



AUGUST 2012, VOLUME 38, ISSUE 4

SERVING LGBT CATHOLICS SINCE 1974

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

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.

**Affirmations Older Adult and Seniors
Helpline**

A representative from the Older Adult and Senior LGBT community is available to answer questions and offer information about issues important to the Older Adult and Senior community. Toll Free: 1-800-398-4297

Offered every Tuesday and Friday from 4 - 7 pm

This month's Sunday readings focus on the Bread of Life. Take some time to reflect on what that means to you.

Does receiving the Eucharist energize your spirit?

**Calendar of Events -
August 2012**

- 5 - 18th Sunday of Ordinary Time**
Rosary Sunday
- 12 - 19th Sunday of Ordinary Time**
- 15 - Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary**
- 19 - 20th Sunday of Ordinary Time**
Council Meeting @ 4:30
- 26 - 21st Sunday of Ordinary Time**

What a fitting indicator of the state of our movement. People of faith are more visible than ever in all aspects of our justice struggle this year. Governors, legislators, activists, bloggers, voters... so many different people working for LGBT equality, and clearly stating that they do so because of their faith. This is the vision we've held for more than four decades, and finally it is becoming reality. This is a joyous moment!

Marianne Duddy-Burke
DignityUSA Executive Director

Daryl the Cable Guy showed up at my friend's home to fix his malfunctioning modem. Daryl noticed the Christian books in my friend's office and immediately began unloading his burdens. Daryl admitted that he, too, was a pastor; at least that was what he used to be. An extramarital affair had ended that career posthaste, and he had been recently expelled from the church and lost his marriage.

My friend shared that story with me a few days ago, and when our conversation ended, I flipped on my own cable box. Greeting me on the screen was former Sen. John Edwards, explaining his most recent legalities and apologizing profusely for a laundry list of well-publicized immoralities. Daryl the Cable Guy and John the Senator have a lot in common. Both fouled up in a very public way. Both violated the trust that good people had placed in them. Both weaved their webs of deceit, harming those closest to them. And both stand in need of redemption. That's a remarkable word, redemption. The Christian books on my own shelves tell me that redemption means "to buy." The word carries the idea of freeing a person who has been enslaved; cutting the chains that bind; lifting away the weights that one carries. Thus, anything — anyone — worthy of redemption is exactly that: Worthy and worth the price.

The objections at this point are obvious. Philandering preachers? Vile and despicable acts by national politicians? Redemption? You can't be serious! Well, people exactly like this seem to have been Jesus' best pals. Let it never be forgotten that the accusation the religious community always hurled against Jesus was that he "was a friend to sinners". I concede that redemption doesn't necessarily mean putting Daryl the Cable Guy back in a pulpit. The intoxicating authority found in such a position may be no good for him. John the Senator will likely never hold public office again — and that's probably a good thing for him — such offices are often more poisonous than profitable anyway.

But this doesn't change the fact all of us sinners need safe, accessible communities of faith that will challenge our selfishness, point us to a hope-filled contrition, teach us what it means to love others and be loved by God and, yes, redeem us.

Ronnie McBrayer is a syndicated columnist, speaker and author of multiple books.

There is still time to register and join the Dignity Detroit Team for AIDS Walk/ Detroit on September 16. Even if you don't register, you are welcome to walk.

Go to www.aidswalkdetroit.org to sign up. NOTE: the website will ask you if you wish to make a donation. This is completely optional and is not part of the Team registration.

If you have any questions about joining the Dignity Detroit team, please see Frank D'Amore

Mark your Calendars!

Dates have been set for our 39th **AND** 40th Anniversary Celebrations.

Our 39th Anniversary Celebration will take place on the weekend of May 4-5, 2013. Our Dinner Dance will be on Saturday, May 4th and our Anniversary Liturgy follows the next day, Sunday, May 5th. Why so early in May you ask? Very simply, May 18th was already taken; the Saturday before is Mother's Day weekend (our Liturgy would be on Mother's Day) and the Saturday after is Memorial Day weekend.

Our 40th Anniversary Celebration will take place on the weekend of May 17-18, 2014. Our Dinner Dance will be on Saturday, May 17th and our Liturgy follows the next day, Sunday, May 18th.

(July 22, 2012) Office Depot has announced it will donate at least \$1 million to support Lady Gaga's *Born This Way Foundation*.

The office supply chain has partnered with the non-profit dedicated to ending bullying to produce several limited-edition products for back-to-school – including \$20 empowerment gift cards, “Kindness Sticks” Post-It notes and Sharpie pens – each featuring the Born This Way Foundation logo. Twenty-five percent of the sales of these limited edition products will be donated to the Born This Way Foundation, with a guaranteed donation of \$1 million this year.

