

*DignityUSA works for respect and justice for all gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender persons in the Catholic Church and the world through education, advocacy and support.*

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## One Year and Counting...

By Mark Matson, President DignityUSA



As many of you probably recall, when I was first approached about taking on the role of DignityUSA President, I had many concerns. The organization was facing enormous financial and leadership challenges, membership was declining, and it was unclear what Dignity's role should be. I questioned whether I was the person best suited to lead our organization's response to these challenges, and was unsure about the level of commitment remaining among our members.

When I questioned you about these challenges, many of you responded with promises of support, by coming forward to serve and with your prayers. All of this has come together to build a focused, effective, and visionary team. Now, one year into my term of office, it feels appropriate to give you a report on what we've accomplished to October 2008.

### Administration

- Raised \$95,000 from members to hire two very capable people to staff our new national office: Marianne Duddy-Burke and Peggy Burns
- Relocated our national office from Washington DC to Boston, demonstrating our ability to move operations to where the talent resides
- Resolved problems with our new membership processing, including lack of timely membership renewal notices, donor acknowledgments, and credit card processing
- Worked with numerous Chapters to restore accuracy of member rosters
- Thanks to a few generous estates and increased membership donations, we ended the fiscal year significantly in the black, allowing us to begin rebuilding our reserves
- Timely publication and dissemination of the weekly *Breath of the Spirit*, monthly Dignity *Dateline* and the *QV: Quarterly Voice*
- Secured a \$20,000 grant from the Arcus Foundation to support our actions during the April 2008 Papal visit
- Completed a contested election for new board members
- Completely overhauled the DignityUSA website, adding new functionality and features to position us for future growth and to support Chapter communications
- Developed a detailed marketing strategy to promote our 40th Anniversary Convention and growth in membership among women and youth

### Being the Voice for LGBT Catholics

- Dignity leaders were widely quoted in national and international media during the April 2008 Papal visit
- Created two brochures to help Catholics voice their support for marriage equality to legislators and to members of their community



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*One Year and Counting...*  
*Continued from page 1*

- Mobilized Catholics to stand against anti-gay ballot initiatives in California and Florida

**Chapter and Member Services**

- Initiated quarterly conference calls between Chapter and National leaders to improve communications
- Held National Board of Directors meetings in Washington DC, Boston, Denver and Chicago to enhance operational knowledge and communications in those cities
- Provided free media training from GLAAD (Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation) for all Chapter leaders
- Board members and staff visited over a dozen Chapters
- Support for Chapter membership drives and outreach efforts
- Timely resolution of individual member complaints

I see these accomplishments as signs of Grace. We have been gifted with generous contributions of time, talent and treasure by our members. Some examples:

- Several significant estate gifts from deceased members whose legacy will be the financial stabilization of Dignity
- The considerable talent and passion of our Executive Director, Marianne Duddy-Burke and Operations Manager, Peggy Burns
- The competent talent of the other executive officers: Lourdes, Lewis and Chris — each covering their respective base well
- The prayers and hands-on labor of many members who followed through with their offers to help with the work of the Board
- A talented and committed group of people on our national Board, building on a solid foundation left by my predecessors

I have had the opportunity to visit numerous Chapters this past year, reminding me of the wide diversity of our communities, and the challenge of leading that bundle of diverse traditions, convictions and history into a new future. Our future path is not clear to me yet. What is clear is that there is a lot of energy in this organization. The Spirit is not done with us. There is much work to do. We've got to ask a lot of questions and listen keenly to discern the future path.

We start our second year focused on the 40th anniversary of DignityUSA. We are planning quite an event in San Francisco — recalling just how far we have come, and laying out a vision for the future. Please make Convention 2009 reservations soon. Convention registration details are scheduled to be released in January 2009.

Until we see you in San Francisco, I ask you for your continued prayers, charity and financial support as all the volunteers serving on your national Board work to discern our future path.

**A Thanksgiving Message**

Thanksgiving Day 2008 rapidly approaches. Let us be thankful for God's love and providential care. Let us be mindful and appreciative of the working of the Holy Spirit in our midst, and pray for continued guidance and blessings.

I am extremely grateful for the love and support the members of the national Board, staff, associates, allies, friends and national membership have accorded me personally and to DignityUSA.

On behalf of the national Board, staff and associates of DignityUSA, I wish you and yours a Blessed Thanksgiving in safety, peace, love, happiness and fellowship.

## MARRIAGE EQUALITY

## Two New Dignity Discussion Groups Formed

One is for Chapter leaders to discuss issues and concerns relating to Chapters. The other is for Chapters-in-information. Send an email to [Secretary@Dignityusa.org](mailto:Secretary@Dignityusa.org) indicating Chapter affiliation and list you wish to participate in.

## Support for Dignity Chaplains

Are you a Chaplain for a Dignity Chapter who would appreciate the opportunity to be part of a secure online community that offers the chance to network with other Dignity Chaplains?

Two folks have volunteered to coordinate such a group, in order to promote dialogue and nurture support for Dignity Chaplains who too often feel isolated in their ministries. This effort is supported by DignityUSA, and would feature shared stories, spiritual reflection, liturgical ideas, homily help, and prayers.

If interested or have questions, please contact [garinns@sbcglobal.net](mailto:garinns@sbcglobal.net).

**Happy Anniversary  
& Congratulations to:**

**Suffolk (Long Island) (NY) - 32 years  
St. Louis (MO) - 34 years**

## Marriage Equality Issues

By Bill Welch, Editor

*Special Note: This edition of the Dateline is delayed due to late-breaking news related to the California Prop. 8 ballot measure, validating sponsors and validating election results in Arizona, Arkansas, California, Connecticut and Florida. The in-depth coverage is designed to give our readers in the non-affected states, and perhaps even those in affected states, more background on the election events, as well as the referendum and initiative processes affecting our lives.*

Marriage equality was put to the test with three propositions submitted to the voting populace on November 2008 general election ballots in Arizona, California and Florida. The Catholic bishops in all three states — through their respective Catholic Conference — endorsed that state's ballot measure and encouraged the Catholic community to support the measures financially, and by voting for and urging others to vote for the measure. A state's Catholic Conference serves as a political arm of the bishop.

The ballot measures are as follows:

- **Arizona Prop. 102:** "Only a union of one man and one woman shall be valid or recognized in this state." Sponsored by the Arizona Legislature to amend the state constitution. Yes on Prop 102 website lists Fred Phelps and The Westboro Baptist Church as sponsor. If enacted, it will amend the Arizona Constitution to define marriage as between one man and one woman. Same-sex marriage is already prohibited in Arizona. As of Nov. 9, 2008, Prop. 102 received YES 56.2%, NO 43.8%.

