



JUNE 2011, VOLUME 37, ISSUE 2

SERVING LGBT CATHOLICS SINCE 1974

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

Calendar of Events -

June 2011

5 - Feast of the Ascension

Rosary Sunday

Motor City Pride @ Hart Plaza

12 - Pentecost

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

19 - Feast of the Holy Trinity

Council meeting, 4:30

“Mass on the Grass”

Father’s Day

26 - Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ

Benediction

Thank You, Thank You, Thank You!!!!

A very big Thank You to everyone who participated in this year’s Anniversary Celebration. Ninety-five folks dined, bid, danced and heard inspiring words from Detroit City Council President Charles Pugh. Our thanks to those who donated items for the Silent Auction and Raffle. Thanks as well to those who bid on the items or purchased raffle tickets. We did have a few bidding wars on which was good to see since all money raised helped pay for the event.

On Sunday, our Anniversary Liturgy was spiritually uplifting and filled with energy. There were five (5) priests in attendance. The choir did an outstanding job of leading the congregation in song while our substitute organist, Curtis Posuniak and guest trumpeter, John Hartwick gave a stellar performance. Dennis Durkin once again outdid himself on the cake and other deserts.

If I have left anyone off the thank you list, please accept my apologies.

With gratitude,

Frank D’Amore

Given that Motor City Pride is moving to downtown Detroit, Ferndale is continuing a Pride event of their own to complement the Detroit event.

You can visit Affirmations website (www.goaffirmations.org) for a complete schedule of events.

Dignity Detroit will be having an exhibit table at this year's Motor City Pride on Sunday June 5, from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at Hart Plaza in Detroit.

Volunteers are needed to host the table. Please contact Denise Smith to sign up.

Why let bishops drive us from Church we love?

By Brian Cahill: former executive director of Catholic Charities in San Francisco.

Well-informed U.S. Catholics are acutely aware of the arrogance, paternalism, flawed logic, inflammatory rhetoric, failure of personal accountability, and lack of pastoral sensitivity of many of our church leaders. The U.S. bishops have set the tone with their continued denial of the wholesale rejection of church teaching on contraception; their clumsy, heavy-handed, ineffective attempt to influence national health care legislation; their opposition to U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development regulations prohibiting discrimination against gays and lesbians; and their condemnation of the work of theologian St. Joseph Sr. Elizabeth Johnson without even meeting with her.

Cardinal Justin Rigali of Philadelphia is the latest U.S. poster boy for our church's continued failure to confront the molestation scandal.

Cardinal Raymond Burke and other shortsighted bishops continue to use the Eucharist as a sanction against public officials, and Archbishop Charles Chaput of Denver tried to tell us not to vote for presidential candidate Barack Obama.

Bishop Thomas Olmsted of Phoenix excommunicated a dedicated Mercy nun for making an impossible decision in a tragic, ambiguous medical crisis.

Bishop Salvatore Cordileone of Oakland, Calif., trashed President Obama and Gov. Jerry Brown for not defending heterosexual marriage and for ignoring the will of the people. However, in the same statement he blissfully ignored the likelihood of voter approval of same-sex marriage within the next few years.

Who are these guys? What part of the Vatican II documents and, which placed the concerns of the church into the modern world, don't they get? When did they decide that harsh political partisanship was part of their calling? Why even stay in a church with these kind of leaders? Why not join the millions of American Catholics who have left? Well, let me tell you.