“Office Depot is a place that brings together students as well as their families and teachers, who play such an important role in inspiring and supporting today's youth,” said Cynthia Germanotta, president of Born This Way Foundation and Lady Gaga's mother. “With Office Depot's support, we will empower millions of young people this back-to-school season, letting them know that it's okay to be yourself.”

Office Depot has also created a Facebook page dedicated to the campaign.

“Born This Way Foundation is an inspirational organization that has the power to make a difference in the lives of today's youth and we are honored to join this movement and help raise awareness for such an important cause,” said Bob Moore, chief marketing officer for Office Depot Inc

Office Depot, Inc.
6600 North Military Trail
Boca Raton, FL 33496-2434
Phone: 1-561-438-4800

Neil R Austrian
Chairman/CEO
Neil.Austrian@officedepot.com

By the time Helen was eighteen months old, her eyes were a bright blue, and her hair was a golden red. When her eyes changed from sky blue to sea green, I was certain that she would be a rare beauty. The camera always adored Helen. However, Helen's personality and innate kindness would always outshine her physical beauty. Her smile reflected a loving nature that permeated every fiber of her being.

At three years old, Helen had already developed an unusual logic that made perfect sense to her. Of course, she would give away her favorite teddy bear to a child "who needed it" more than she did. In kindergarten it seemed perfectly natural for her to love the unlovable, including the teacher who struck terror within the hearts of the other students. Helen was quite certain her teacher was delighted to be with her, and by the second week of school, Helen was feeding her teacher oranges from her grimy little hands. By second grade, Helen had become the champion of the weak, the hope of the hopeless, and she did it all with a selfless grace that was nothing short of miraculous. When Helen reached high school, it was pretty evident that our house would always bulge with teenagers of every shape, creed, and ethnicity.

I still have the pictures from Helen's thirteenth birthday party. I can pick out the boy who needed to check in with his parole officer before the cake was cut. Then, there is the girl who couldn't drink cola because her religion forbade it. We went running across the street for chocolate milk. In the corner was the boy whose parents had escaped from Vietnam when he was a baby, and the girl whose father was a Taiwanese diplomat. African American, Irish, Filipino, and Caucasian faces stare cheerfully out at me. It was an incredible feat just to round up all the kids for a one-of-a-kind picture. It took three snapshots to complete the photograph. What an unforgettable sea of grinning faces peer out from those pictures, as though the United Nations had dropped off all its teenagers for a day of ice cream and cake.

In the fall of her sophomore year, Helen and I were shopping the malls for school clothes. I was doing some creative arithmetic, trying to make our budget stretch into something that would delight and still be affordable. At one point, I noticed a man and young girl moving straight toward us. The man was dressed in work clothes, and he seemed to be encouraging the overweight youngster closer to us. I could identify with the girl. I looked back upon my teenage years with horror. These two seemed to be disagreeing and were almost upon us.

Helen had just finished exchanging greetings with one of her countless squealing friends, and as she turned around, she came face-to-face with the reluctant teenager. Faster than the speed of light, Helen's eyes sparkled with recognition. Her face broke into a brilliant smile, and she shrieked with joy! "Cindy!" she squealed as she threw her arms around the chubby girl's neck. Cindy's face broke into a beautiful smile, and she squealed right back at Helen. Then they both did a hand-holding, happy dance while grinning and shrieking with delight. Cindy was transformed from a rather sad, "just-like-I-was" kid into the vivacious young girl she truly was meant to be. Cindy and Helen chattered away, totally oblivious to Cindy's father and me as we stood amazed.

Who was this unconsciously generous, loving daughter of mine? How had God graced my life with someone so bright and beautiful? How different my life might have been had there been a Helen to accept and love me when I was a teenager. When I turned back to Cindy's father, I saw his face transformed from frustration and sadness to joy. Cindy had seen Helen, he confided, long before Helen spotted her. She had identified Helen as "one of the popular girls". As Cindy's father encouraged her to speak to Helen, Cindy had refused. Why would a somebody, she reasoned, want to talk to a nothing?

Cindy's father had felt helpless to make his daughter believe how precious she truly was. Helen, in one unpretentious act, had given Cindy and her father a priceless gift of unconditional acceptance and love. Cindy's dad's eyes shined with pride and gratitude, but no more than the gratitude that filled my heart for the gift that was Helen. I learned a great lesson that day. I learned that true friendship does not measure another with speculation. Fourteen-year-old Helen taught me that the worth of a soul is not in the eye of the beholder. It's in the heart.

Written by Jaye Lewis - From *"Chicken Soup for the Soul – Celebrating People Who Make a Difference"*

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!!!

Is your membership expiring soon? You can renew by logging on to the Dignity/USA website. If you don't have access to a computer, renewal packets are available on the back table in the Chapel for you to mail in.

Anyone who cannot afford the \$50 membership is encouraged to see any member of council for the **confidential** Angel's Fund program. All you have to do is ask!

