



# Dateline

Monthly News Bulletin  
Volume 16, No. 7  
July 2007

*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.*

## Contents:

- Leadership Day at Convention — 1
- Looking for Some Writers/Reporters — 1
- Breath of the Spirit — 2
- Pride Appeal — 2
- Chapter Events — 2
- Dignity/Columbus & Dignity/Dayton — 2
- Dignity/Los Angeles — 3
- Dignity/New York — 3
- Dignity/Seattle — 3
- Dignity/Southern Colorado — 3
- Religious Institute on Sexual Morality, Justice and Healing Releases Open Letter — 4
- Women's Justice Coalition Expresses Appreciation for Work of Linda Rieder — 4
- Retreat for Lesbian, Bisexual, and Questioning (LBQ) Women of Faith — 4
- Sister Jeannine Gramick to Lead GLBT-Friendly Pilgrimage — 4

## DIGNITYUSA CONVENTION 2007

### Leadership Day at Convention, Thursday, July 5, 2007

DignityUSA will sponsor a Leadership Day at its Convention 2007 on Thursday, July 5, 2007, 9:00 a.m. To 3:00 p.m.

Spirituality is a key component to our Dignity chapters. How can we work on overcoming obstacles? There are many chapters where things are working. But what does one do when there are no priests to preside? Why do so few people come forth to participate, to lead, to help out?

Come and listen to Rosemary, Dick, Kathy Ann and John. Hear what they have to share. How did they arrive at the point they are at now? They don't have any magic formula, just suggestions and ideas.

Come and dream big. What changes or additions would you like to see in your liturgies? Lay-led liturgies, co-presiding, family participation, prayer services, music selections and many more ideas will be presented.

Come and share your success story. What works in your community?

*Continues next column*

DignityUSA, P.O. Box 15373, Washington, DC 20003-5373  
Phone: 1-800-877-8797  
Fax: 1-202-543-5511  
Email: [info@dignityusa.org](mailto:info@dignityusa.org)  
Website: <http://www.dignityusa.org>  
DATELINE Editor: Bill Welch, [DUSAEditor@comcast.net](mailto:DUSAEditor@comcast.net)

In the afternoon, the leadership day team wants all participants to bring something brief to share with the group, such as a quote, a song lyric, an image, a prayer, etc., to provoke discussion on how these little things have been spiritually inspiring.

Please make sure you sign "yes" for the leadership conference on your registration form. If you have already sent in your form, please let the national office know you wish to attend: [info@dignityusa.org](mailto:info@dignityusa.org), or by phone 1-800-877-8797.

## Looking for Some Writers/Reporters

By Leo Egashira

Calling all writers from Texas! (Non-Texans welcome, too!) Are you good at injecting some Texas Twang or barbecue-flavored language in reporting the upcoming DignityUSA Austin Convention?

I'm recruiting 2-4 DignityUSA Texas writers who can pen brief paragraphs or articles on the opening ceremonies, keynote speech, a few workshops, the membership meeting, awards presented at the dinner/dance, etc. I'm not looking for detailed coverage of every little activity, but rather, a feeling for the convention that can be conveyed to the rest of Dignityland in the upcoming issue of the *QV*: Quarterly Voice.

You can write as much or as little as you wish: One event, or better yet, one subject a day. I can coordinate topics to be covered, so that we won't have four people writing on one topic and no one writing about another major event.

*Continues on page 2*

**DignityUSA**  
**18th Biennial Convention**  
**Austin, TX**  
**Thu-Sun, July 5-8, 2007**

For detailed convention activities,  
schedule and registration form, visit:  
[www.dignityusa.org/convention07/index.html](http://www.dignityusa.org/convention07/index.html)

*Looking for Some Writers/Reporters  
Continued from page 1*

*Editor's Comment: Plain English notes, reports or articles will work just fine.*

Please contact Leo Egashira, at (206) 214-7954 (cell) or at his hotel room in the Hyatt Regency Austin (512) 477-1234 after July 2, 2007. Unsolicited submissions after the convention sent to my e-mail address [Legashira@yahoo.com](mailto:Legashira@yahoo.com) will also be welcomed.



In October 2003, Sam Sinnett, President, suggested a new concept for the membership to our National Board of Directors. In line with our Statement of Position and Purpose, he felt DignityUSA needed a new pastoral and liturgical interface with our members and potential members. He thought a scripture homily would be beneficial to individual members, as well as to chapters to supplement their incredibly valuable efforts in ministry. After much thought and discussion, we began *Breath of the Spirit* in August 2004. Each week a homily is disseminated on the DignityUSA News List.

To subscribe for weekly copies of this publication, please go to <http://lists.dignityusa.org/mailman/listinfo/dusa-news>.

DignityUSA maintains a library of these homilies on our website, building an impressive written pastoral support resource at the national level. Please visit: <http://www.dignityusa.org/breath/spirit.html>.

