

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.

Dignity Detroit's Annual Hygiene Kit Drive begins Sunday, February 17 and will continue thru Easter Sunday, March 31.

The drive this year will benefit The Ruth Ellis Center which provides residential and drop-in programs dedicated to GLBTQ youth.

Your participation is greatly appreciated!!

**Calendar of Events-
February 2013**

February 3rd - 4th Sunday in Ordinary Time. Blessing of throats in observance of feast of St. Blase will take place following liturgy.

February 10th -5th Sunday in Ordinary Time

February 13th -Ash Wednesday. Liturgy with imposition of Ashes at 7pm

February 17th -1st Sunday of Lent

February 24th - 2nd Sunday of Lent

Lenten Fast and Abstinence Requirements

Catholics between the ages of 18 and 59 are obliged to fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. In addition, all Catholics 14 years old and older must abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday, Good Friday and all the Fridays of Lent. Fasting as explained by the U.S. bishops means partaking of only one full meal. Some food (not equaling another full meal) is permitted at breakfast and around midday or in the evening—depending on when a person chooses to eat the main or full meal. Abstinence forbids the use of meat, but not of eggs, milk products or condiments made of animal fat. Abstinence does not include meat juices and liquid foods made from meat. Thus, such foods as chicken broth, consommé, soups cooked or flavored with meat, meat gravies or sauces, as well as seasonings or condiments made from animal fat are not forbidden. So it is permissible to use margarine and lard. Even bacon drippings which contain little bits of meat may be poured over lettuce as seasoning.

**From Ask A Franciscan, St. Anthony Messenger magazine*

March Madness/Spring Fling Raffle

We will once again be sponsoring a March Madness/Spring Fling Raffle.

The raffle will take place on Sunday, April 7th as part of the after-Mass Social. We are asking everyone, members and supporters, to take one book of thirty (30) tickets to purchase or sell. Tickets are \$1.00 each and if you sell or purchase all 30 tickets you only need turn in \$25.00. That is five free tickets or \$5.00 cash for your time and efforts. It goes without saying though that if you should choose to turn in all \$30.00, no one will mind. The prizes are cash awards of \$500.00, \$250.00 and \$100.00. The winner need not be present to win.



As in years past, at least one-half of the proceeds from the raffle will be donated to the IHM South African AIDS Ministry Program. The remaining funds will be deposited in our treasury for future use.

If you are so inclined, donations are also welcome to help offset the expenses associated with the raffle.....ticket printing, license fee and of course, the prize fund.

With your support and generosity, we hope to make this one of our most successful raffles ever!



Ask any person who works for a parish this question: *What is your favorite season of the church year?* I can predict, with a sense of certainty, that they won't answer *Lent*. For those who minister in a parish setting, Ordinary Time is a favorite season. There are no special plans to be made, no special decorations to be put up, no missions to plan, no special liturgies to conduct. Yes, Ordinary Time, for the church minister is peaceful, calming, and relaxing.

But here we are...LENT!!! As I contemplate this season at this point in my life I can't help but remember the Lents of my childhood. Every year my parents would provide my brother, sister, and me a shoebox that was covered with a brown paper bag. The lid of the box had a small opening cut into it and we could decorate the box any way we wanted...as long as it looked austere and penitential! Once the box was decorated, our parents asked us the inevitable question: *What are you giving up for Lent?* Our standard and expected answer every year was: *Candy*. As a child, you would think it would be easy to give up this yummy goodness since the only way you ever got it was if a parent or grandparent purchased it for you. And surely, they wouldn't buy it for you during Lent since they knew you gave it up...right? Oh no, not in my house! Our parents would come home from shopping, give us candy and sweetly tell us, *Put it in your Lent box!* What??? You are actually tempting us??? I can remember on more than one occasion my brother would climb up onto the counter, reach high into the cupboards, and grab us our boxes when our folks were out. We'd quickly gobble up some candy and then hide the wrappers in the trash can outside! Did we learn anything from this yearly ritual? Certainly, but not what our parents wanted us to learn. We didn't learn sacrifice. We learned craftiness.

During this same time my dad would engage us, as well as the students he taught, in an act of kindness and almsgiving that went on for many years. He was friends with a Maryknoll Missionary who was from our hometown. Fr. Eugene Homrich served the people of Bangladesh. (In fact, at the age of 85, Fr. Homrich is still ministering in Bangladesh!) Our Lenten almsgiving consisted of coming up with creative ways to collect money to send to Father's mission. I have no idea how much all the students donated over all those years, but I do know that we learned a very valuable lesson: Love for others.

I think that's what Lent, and life, are supposed to be about...we are to love others in the way that Jesus loved. So maybe instead of "giving up" something for Lent this year each of us could focus on being more loving, more compassionate...more like Jesus.

Peace,
Claudia

Recently Catholic Cardinal George issued announced his strong opposition to marriage equality demanding that the state legislature not pass it. The Cardinal articulated the usual myths and nonsense that the church has been spouting for the last couple of years.

In response, there is this wonderful open letter written by Sun-Times Columnist Neil Steinberg. You have to read it and enjoy it as I have every word!