I stay because I need the Eucharist. I need to hear the word of God. I need to pray with the worshiping people of God. I stay because of the great works of charity, social service, health care and education that have always come from my church. I stay because of the great priests, brothers, nuns, bishops and other fellow Catholics that I have been blessed to know who are models of faithful witness and compassionate ministry. I stay because of our new San Francisco auxiliary, Bishop Robert McElroy -- a nurturing pastor who has written eloquently of the unintended consequences of the denial of Communion: the perception of coerciveness, the identification of abortion as a sectarian Catholic effort, and the diminishment of the full range and impact of the church's social teaching. I stay because of retired Archbishop John R. Quinn, who continues his advocacy for the reform of the papacy and with humility and wisdom urges his fellow bishops to consider how their voices can be most credible. I stay because of Bishop John Wester of Salt Lake City, a priest of deep compassion who has led the U.S. bishops in their advocacy for the needs of immigrants. I stay because of San Francisco Archbishop George Niederauer, whose first response to an issue is always pastoral.

In spite of my church's obsession with power and sex -- its insular superiority, its tone-deafness -- I am not going anywhere. I want to say to those who have left for these reasons: Come on back! It's our church! Why let these guys drive us away from a church founded on love, compassion, forgiveness and inclusivity where the message of Jesus Christ, while at times obscured by the failures of the institution, is still alive and still relevant? The history of the official church has been one of conflict, corruption, violence and scandal, but if we are believers, we know that as much as we would like to, we cannot separate the institution from the community of the faithful. But we can pray, and we can trust in the Holy Spirit that our church leaders will come to realize they have lost their teaching voice and will come to discern, consulting with the community of the faithful, how their legitimate authority can be exercised far more effectively and pastorally. As we pray, we might appreciate that those of us who resist the "hard-liners" are as imperfect and broken as they appear to be. Their words and actions may have greater impact than ours, but why should we expect them to be different from us, and why should we allow their imperfections and brokenness deprive us from something so life-giving, so grace-filled, so sanctifying? And we can speak out. All the silent bishops who do not agree with the approach of these church leaders can speak out. All the bishops and priests and religious who do not accept church teaching on contraception can speak out. All who believe that women should be priests can speak out. All who believe celibacy is a gift, not a mandate, can speak out. All who understand and accept the reality of homosexual orientation can speak out.

We are the people of God. We are called to be prophetic voices. Perhaps with enough prayers offered, with enough voices raised, with enough trust placed in the Holy Spirit, perhaps they will listen.

However, whether they listen or not, I'm not leaving.

**Recommended Reading from DignityUSA website
about religion and homosexuality:**

Both Feet Firmly Planted in Midair: My Spiritual Journey. John McNeill. Westminster John Knox Press, 1998.

Can Homophobia Be Cured? Wrestling with Questions that Challenge the Church. Bruce Hilton, Abington Press, 1992.

Coming Out to God: Prayers for Lesbians and Gay Men, Their Families and Friends. Chris Glaser. Westminster John Knox Press, 1991.

Homosexuality and Religion. Richard Hasbany, editor. Haworth Press, 1990.

In God's Image; Christian Witness to the Need for Gay/Lesbian Equality in the Eyes of the Church. Robert Warren Cromey. Alamo Square Press, San Francisco, 1991.

Is the Homosexual My Neighbor? A Positive Christian Response. Letha Scanzoni and Virginia R. Mollenkott, Harper San Francisco, 1994.

The New Testament and Homosexuality. Robin Scroggs, Augsburg Fortress, 1984.

Pastor, I Am Gay. Rev. Howard H. Bess. Palmer Publishing Company, 1995.

The Poetics of Intimacy and the Problem of Sexual Abstinence. Published by Peter Lang, 2000.

Stranger at the Gate. Rev. Mel White, Simon & Schuster, 1995.

Twice Blessed: On Being Gay & Jewish. Christie Balka and Andy Rose, editors. Beacon Press, 1989.

What the Bible *Really* Says About Homosexuality. Daniel A. Helminiak, Ph.D. Alamo Square Press, May 2000.

A BIG THANK YOU to our Dignity community for the following outreach items:

The hygiene items donated that benefited St. Mark's Parish to be distributed to the homeless

All participants, contributions and prayers for Team Dignity at this year's Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure.

Dignity Detroit will be collaborating with St. Mark's Parish again with a fund-raising opportunity at Comerica Park for select Tiger games.