- **California Prop. 8: ELIMINATES RIGHT OF SAME-SEX COUPLES TO MARRY.** Changes California Constitution to eliminate the right of same-sex couples to marry. Provides that only marriage between a man and a woman is valid or recognized in California. Sponsored by signature gathering initiative process and Protect-Marriage.com. Passage requires a simple majority vote. As of late November 6th, with 100% precincts reporting, YES 52.5%, NO 47.5%. 2.3-million ballots yet to be counted. Equality California concedes passage of initiative.

- **Florida Amendment 2:** "Inasmuch as a marriage is the legal union of only one man and one woman as husband and wife, no other legal union that is treated as marriage or the substantial equivalent thereof shall be valid or recognized." (Note: Also bans domestic partner benefits for unmarried couples.) Sponsored by signature gathering initiative process, Yes on 2 and Florida 4 Marriage associated with Florida Family Action and Florida Family Policy Council, both associated with James Dobson's Focus on the Family. Amendment as written includes a clause prohibiting judges from overturning the law. Passage requires a 60% majority of those voting in the election. Two existing Florida statutes prohibit same-sex marriage. With 99% of the precincts reporting and votes YES 62.1%, NO 37.9%, the measure passed the 60% majority vote required.

On the face of the proposed amendments, it would appear that Florida Amendment 2 would be the most restrictive if incorporated into the state constitution. However, the greatest focus was directed towards California's Proposition 8 campaigns due largely to the fact that same-gender marriage was incorporated into California's marriage equality law on June 15, 2008. As of November 5, 2008, campaign records show that total contributions for and against the measure surpassed \$74 million. It sets a record nationally for a ballot initiative based on a social rather than economic issue. It also eclipses the combined total of \$33 million spent in the 24 states where similar measures have been put to voters since 2004.

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## Chapter Leaders Conference Call set for December 10, 2008

The next conference call is scheduled for **Wednesday, December 10, 2008**, beginning at **9:00 p.m. EST**.

Information to access and participate in the conference call:

“Free Conference Call”  
(long-distance toll call)

Conference Dial-in number:  
269/320-8400.

Participant Access Code: 890836#.

If you have not done so, please notify Lewis Tanner of your desire to participate by sending an e-mail to [Secretary@dignityusa.org](mailto:Secretary@dignityusa.org).

Reminders will be announced in future *Datelines*. Please set aside this date and time on your calendars!

## FUNDRAISING CHAPTER EVENTS

Dignity/Columbus (OH) held its third annual “traveling dinner” fundraiser for DignityUSA on Saturday, November 8, 2008. The fun event raised \$2,500 for the organization, and included an extraordinary gift of \$1,500 from a gay couple who had been invited but were unable to attend. You never know what might come from an invitation.

Five households, three of whom are straight couples, hosted various courses. Guests included several straight people from two area gay-friendly parishes. This event has turned out to be one of the Chapter’s best social traditions while raising money for DignityUSA. Four members of Dignity/Dayton drove over to assist.

For more information, check the Chapter’s website link:  
[www.dignitycolumbus.org](http://www.dignitycolumbus.org).

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Tony Perkins, president of the Family Research Council, a conservative Christian lobby based in Washington and a division of James Dobson’s Focus on the Family, remarked that the California Prop. 8 campaign “... is more important than the presidential election. We’ve picked bad presidents before, and we’ve survived as a nation. But we will not survive if we lose the institution of marriage.”

In view of the importance accorded the California Prop. 8 campaign, I will concentrate the balance of this article to report on those behind the initiative, the Protect-Marriage.com campaign, and counteractive support by NO on 8 led principally by Equality California (EQCA).

Focusing mainly on Catholic actions, I will report on:

- a courageous California Catholic priest
- a news conference held at Dignity/Los Angeles’ Dignity Center
- a letter to the editor of a diocesan newspaper
- Dignity/Dallas objections to U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) use of YouTube on the matter of same-sex unions
- a fund-raiser to supporting NO on Prop. 8 in lieu of wedding gifts

At the end of this section, I will touch on two other November 2008 election-related items:

- Connecticut Supreme Court legalization of same-sex marriage and after-effect on ballot-measure regarding a constitutional convention
- Arkansas Initiative Act 1 related to adoption and foster parenting of children.

## ProjectMarriage.com Executive Committee

- Ron Prentice, Yes on Prop. 8, Campaign Chairman, is the founder and head of the California Family Council, an organization tied to James Dobson’s Focus on the Family
- Edward Dolejsi, Executive Director, California Catholic Conference
- Mark A. Jansson, Executive Committee Member, is a self-described member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS)
- Andrew Pugno, General Counsel

## ProtectMarriage.com — an unholy alliance

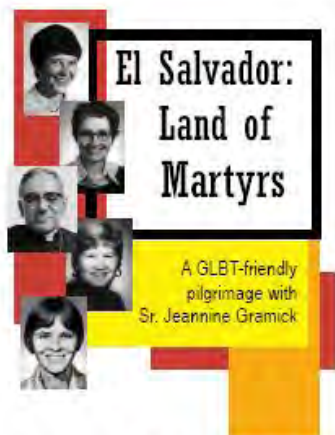
- California Catholic Bishops and their California Catholic Conference
- Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
- California Family Council — associated with James Dobson’s Focus on the Family whose headquarters is in Colorado Springs, CO.

## Archbishop of San Francisco solicits help from Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Following the California Supreme Court ruling granting equal access to marriage in May 2008, there was a signature-gathering campaign to place an initiative on the November 2008 ballot for a constitutional amendment to define marriage as between one man and one woman. This became Proposition 8. Catholic Archbishop George H. Niederauer of San Francisco wrote Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) President Thomas S. Monson enlisting LDS support for the amendment. Niederauer had a good relationship with LDS leaders developed during his 11 years as bishop of Salt Lake City, and Latter-day Saints enthusiastically jumped on board. The LDS First Presidency announced its support for Proposition 8 in a letter read in every Mormon congregation.

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## ANNOUNCEMENT OF PILGRIMAGE



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or contact Sr. Jeannine at 301-864-3604 or [gramick@juno.com](mailto:gramick@juno.com).

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The letter got mixed reception from LDS members. Some LDS leaders resorted to threats and intimidation towards members. A phone-bank operation was set up in Utah to solicit financial and hands-on support by Mormons in California. An LDS bishop has called it one of the most divisive actions within the LDS Church membership. It is reported that 59,000 Mormons contributed more than \$19.15 million to the Yes on 8 campaign.

### Catholic Church Leaders' Involvement

- California Catholic Conference (CCC) website supports Yes on 8 Campaign, carries supporting documents issued by the California Catholic bishops, provides materials for flyers and inserts into parish bulletins and provides links to the Yes on 8 website.
- California Catholic Bishops claimed the issue was the redefinition of marriage, not taking away or denying equal rights to lesbian and gay couples.
- Each diocesan bishop prepared a pastoral letter to be disseminated widely within their diocese as well as being read at parish Masses.
- There is no indication or report that contributions were made in the name of the California Catholic Conference or by any single diocese, although personal donations may have been made.
- On October 28, 2008, ProtectMarriage.com, in a campaign finances report to the California Secretary of State, reported a contribution of \$200,000 by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) at the request of the California Catholic Conference.
- As of October 26, 2008, the Knights of Columbus (KofC) national office in New Haven, Conn, was the measure's largest single contributor in the amount of \$1.4 million. Local KofC chapters and individual members within and outside California made additional donations in support of Prop. 8.