**Dear Cardinal George:
So marriage is all about boinking?**



Forgive me for being blunt — lucky you didn't read watered down the gerund, out of concern for your that idea — sex = marriage — is the gist of the letter faithful last weekend: Marriage is about sex, gays can't have sex, at least not good old-fashioned heterosexual sex, thus gays can't get married, and any attempt to allow them to marry — for instance, any new law passed in Illinois — is a "legal fiction" and a "serious danger"; oh wait, the "serious danger" part is in your second letter, to government officials, urging them to follow your religious dogma when forming laws for the State of Illinois.

the above before I sensibilities. But you sent to the

Where does one begin?

First, Cardinal, thank you for your insight. Given that I have been married — 22 years and counting — and you haven't, perhaps you wouldn't mind if I reply to your letters with a letter of my own. Letters are so friendly.

I should be clear at the get-go, since so many readers have such a hard time with this: I am not Catholic, and my concern is not about what Catholics do or don't do in practicing their own religion. It's a free country, sort of, and all may follow whatever faith they like. As the leader of Chicago Catholics, you have a duty to tell your flock what being a good Catholic means. And were that the extent of your letters, I'd never dream of arguing. It would be none of my business.

But that is not what you're doing. What you're doing is instructing Catholics to pressure legislators, and pressuring them yourself, joined by like-minded clerics, to craft laws that force non-Catholics to follow Catholic doctrine. That makes it everybody's business. It is the right — I would say duty — of non-Catholics to resist religious notions being imposed on Illinoisans through law.

In an attempt to justify an unjustifiable intrusion of religion into secular life, you write, in your letter, "Marriage comes to us from nature" — one of the wilder statements to issue from a prelate, which is saying a lot. "The human species comes in two complementary sexes, male and female" — no argument here — "their sexual union is called marital."

Really? By whom? Because people nowadays mate like ferrets, while fewer call it “marital.” What comes to us from nature is not marriage but sex. Some species do indeed mate for life, but that is the exception, not the rule. Biologists say it isn’t fidelity, but random copulation that comes from nature.

Surely, Cardinal George, you are not endorsing random copulation, natural though it may be. Rather, this is the latest in a long history of the church trying to control sex — first straight sex, and now that effort has fizzled, roundly rejected by both society and most Catholics, you’re focusing on gays, perhaps because you can or you think you can.

You worry, in your letters, not about the families you would blithely squelch, but about your own feelings, the risk that devout Catholics will be seen as “the equivalent of bigots” after gay marriage becomes completely accepted — which it certainly will.

Well, yeah, that’s the drawback of being a bigot, no matter how you gild it in theology. But worry not — look at the church’s stance on females. While society long ago let them be doctors and lawyers and, yes, even clergy, the church refuses to follow suit. Yet it lives with the anti-women stigma just fine. It’ll be no different with gays, and the church’s position will be just one more antiquated cruelty the world will tolerate. You’ll hardly notice.

Because marriage — and here you’ll have to listen to an old married guy — isn’t just about sex. Yes, that’s part of it. But someone who gets married for the sex is like someone who flies on an airplane for the meal — there are easier, cheaper ways to go about it.

Sex is not the central defining element of marriage — that would be commitment a.k.a. staying together, often raising children, sometimes cleaning the house, paying bills, talking quietly at night, having a relationship recognized by society and law, a vessel solid enough to navigate the tempests and calms, storms and lassitudes of the years. Marriage is about love and responsibility. And here homosexuals are on an even playing field with straights. Yet here you are mum — as if, because you don’t see them, they’re not here.

But they are here, and you’re hurting them, or trying to. Religion is a tool — a hammer that can be used to build a house or to hit someone in the head. Your choice. Rather than try to make life better for gays — a long-oppressed group only now achieving freedoms most take for granted — you choose to set your faith as a stumbling block before them. Rather than help the more hidebound members of your church see why this is rightly happening now, you vigorously rally them to desperate, last-ditch resistance. That is your misfortune, and theirs, and ours.

With respect,

Neil Steinberg

Be a Part of the **DYAC Dignity Photo Project!**

WHAT LGBTQA Catholics from around the nation coming together to share their inspirational messages.

How Write a 1-2 sentence message stating why you are LGBTQA & Catholic on a dry-erase board. Then take a Picture with your message

WHY With inspiration from the “it gets better” campaign these pictures will be compiled into a Video and put on the Dignity VIMEO Channel! We hope to have 100 pictures to compile into a VIDEO TO SPREAD ACROSS THE INTER-NET! Our stories as LGBTQA Catholics are powerful should be shown to each other and the whole world!

When If there is interest shown in being involved with this campaign pictures will be taken at the after mass social.

Ask Ashley or Kayla for more information or to show your interest!! *Dates and times can be arranged. It won't take much of your time and you never know who your message may help in a time of need!

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

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!

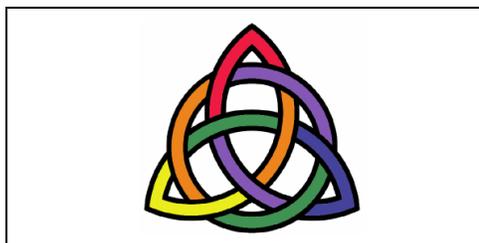
Dignity Detroit offers community outreach for our less fortunate brothers & sisters at the Capuchin Soup Kitchen in Detroit.

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!!!



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