In 2010, we at Dignity earned \$1,600 for our general fund and hope to increase that amount this year. Much work was performed, but much fun was had! Please consider joining our Dignity team in 2011.

If you are interested, please contact Denise or Frank.

ST. ANNE NAMED AS DETROITS PATRONESS *By NIRAJ WARIKOO FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER*

To loud applause, the head of the Catholic Church in Detroit announced Thursday, May 5, that St. Anne — the grandmother of Jesus — is the patroness saint of Detroit. For centuries, Catholics have considered St. Anne the unofficial saint of the city because the first Catholic parish in Detroit, created in 1701, is named after her.

It became official as Archbishop of Detroit Allen Vigneron announced a Vatican decree to a crowd assembled for the ordination of three new bishops at Blessed Sacrament Cathedral in Detroit. The letter noted that St. Anne has been Detroit's patroness "from time immemorial." St. Anne, the mother of the Virgin Mary, also is considered the patroness saint of housewives, women in labor, cabinet makers, horse riders and miners.

In September 2009, Vigneron had asked Catholics in Detroit to submit ideas for the city's patron saint. After considering them, the archdiocese passed on its recommendation of St. Anne to the Vatican, where Pope Benedict XVI approved it. "Countless of the Christian faithful have cultivated devotion to St. Anne in each generation," said the decree.

"We're happy about it," said the Rev. Thomas Sepulveda, pastor at Ste. Anne de Detroit, the second oldest Catholic parish in the U.S. "It's recording a reality that has existed for over 300 years."

Ideas in Passing ..by Sr. Joan Chittester

So What Is the Prayer Life?

The purpose of prayer is not prayer. The purpose of prayer is to come to love God as much as possible with all the insights into the nature and presence of God this world allows.

In fact, one of the most consistent themes in mystical literature is the clear notion that the Mystic is not seeking spiritual escape from the life of the world. The mystic, history records in one life after another of them, is simply seeking God. The life of those who practice prayer deeply and regularly is clearly a life of enlightenment. They come to know both the mind of God and the obstacles of their own hearts with an acuity uncommon even to the professional bearers of the tradition—its ministers and officers, its scholars and its priests.

What they do not seek are "consolations" in prayer.

To strive for spiritual "consolations," the ancients taught, meant the desire of the seeker to find the spiritual life "rewarding," pleasant, easy, comforting. It was the desire to have ecstatic experiences. It was the hope of being lifted up out of the self to the point of the ethereal. It was, consciously or unconsciously, the hope to use prayer as an escape. In some traditions, drugs and a kind of self-hypnosis are used to enhance the chances of dissolving into some kind of other-worldly trance.

But it was not the way of the genuine mystic. Some of them, in fact—John of the Cross, Teresa of Avila—suffered even more in prayer at the thought of the sufferings of Jesus or the awareness of the suffering of others, than most of their contemporaries did who never fully followed a life of prayer at all. Some of them lived in spiritual dryness—"the dark night of the soul"—all their lives.

So what was their prayer life about? It was just like mine and yours. It was about learning, as I did, what the catechism said, "to know and love God with all our heart, all our mind, and all our strength." Prayer is effort on my part and depth of life and fullness of understanding on God's part. God does surely come to us in prayer. In fact, in prayer we are seeking the God who is seeking us. This same God spoke in dreams, and as Hildegard of Bingen said, "in mental visions" to the people of God throughout the ages. That same God is surely speaking to us, as well. Prayer is the process of learning to listen.

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

8425 W. McNichols @ Wyoming

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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

How busy are bees?

*To make a one-pound comb
of honey, bees must collect
nectar from about two
million flowers*

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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 26th Annual Pride
Banquet and Awards
Ceremony will be held at
the Ukrainian Cultural
Center in Warren, on
Thursday, June 23. Tickets
are \$42.00. please contact
Denise Smith for details.