### Yes on 8 Protect Marriage campaign tactics

- From the outset, ProtectMarriage.com and Yes on 8 campaign materials and media advertising resorted to misinformation, distorted and fear-mongering reporting, lies, blackmail, extortion letters, and misused photos of children without parental or guardian consent. I have yet to see any media materials extolling the virtues and benefits of one man and one woman marriage.
- On or about October 20, 2008, ProtectMarriage.com sent certified threatening letters under their logo and signed by the four executive committee members noted above to about 35 companies who had made large donations to Equality California, a non-profit organization helping to lead the campaign against Proposition 8. The principle content of the letters reads:

"We respectfully request that [name of company or organization] withdraw its support of Equality California. Make a donation of a like amount to ProtectMarriage.com which will help us correct this error and restore Traditional Marriage. A donation form is enclosed. We will be most grateful and will advertise on our website [name of company or organization] generous contribution.

"Were you to elect not to donate comparably, it would be a clear indication that you are in opposition to traditional marriage. You would leave us no other reasonable assumption. The names of any companies and organizations that choose not to donate in like manner to

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ProtectMarriage.com but have given to Equality California will be published. It is only fair for Proposition 8 supporters to know which companies and organizations oppose traditional marriage.”

- On October 26, 2008, the parents of two kids appearing in a TV ad in support of Proposition 8 to illustrate that same-sex marriage will be taught in schools if the proposition fails, held a press conference to complain about the use of their kids for political gain and without signed releases by the parents or guardians. They requested the ad be removed. The Prop. 8 campaign refused. The ad shows a charter school class of 1st graders on the steps of San Francisco City Hall as their teacher and same-gender spouse are about to descend the steps after their recent marriage. The excursion to the City Hall event was organized by the students’ parents, not by the teacher or the school. The kids of parents who did not approve of the excursion were held in classes at the school. At issue is the unlawful use of unauthorized photography for commercial use by Yes on Prop. 8.

- On October 31, 2008, the Yes on 8 campaign — anticipating an extremely large turnout of African-Americans at the polls in support of presidential candidate Obama — sent out a direct mail piece targeting the African-American community to give them the impression that Barack Obama supports Proposition 8. The mailer features an image of Barack Obama with comments from him stating “I’m not in favor of gay marriage...” along with quotes from four black ministers in California. November 1st, the Obama-Biden campaign issued a statement that reiterated Obama’s stance against Prop. 8 and allowed the “No on 8” campaign to run a TV spot stating his opposition. At issue is the misuse of Obama’s words. Early in the campaign, Obama remarked that while not in favor of gay-marriage, he was opposed to an amendment to the California Constitution which would take away civil rights of citizens, and therefore was opposed to Prop. 8.

- Political analysts say that proponents of Prop. 8 and the YES on 8 campaign went beyond the debate on marriage and targeted purported implications for schools, churches and children. They were able to focus the debate on their assertion that without the ban on gay marriage, public school children would be indoctrinated into accepting gay marriage without their parents’ wishes, churches would be sanctioned for not performing same-sex weddings and the institution of marriage would be irreparably harmed.

- Despite California’s Superintendent of Public Instruction saying the assertion pertaining to the education of children was false and baseless, evidently that scare tactic and advertising was one of the most persuasive to sway voters’ support of Prop. 8 according to voter exit interviews.

### Misplaced Respect and Trust?

- Although the California bishops claimed that this campaign was not in any way to be homophobic, they allowed themselves, their offices, and their church, to be manipulated in

ways that certainly are homophobic. Their explicit intention has been undermined by a strategy that they should have managed more responsibly.

- To the best of my knowledge, none of the California bishops stopped, attempted to stop, nor disassociated themselves from the ProtectMarriage.com rhetoric and questionable tactics mentioned above.

- Not only did the bishops not stop, curtail or take issue with the management style, as well as deceptive and wrongful advertising, the California Catholic Conference sought and received financial assistance from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) for more of the same approach and tactics in the final weeks of the campaign.

- The media and other communications by ProtectMarriage.com under the patronage of the California Catholic Conference was contrary to and inconsistent with the pastoral concern and ministry suggested by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (now U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops) in their twice issued pastoral letter “*Always Our Children.*”

- The active endorsement and support of the management and questionable conduct of the ProtectMarriage.com and YES on 8 campaign enkindles lack of respect and trust in the Catholic Church episcopacy in California and beyond.

- The deceit, lies, scare tactics, intimidation and gangster-like activities by the YES on 8 campaign were blatantly employed to support the passage of Prop. 8 to strip equal rights from a sector of California citizens.

I don’t buy into the adage that “All’s right and fair in love, war and politics.”

### California Catholic Priest Publicly Rejects Bishops’ Pastoral Letter on Prop. 8

On Sunday, October 5, 2008, Fr. Geoffrey Farrow, then a priest of the Diocese of Fresno, California, and pastor of St. Paul Newman Center in northeast Fresno, shocked parishioners at the 11:00 a.m. Mass when he came out against Proposition 8 in a post communion address to the congregation. See Geoff’s story “In His Own Words” by Fr. Farrow below.

On October 10, 2008, Fr. Farrow’s attorney — both a civil and canon lawyer, received a letter from Bishop John Steinbock suspending Geoff from “governance and faculties as a priest,” without pay or benefits, and directing him to remove himself from the San Joaquin Valley he had served for 23 years.

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### In His Own Words

By Fr. Geoffrey Farrow with permission  
Fr. Farrow's October 5 post communion statement

As most of you know, I was appointed pastor here at the Newman Center on April 15th of this year. When I arrived, I set out to address a series of various projects to repair our facilities. To date, most of these deferred maintenance items have been addressed. In the middle of dealing with contractors, the parish finance committee, the building department of the diocese, neighbors, etc., I received a FAX from the bishop's office on the 30th of June. It was the bishop's pastoral letter for the month of July.



Fr. Farrow

This single FAX threw my whole summer, and in fact, my whole life into a turmoil. Recently, I was speaking with some of our parishioners who advocate for the ordination of women. In the course of our conversation, a question arose which has haunted me: "At what point do you cease to be an agent for healing and growth and become an accomplice of injustice?" By asking all of the pastors of the Diocese of Fresno to promote Catholics to vote "Yes" on Proposition 8, the bishop has placed me in a moral predicament.

In his "Pastoral," the bishop states: "Marriage is much more than simply two persons loving each other. Marriage is naturally, socially, and biologically, directed to bringing forth life."

