <p>On January 1, 2001, President Mary Louise Cervone and Executive Director Marianne Duddy go to Rome to represent DignityUSA in collaboration with Soulforce to bring attention to the Catholic hierarchy's demeaning attitude toward GLBT Catholics.</p>