Actually, there are TWO ends to marriage: 1) Unitive and 2) Procreative. The unitive end of marriage is simply a union of love and life. The Procreative end is, of course, to create new life. It is important to understand that the unitive end of marriage is sufficient for a valid marriage. The Church sanctions, and considers a sacrament, the marriage of elderly heterosexual couples who are biologically incapable of reproduction. So, if two people of different genders who are incapable of reproduction can enter into a valid marriage, then why is it that two people of the same gender, who are incapable of reproduction, cannot enter into a valid marriage.

The objections which are raised at this point are taken from Sacred Scripture. Scripture scholars reveal the problematic nature of attempting to use passages from the Hebrew Scriptures as an argument against same gender relationships. Essentially, these scriptures are addressing the cultic practices in which sex with temple prostitutes was part of an act of worshipping Pagan gods. With regard to the Pauline epistles, John J. McNeill, in his book: "The Church and the Homosexual," makes the following point: "The persons referred to in Romans 1:26 are probably not homosexuals, that is, those who are psychologically inclined toward their own sex—since they are portrayed as 'abandoning their natural customs.'" The Pauline epistles do not explicitly treat the question of homosexual activ-

ity between two persons who share a homosexual orientation, and as such cannot be read as explicitly condemning such behavior. Therefore, same gender sex by two individuals with same sex orientation is not "abandoning their natural custom."

In 1973, as a result of a greater understanding of human psychology, the American Psychological Association declassified homosexuality as a mental illness. In 1975, the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (the Church's watchdog for orthodoxy) produced a document entitled: "*Declaration on Certain Questions Concerning Sexual Ethics.*" In this document, they made the most remarkable statement. They stated that there are "homosexuals who are such because of some kind of innate instinct." While these statements are hardly glowing affirmations of gay and lesbian persons, they represent a watershed in human perception and understanding of gay and lesbian people.

These new insights have occurred as a result of the birth and development of the science of psychology and understanding of brain development in the 19th and 20th centuries. The California Supreme Court cited and quoted an amicus brief filed by the APA in the Court's opinion issued on May 15, 2008, that struck down California's ban on same sex marriage. Specifically, the court relied on the APA's brief in concluding that the very nature of sexual orientation is related to the gender of partners to whom one is attracted, so that prohibiting same sex marriage discriminates on the basis of sexual orientation, rather than just imposing disparate burdens on gay people.

In directing the faithful to vote "Yes" on Proposition 8, the California Bishops are not merely entering the political arena, they are ignoring the advances and insights of neurology, psychology and the very statements made by the Church itself that homosexuality is innate (i.e. orientation). In doing this, they are making a statement which has a direct, and damaging, effect on some of the people who may be sitting in the pews next to you today. The statement made by the bishop reaffirms the feelings of exclusion and alienation that are suffered by individuals and their loved ones who have left the Church over this very issue. Imagine what hearing such damaging words at Mass does to an adolescent who has just discovered that he/she is gay/lesbian? What is the hierarchy saying to him/her? What are they demanding from that individual? What would it have meant to you personally to hear from the pulpit at church that you could never date? Never fall in love, never kiss or hold hands with another person? Never be able to marry? How would you view yourself? How would others hearing those same words be directed to view you? How would you view your life and your future? How would you feel when you saw a car with a "Yes on 8" bumper sticker? When you overheard someone in a public place use the word "faggot?"

I remember the first time I heard that word, "faggot," I was hanging out with my cousins. They all played on the football team of the Catholic high school in our town. One of them spat

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out the word in the form of a curse. I was just a kid in the 5th grade, I'd never heard the word before, and so I asked: "What's a faggot?" A faggot is a guy who likes other guys, was the curt reply. Now pause. Think. What would those words mean to someone in junior high school who discovers that he/she is attracted to people of their same gender? The greatest fear that he/she would have is that they would be rejected by the people they love the most—their family. So, their solution is to try to pass as straight, deceive, and in effect—lie. Of course, this leads ultimately to self loathing. It should come as little surprise that gay teenagers have elevated suicide rates. According to the Center for Disease Control's Youth Risk Behavior Survey (1999), 33% of gay youth will attempt suicide.

The bishop states: "The Church has spoken out constantly that those with a homosexual orientation must be respected with the dignity of every child of God. Every individual is created in the image and likeness of God and should never be subjected to prejudice or hatred." A pious thought uttered by a cleric, robbed of any substantive meaning, as the executioner begins his work. Only a few select people actually read those documents. What most Catholics hear about being gay or lesbian at their parish church is—silence. A numbing silence, which slowly and insidiously tells them, "You don't belong here, this is not for you, and you are not welcome." It is not the crude overt vulgarity of some churches. But rather, it is the coldness of a maitre d' who simply won't seat you, or the club which has put you on a waiting list with no intention of allowing you to join. And simply asks you to wait in polite almost, apologetic tones.

In effect, the bishops are asking gay and lesbian people to live their lives alone. Why? Who does this benefit? How exactly is society helped by singling out a minority and excluding them from the union of love and life, which is marriage? How is marriage protected by intimidating gay and lesbian people into loveless and lonely lives? What is accomplished by this? Worse still, is to intimidate a gay or lesbian person into a heterosexual marriage, which is doomed from its inception, and makes two victims instead of one by this hurtful "theology." This "theology," which is parroted by clerics in polished tones from pulpits, produces the very prejudice and hatred in our society which they claim to abhor.

When the hierarchy prohibited artificial birth control, most of the faithful in the United States, Canada and Europe scratched their heads in wonderment and proceeded to ignore them. There is an expression in theology: "the voice of the people is the voice of God." If your son or daughter is gay/lesbian let them know that you love them unconditionally. Let them know that you are not ashamed or embarrassed by them. Guide them as you would your other children to finding true and abiding love. Let them know that marriage is a union of love and life and is possible for them too.

I do not presume to tell you how to vote but I do ask that you pray to the Creator of us all. Think and consider the effects

of your vote on others, especially minorities in our society who are sitting next to you in church, and at work. The act of casting a vote takes you a few minutes but it can cause other human beings untold happiness or sorrow for a lifetime. It can grant them hope and acceptance, or it can cause them to lose civil rights. It can be a rebuff to bigotry and hatred, or it can encourage bigotry and hatred. Personally, I am morally compelled to vote "NO" on Proposition 8. It is my hope that the people of California will join with those others around the world such as Canada, Europe and South Africa who welcome their gay and lesbian family members fully into society by granting them the civil right to marry.

I know these words of truth will cost me dearly. But to withhold them, would be far more costly and I would become an accomplice to a moral evil that strips gay and lesbian people not only of their civil rights but of their human dignity as well. Jesus said, "The truth will set you free." He didn't promise that it would be easy or without personal cost to speak that truth.

**Fr. Farrow's responses to questions posed on his Web site**

Many of you may be asking why I decided to make this public statement. The answer is simply that I had been asked to do so. Just two weeks ago this was asked of me at a Faith, Family & Friends planning session. I offered to do so at that meeting as a post communion statement to be read at the end of Mass. This is precisely what I did last Sunday on October 5 at the end of the 11:00 AM liturgy. Some have raised an objection that the local media was invited to be present. I knew beforehand, that given the content of this statement, it could only be made once. The media's coverage made it possible for the whole parish to hear the message as well as others in our city.

Some have characterized my statement as a "personal" statement. The simple fact that it has taken on such far reaching interest, is evidence that this is not merely my "personal" opinion but rather, a very wide ranging issue in our state, our nation and indeed, internationally. I have received E-mails from the United Kingdom, Holland, Sweden, Germany and even Rome. This is not a "personal" opinion, it is one person expressing something very wide spread in our nation and in our international communion. Why? Because, almost every family has a lesbian or gay person as one of its members.

I felt the need to speak, not for myself, but on behalf of those who have no one to speak for them in this matter in our Church. Personally, my life has been rather difficult since I made this statement as I knew it would be. I have no regrets since, it was my hope that this statement would lead to greater discussion of the treatment of gay and lesbian people in and by the Church. Also, it is my earnest hope that in some small way, this helps to preserve the civil rights of gay and lesbian persons which are currently under attack by the proponents of Proposition 8

*Continued on page 9*

*Marriage Equality Issues*  
Continued from page 8

### What are you doing since making the statement?

I am speaking with various groups and individuals who are working very hard for the “NO on Proposition 8” campaign. I have to tell you, this is a fight for all of us, not just for people in the state of California. If the Yes on prop. 8 party wins, they won’t stop with robbing gay and lesbian people in California of their right to marry. They will then, move on to weaker states and go after domestic partnership laws, adoption laws, and employment protection laws. Essentially, they would like gay and lesbian people to have no rights at all and simply to not exist.

### Press Conference on Prop. 8 at Dignity/Los Angeles’ Dignity Center



(L to R) Tom Honore (a national Board member of Call To Action), Fr. Kevin Steen (Dignity/Los Angeles), Fr. Geoffrey Farrow, Rosa Manriquez (a lay leader at Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in East Los Angeles)

On October 14, 2008, a press conference related to California’s Proposition 8 ballot measure was hosted by Dignity/Los Angeles. Fr. Geoffrey Farrow responded to questions put to him by media reporters as to why he opposed the initiative and actions taken by Bishop Steinbock of Fresno, CA against Fr. Farrow which included removing him as pastor of St. Paul Newman Center, stripping him of his priestly faculties, employment and benefits in the Diocese of Fresno, ordering him to avoid all church communities he had served and to cease using the Internet to “continue his conflict with Church teaching.”

That same evening, Fr. Farrow appeared on Telemundo News at 11 p.m., which included video tape from the press conference at Dignity Center.

The press conference was organized with the combined efforts of Dignity/Los Angeles, Marianne Duddy-Burke, Executive Director DignityUSA, Call To Action, California Catholic Democrats and the Catholic wing of California Faith for Equality. The event is a tangible result of DignityUSA’s efforts to mobilize pro-LGBT Catholics in California with the assistance of our coalition partners to support us.

### Letter to Editor in Diocese of San Jose, California newspaper

As Published in *The Valley Catholic*, October 14, 2008, page 21

### Marriage and Proposition 8

Editor:

This is in response to an article in the Sept. 16 edition...

Saving and protecting marriage and the family is a valid concern. The failure rate of first-time civil and religious marriages in the United States is quite high.

The same is true within the State of California. It is not a new phenomenon, but rather constant for decades. Denying access to marriage to same-gender couples is not the solution.

The time is long overdue for political, religious and civic leaders, as well as allied organizations, to address the failure rate and take action to educate the masses on those things which make for a solid, functional, productive and growth-oriented marital relationship and family environment, and those which contribute to failure.

Such actions would be exponentially more productive than proposing measures to limit marriage to male-female couples.

The coalition ProtectMarriage.com, also known as “Yes on 8,” — which includes the California Catholic Conference of Bishops — hopes to raise \$20 million in contributions and tens of thousands of Catholic volunteers in support of the ballot measure.

Such resources would be better deployed in research and education for better, lasting, life-giving, nurtured marriages and families.

Perhaps partner equality and mutuality in same-gender life-partnerships lend to more stability and productive relationships — a boon to marriage.

Information provided by the California Catholic Conference and the referenced coalition equating domestic partner benefits to those of marriage is misleading and untrue.

Contrary to the claim that civil rights of same-gender couples would not be affected, Proposition 8 distinctly eliminates the right of same-sex couples to marry.

The California State Supreme Court ruling deals with constitutional equal rights to loving and committed partners, and their access to same and equal rights and obligations of civil marriage. Voting NO on California Proposition 8 maintains the status quo in this regard.

*Bill Welch*  
Santa Clara, CA.

*NOTE: A similar letter appeared in the National Catholic Reporter, November 14, 2008 edition, page 22.*

## Dignity/Dallas leaders respond to bishops' initiative against same-sex unions

In their news release of November 3, 2008, leaders of Dignity/Dallas (Texas) voiced their objection to an initiative by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) to reach younger voters by expressing their concerns about same-sex unions via YouTube, the popular video-sharing Web site.

"By taking their debate to YouTube just days before several states are to vote on legislation to define marriage as being valid only between a man and a woman, the bishops are clearly hoping to shape the outcome of the election," said Jon Garinn, Dignity/Dallas co-pastor. "Once again, they've used us and our families as a way to support discrimination."

An English-language video features Archbishop Joseph Kurtz of Louisville, chairman of the USCCB's Ad Hoc Committee for the Defense of Marriage. Archbishop José Gomez of San Antonio, chair of the bishops' Committee on Cultural Diversity in the Church, speaks on a Spanish-language video.

"Reaffirming the traditional understanding of marriage is neither discrimination nor the denial of rights," the bishops say. "Like all people, homosexual persons have the right to be treated with respect and to live in peace with the support of their loved ones."

Proposed marriage protection amendments in Florida, California and Arizona would define a valid marriage in the state constitution as between a man and a woman.

On October 10, 2008, the Connecticut Supreme Court made that state the third one to legalize marriage for same-sex couples, joining Massachusetts and California. In all three cases the courts overturned laws that banned same-sex marriages.

"The bishops warn that if successful, this effort of redefining marriage to include same-sex unions will bring confusion to what marriage actually means," says Dignity/Dallas co-pastor Cliff Garinn. "Beyond that, they say that children will be forced to learn that marriage is merely one kind of loving relationship among many. This shows that the bishops have very little understanding of the truth of how we live our lives."

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## Fund raising for NO on Prop.8 in lieu of wedding gifts

On July 4, 2008, John Ducote, a 20-year member of Dignity/San Francisco and DignityUSA, and Ken Barnes, his partner, celebrated their 27th anniversary as a loving couple. They were married on October 11, 2008, at First Congregation Church of Berkeley — United Church of Christ, in Berkeley.

On Sunday, October 19, 2008, they participated in "Marriage Equality Sunday" at the same location with 19 other same-gender couples married at that church. The event was carried on Channel 2 KTVU San Francisco. John and Ken appeared in segments of the 5:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. newscasts.

Here is text taken from the program of John and Ken's wedding:

Dearest Friends and Family,

Welcome to our wedding celebration. We are honored and privileged that you chose to be with us on this special day.

The transition that we have witnessed within our lifetime enabling gay and lesbian couples to live and love as equals in society represents a unique moment in history. It seems a bit surreal to us, but the power of love is transformational.

We are collectively creating a world where love between individuals is respected and even embraced without regard to sexual orientation. Each of you has had a part in making this our reality, yet there is still much work to be done before marriage equality is universal.

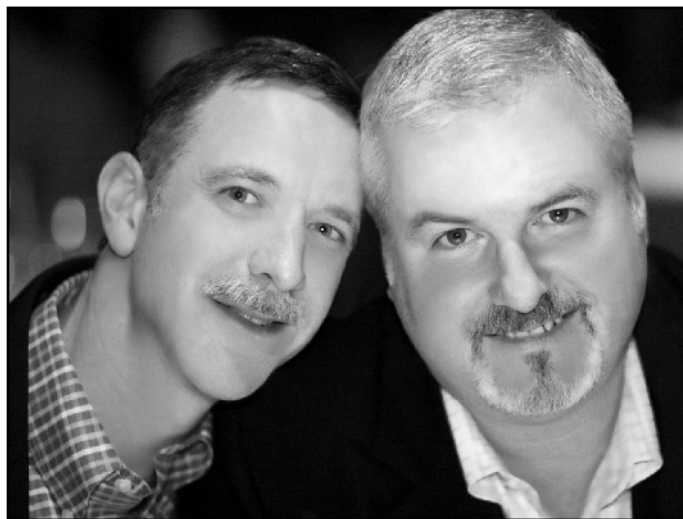
Please remember to vote "No on 8" November 4th, and encourage your friends and relatives to do so as well.

We welcome you to join us in continuing our marriage celebration at the reception. As we say in our native homeland of Louisiana "Laissez les Bon Temps Rouler!" (Let the Good Times Roll!).

Sincerely,

John and Ken

In lieu of wedding gifts, John and Ken invited family and friends to donate to the NO on 8 campaign at their wedding register URL address. As of November 10, 2008, contributions total \$5,075.



(L to R) John Ducote & Ken Barnes

## Connecticut Supreme Court legalizes same-sex marriage

On October 10, 2008, the Supreme Court of Connecticut, in a 4-3 decision, ruled that same-sex couples have a constitutional right to marry. Writing for the majority, Justice Richard N. Palmer claimed that in light of the historical discrimination of gay men and lesbians, and because Connecticut's civil union law lacks the status of a real marriage, "segregation of heterosexual and homosexual couples into separate institutions constitutes a cognizable harm."

Frank O'Gorman, director of People of Faith Connecticut and member of DignityUSA, in an interview by the New Haven Register, said "This victory for human dignity is a victory for all people who are discriminated against based on their sex, race, ethnicity, ability, gender expression or any other immutable God-given aspect of their being. Today, one of the most marginalized and dehumanized groups in society is taking its rightful place at the marriage table. This ruling has been centuries in the making and many months in anticipation."

Every 20 years the question has to appear on the ballot as to whether or not there should be a constitutional convention. Connecticut's Constitution doesn't allow for ballot initiatives. There are some groups that want to write a provision for that in the state constitution. The November 2008 general election ballot Question 1 read, "Shall there be a Constitutional Convention to amend or revise the Constitution of the State?"

Shortly after the Supreme Court ruling legalizing marriage for same-sex couples, there was a push in fund-raising and advertising for the passage of Question 1. The biggest supporters of the Yes side were the Family Institute of Connecticut, associated with James Dobson's Focus on the Family, and the Connecticut Catholic Bishops through the Connecticut Catholic Conference — another unholy alliance. The measure failed with YES 39% and NO 61% leaving same-sex couples access to marriage.

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## Arkansas Unmarried Couple Adoption Ban

The Initiative Act No. 1 on the Arkansas November 2008 general election ballot read, "An Act Providing that an Individual who is Cohabiting Outside of a Valid Marriage May Not Adopt or be a Foster Parent of a Child Less than Eighteen Years Old." While proposed primarily to prohibit same-sex couples from being adoptive or foster parents, it applies to all otherwise qualified couples who are not legally married.

The initiative is the result of a Supreme Court case ruling about the Arkansas Child Welfare Review Board that had established an administrative policy that banned gay people from serving as foster parents. The policy was struck down

unanimously after a seven year battle between the state and the ACLU.

The Arkansas Family Council, associated with James Dobson's Focus on the Family, attempted to push a bill through the Arkansas legislature in 2007 that would have banned same-sex adoption or foster care. Governor Mike Beebe had suggested that there were constitutional problems with the proposed bill and it never came to pass.

The Family Council resorted to the initiative process which was certified and resulted in the Initiative Act No. 1 as described above. The Unmarried Couple Adoption Ban was approved with 57% of the vote. The sponsor was the Family Council Action Committee.

My investigation at the Internet Web sites for the Arkansas Catholic Conference, Diocese of Little Rock and the Arkansas Catholic — official diocesan newspaper — disclosed that a new bishop was ordained and installed in June 2008. However, I found nothing showing active support — financial or otherwise — in favor of the initiative.

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## Closing Commentary: Words, Actions and What Next?

Documents and pastoral guidelines issued by The Vatican on the matter of pastoral care of homosexual persons admonish against abuse, violence and injustice directed towards homosexual persons.

Pastoral guidelines in *Always Our Children* — twice-issued by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops — convey the same admonitions, extend welcome to homosexual persons and their family and advocate for their active participation in the Catholic Church.

In a Catholic News Service story of November 7, 2008, mention is made about a post-election statement made by Cardinal Roger M. Mahony, of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, wherein he spoke about one of the biggest misunderstandings, namely, that the church's opposition to same-sex marriage indicates a rejection of homosexual persons as people.

Cardinal Mahony said, "Proposition 8 is not against any group in our society. Its sole focus is on preserving God's plan for people living upon this earth throughout time. The Catholic Church understands that there are people who choose to live together in relationships other than traditional marriage. All of their spiritual, pastoral and civil rights should be respected, together with their membership in the church."

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*Closing Commentary: Words, Actions and What Next?*  
Continued from page 11

If that was intended as an apology, it is most disingenuous. Is he saying that the loss and denial of civil marriage rights for same-gender couples is a misfortunate by-product or collateral damage?

James Dobson's Focus on the Family, along with its subdivisions and associates — Dobson's mega-buck industry —, has a long history of documents and actions directed towards the disenfranchisement of homosexual persons, including the non-recognition and removal of human and civil rights to include domestic partnerships and associated benefits. They are the predominant force in the use of referendums and state initiative processes to implement their agenda, as well as use the media to discredit homosexual persons using fear-mongering tactics, lies and deceit.

Here are a few examples taken from the Arizona Yes on Prop 102 website <http://www.prop102.com/prop102.html>

It is estimated that, since 2006, approximately 20,000 heterosexual marriages have failed in Arizona due to inadequate protections from the possibility of activist judges ruling in favor of some future homosexual plaintiffs. State authorities fear that we may be on a slippery slope of failed heterosexual marriages and broken families if we don't take immediate action to pass Prop 102.

Additionally, the legality of gay marriage in California sent out powerful shockwaves of destructive gay energy throughout the country. Without an amendment to our constitution specifically barring homosexuals from obtaining marriage rights, this destructive force will continue to turn thousands of upright, decent straight couples into deranged, out-of-control gay perverts.

New research from the Family Focus Forum (FFF) [**associated with James Dobson's Focus on the Family**] indicates that homosexuality may in fact be a **communicable disease**. In fact, many previously heterosexual men are now leaving their families for no apparent reason in order to [sic] pursue careers in fashion design and hair styling. One has only to tune in to Bravo to see how such shows as *Shear Genius* or *Project Runway* are transforming popular culture toward the sin of homosexuality. (*Bold text mine*).

If the contents of the first four paragraphs of this closing commentary represent honest comments and teaching

by The Vatican, USCCB and bishops of the United States, then why do our prelates and members of the USCCB, state Catholic Conferences, the Knights of Columbus and other Catholic organizations align themselves with Focus on the Family and its associates, Pastor Fred Phelps and The Westboro Baptist Church and similar groups, as well as providing supportive funding of their activities?

To quote the adage, "Actions speak louder than words."

### What Next?

Perhaps the first thing needed is healing. Feelings of loss and anger are justified, especially in view of the tactics employed in the campaigns to deny marriage equality. Peaceful protests and boycotts are appropriate. Violence, personal injuries and property damage are not only inappropriate, they are counterproductive in our bid for social justice and equality. Vandalism to homes, churches, businesses and other properties further enrages those we need for achieving these goals.

Several legal suits have been filed in California contesting both the initiative process and the implementation of withdrawal and denial of civil rights and equal access to marriage deemed appropriate by supreme court rulings in four states.

We can look at the good that has come out of the battle such as coalition building, education and changes in society towards more favorable acceptance of the GLBT community and equal rights. On the matter of marriage equality in California, we have gone from the outcome of Proposition 22 in the year 2000 with 61.35% FOR and 38.65% AGAINST, and for Proposition 8 in 2008 with 52.46% FOR and 47.54% AGAINST.

It behooves us as individuals, Chapters, faith communities and DignityUSA to call into question the alliances being forged by our bishops with organizations such as Focus on the Family and its associates whose mission is to "uproot homosexuality" and point up the inconsistency with welcome and pastoral care towards homosexual persons.

In a feeling of hope and progress, we need to be appreciative of, maintain and enlarge the base of our allies and support groups, especially the new ones forged during the election campaigns.

The following is excerpted from an open letter issued in conjunction with the November 10-13 Fall 2008 General Meeting of the USCCB in Baltimore, Maryland:

Today, as the U.S. bishops begin their meeting in Baltimore, we express our dismay regarding the bishops' use of significant resources — including \$200,000 toward Proposition 8 in California — to block same-gender couples from access to the rights and

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*Closing Commentary: Words, Actions and What Next?*  
*Continued from page 12*

responsibilities of civil marriage. We are opposed to ballot initiatives against same-gender marriage because this takes the dangerous path of putting the fundamental civil rights of a class of U.S. citizens up for a vote. As faithful Catholics, we support the broadening of the definition of civil marriage to be inclusive of same-gender couples.

We believe strongly that efforts to “protect marriage” must focus on expanding legislation and programs that protect all families and aid them in the areas where they most need it — education, child care, healthcare, and employment. To ignore the real challenges faced by all families, and to demonize families headed by same-gender couples, is offensive to all who follow the Catholic social justice tradition. Gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people want and will continue to form families — with and without children. To grant equal rights and responsibilities provided by civil marriage to these individuals will only serve to strengthen the very family and social ties that our bishops say they so passionately want to protect. To do less contradicts the Gospel message of Jesus Christ.

We ask the bishops as they meet this week in Baltimore to address the issues that actually contribute to the breakdown in the family. We state our unequivocal support for marriage, which includes expanding the definition of civil marriage rights to be inclusive of same-gender couples. Supporting marriage equality is the right and just thing to do. It is the Catholic thing to do.

Association for the Rights of Catholics in the Church  
 Call To Action  
 Catholics For Choice  
 CORPUS, Linda Pinto  
 DignityUSA  
 FOSIL (Fellowship of Southern Illinois Laity)  
 National Coalition of American Nuns  
 Southeastern Pennsylvania Women's Ordination Conference

ference

New Ways Ministry  
 Pax Christi Maine  
 RAPPORT  
 Women's Ordination Conference  
 WomenChurch Convergence

- Other signs of hope and actions to be taken:
- pro-marriage equality demonstration in cities around the nation. The largest, coordinated nationwide protest will occur on Saturday, November 15, 2008, 1:30 p.m. Eastern, 10:30 a.m. Pacific. <http://jointheimpact.wetpaint.com/?t=anon>
  - strengthening of coalitions in support of marriage equality and equal family rights
  - more work through the court systems
  - building bridges with people of color to help break down the barriers and assist in the coming-out process to members of their family and community
  - get out better messages of commonality with our straight brothers and sisters with respect to similar pursuits of love, happiness and family
  - since the messages from religious groups held so much sway — even though most were used in fear-mongering — we need to be more assertive about the role of religion and spirituality in our lives even if this antagonizes those in the GLBT community who hold forth that religion is our greatest oppressor
  - some members of our LGBT community have challenged the activist approach of hiding who we are in the media and the absence of gay couples and families in the NO on 8 campaign advertising.



## TRANSITIONS

### In MEMORIAM

### BIRTHS

### ADOPTIONS

### MARRIAGES

John Ducote and Ken Barnes of San Francisco, partners for over 27 years, were married in Berkeley, CA on October 10, 2008.

### HOLY UNIONS

### WEDDING/UNION ANNIVERSARIES

Please send DignityUSA member name(s) of the affected person(s) and event to Peggy Burns, Operations Manager, by email to [info@dignityusa.org](mailto:info@dignityusa.org) or by phone 800-877-8797.

For example, in events such as births and adoptions, the name(s) of parent(s) and child or children, or number of girls or boys, and Chapter affiliation or city and state. In events such as marriage or holy union, the names of the couple and Chapter affiliation or city and state.



## Dignity Discussion Group

Are you interested in engaging in a lively, on-line discussion group that covers everything from GLBT & Catholic concerns to the current political scene, as well as the personal vignettes of contributing members? Because the group is moderated, spam, irrelevant topics and personal attacks are not allowed. The number of postings range from several hundred to over a thousand per month! Check out the group: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/dignity-1/>, read some of the postings, and if it piques your interest, apply to join! Following is a testimonial posted on September 10, 2008:

“As you will no doubt agree, this has been and continues to be a wonderful list and I count myself blessed to have found it. Lists, like any other grouping or organization, are only as good as the people involved and the stability of this list says a lot about the people here.”

## Transgender Survey

Dear Colleagues in the Pro-LGBT Religious Movement,

I write to ask that you spread the word (if you haven't already) about a new survey (and one that promises to be the largest ever) on the lives of gender non-conforming people. I intentionally use the language gender non-conforming because this survey is intended to expand our knowledge not only of folks who identify as transgender but also those who fall on the continuum of gender non-conformity.

The importance of the survey cannot be overstated. Currently there is almost NO research on the lives of transgender and gender non-conforming people. This survey allows for accurate and good information to get out in order to support advocacy and other social justice work with and on behalf of transgender and gender non-conforming folks.

To date, we have over 2,900 responses — this is within the first week of the survey's launch. The largest study ever done on trans folks had 3,200 respondents. So this is truly an amazing opportunity.

The survey can be found at: <https://online.survey.psu.edu/endtransdiscrim/>

If you identify as transgender or gender non-conforming, please fill out the survey. If you know of anyone who does, please share it with them. Please send it to any of your lists, too.

Thank you for your collegiality and support with this important project!

Rev. Rebecca Voelkel  
 Institute for Welcoming Resources and Faith Work Director  
 The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force  
 810 W. 31st Street  
 Minneapolis, MN 55408  
 612.821.4397  
[rvoelkel@theTaskForce.org](mailto:rvoelkel@theTaskForce.org)  
[Rebecca@WelcomingResources.org](mailto:Rebecca@WelcomingResources.org)  
[www.WelcomingResources.org](http://www.WelcomingResources.org)



HUMAN  
RIGHTS  
CAMPAIGN®

## HRC SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

The much anticipated *For the Bible Tells Me So: A Study Guide and Advocacy Training Curriculum* by Rev. Chris Glaser is now available through HRC's Religion and Faith Program **online and free of charge** [www.hrc.org/issues/religion/10750.htm](http://www.hrc.org/issues/religion/10750.htm)

Created to accompany the award-winning, life changing film *For the Bible Tells Me So*, this user-friendly guide will enable anyone to facilitate a moving conversation about the Bible, our congregations and LGBT people. It will empower you and participants to take these conversations to the next level to create communities that move beyond acceptance to advocacy.

The guide is divided into three parts: (1) a discussion of the feelings the film evokes about our families and our faith; (2) a conversation about the Bible—both how it is often used to discriminate against LGBT people and how it is a source of empowerment and liberation; (3) a step-by-step training to move people of faith and congregations from acceptance to public advocacy.

Normally, the cost to show videos in public settings (including congregations) is quite high. However, through HRC you can now purchase the DVD and an accompanying educational license for only \$50.00 **as long as you agree to use the study guide**. This bargain rate is only available through HRC Store.\*

<http://hrccornerstore.myimagefirst.com/store/product.asp?sku=11798L>

*\*Please note: It is illegal to show this film in any public setting (including a congregation) without an educational license.*

Further details <http://www.hrc.org/issues/religion/10750.htm>



## Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies in Religion and Ministry

### EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies in Religion and Ministry (CLGS) has opened a search for a Director of Programming. The Director of Programming will develop, coordinate, and oversee all national programming for the Center including the OutFront Program, the Living OutFront Initiative, and various conferences and programs that the Center conducts throughout the year. The Director will also develop, coordinate, and oversee all local programming for the Center including the Lavender Lunch Program, local lectures, on-campus CLGS programming and various conferences and programs that the Center conducts throughout the year.

For a list of qualifications and a more detailed job announcement, visit the jobs page at the Pacific School of Religion (PSR) website — <http://www.psr.edu/job-posting/clgs-director-programming> .

Candidates should submit a letter of application addressing specifically the qualifications of this position, resume, and contact information for three references to Bernard Schlager, CLGS Deputy Director, Pacific School of Religion, 1798 Scenic Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94709. Email: [bschlager@psr.edu](mailto:bschlager@psr.edu).

Applications received by **November 10, 2008** will receive first consideration.

Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.

PSR is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer.

## 10th Annual Transgender Day of Remembrance is Thursday, November 20, 2008.



Transgender Day of Remembrance is held in communities and DignityUSA Chapters around the country to memorialize those who were killed due to anti-transgender violence or prejudice. Day of Remembrance publicly mourns and honors the lives of transgender people who might otherwise be forgotten. The event is held in November to honor Rita Hester, whose murder kicked off the “Remembering Our Dead” web project and a San Francisco candlelight vigil in 1999. Rita Hester’s murder — like most anti-transgender murder cases — has yet to be solved.

We live in times more sensitive than ever to hatred based violence, especially since the events of September 11th. Yet even now, the deaths of those based on anti-transgender hatred or prejudice are largely ignored. Over the last decade, more than one person per month has died due to transgender-based hate or prejudice, regardless of any other factors in their lives. This trend shows no sign of abating.

More information is at <http://www.rememberingourdead.org/day/what.html>

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## Mid-Atlantic Leather Weekend 2009

Defenders Washington (DC) invites all Defenders, their spouses, dates, potential members and friends to join us in celebrating Mid-Atlantic Leather Weekend 2009 in Washington DC! The event will be held Friday – Sunday, January 16-18, 2009, at the Washington Plaza Hotel, 10 Thomas Circle, NW, Washington, DC 20005.

**Lodging:** Since it is the Inaugural weekend, the room availability will be very limited and many guests will not be able to extend their stay thru Monday night, January 19, 2009, as the hotel rates change to a different rate at that point!

Event Sponsored Hotels -- See <http://www.leatherweekend.com/hotel.php>

Staying with local Defenders – We have several Washington DC area members willing to host visiting Defenders. Please notify the Chapter contact below as soon as possible so we can get a head count to the Washington DC Chapter membership. NOTE: The majority of our Chapter members do not live in downtown Washington DC. Please keep this in mind if you plan to stay with Defenders Washington members.

Contact Fred Bowers ([fabowers@aol.com](mailto:fabowers@aol.com)) for details. Please use “Defenders MAL 2009 Lodging” as the subject of your email.

More details about Mid-Atlantic Leather Weekend 2009 are available at <http://www.leatherweekend.com>.

More information on the Defenders is at <http://www.dignityusa.org/defenders>.