Most of the homilies are Weekly Scriptural Essays, written under the pseudonym RVC, but other authors have been included. Submissions—either regularly or one time—are welcome to be considered for inclusion.

After nearly three years, what do DignityUSA members think about *Breath of the Spirit*? Here are a few comments:

“These commentaries are very inspiring. Thank you very much. God did indeed choose us to be his/her own before creating us.... Best regards.”

“Nicely done. Enjoy your thoughts.”

“I’m writing to simply say thanks to whoever writes these scripture reflections. They are wonderful! Consistently the best I’ve seen. I suggest that they be packaged into booklets for each cycle of the Church year and offered for sale. Blessings!”

“I am remiss in thanking you for sending the commentaries on the Sunday readings. What a wonderful service.”

“Thank you for posting the *Breath of the Spirit* for Sunday, Dec. 17, 2006. This is very powerful and inspiring and has touched my heart!”

“I truly appreciate your splendid exposition of *hesed*. I shall try to practice it and disseminate the concept.” (from Feb. 18, 2007)

“I enjoyed your discourse on Rahner’s four changes in Christianity since the time of Christ.” (from May 13, 2007)

*Continues next column*

“I am not sure if we can post this on our website, but if it is possible, would you mind if we shared it with our members? If so, to whom would I credit the writing? You? DignityUSA?”

Should any member wish to share the homilies with others, please credit: “*Breath of the Spirit*, DignityUSA’s Weekly Spiritual Essay by RVC.”

## Pride Appeal

If you have not yet responded to the Pride Appeal letter mailed in June, 2007, please do so today. Take pride in DignityUSA and make a gift in support of its vital mission.

You can use the reply coupon attached to the letter, or go to [www.dignityusa.org/mem\\_reg/index.html](http://www.dignityusa.org/mem_reg/index.html) and make your gift securely on line.

Your support has a direct impact on the number and scope of programs DignityUSA can provide. Help us expand and grow our work in advocacy and ministry. Take Pride in your membership in DignityUSA.

## CHAPTER EVENTS



### Dignity/Columbus & Dignity/Dayton

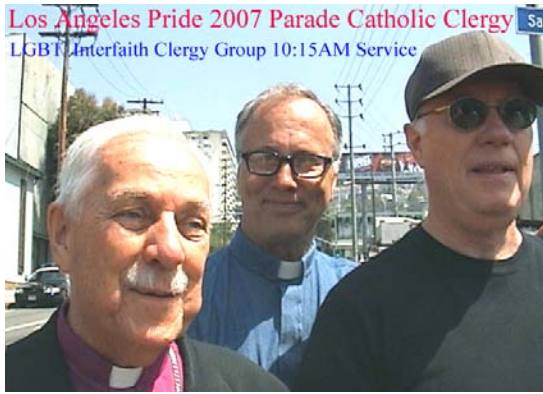
Members of Dignity/Columbus and Dignity/Dayton (OH) marched in the Columbus, Ohio Pride Parade on Saturday, June 23, 2007. Reported as this year’s largest Pride Parade between the District of Columbia and Chicago by The Advocate magazine, over 100,000 people lined the parade route. The parade contingent’s signs “Proudly Gay - Proudly Catholic” generated lots of welcoming and supportive cheers along the route.

Pictured left to right with permission: Mark Matson, Chris Stringer and Joe Gallagher.

*Chapter Events continues on page 3*

**Happy Anniversary  
& Congratulations to:**

**Honolulu, HI - 31 years  
Central Pennsylvania, PA - 32 years**



### Dignity/Los Angeles (CA)

Three members of Dignity/Los Angeles were the “Catholic” representatives of the LGBTQI Interfaith Clergy Association’s 10:15 a.m. Morning Service at the Los Angeles Pride Parade on Sunday, June 10, 2007. The service included song, praise, prayer, remembrances and the blessing of the people and the parade.

Pictured left to right with permission: Bishop Robert M. Clement and Fr. Adrian of the American Catholic Church, and Fr. Kevin, a presider for Dignity/Los Angeles.

Bishop Clement, founder of the first historic gay/lesbian Church of the Beloved Disciple in Manhattan, NY (1969-1987), now has a church in Los Angeles.

### Dignity/New York (NY)

Celebrating its 35-year history, Dignity/New York had a great Gay Pride weekend beginning with a historic and very moving Pride liturgy on Saturday evening, June 23, 2007, with a Roman Catholic Woman Priest, Rev. Victoria Rue, presiding for the very first time. A woman priest presider was a first in the chapter’s history. About 350 people were in attendance, with many new faces (especially women) chapter leaders had not seen before. There were 15 to 20 Call to Action members present.



On Sunday, June 24<sup>th</sup>, religious organizations had a prominent first section position in the New York City Pride Parade. Dignity/New York had a float, a giant rainbow flag and 50-person marching contingent. The chapter’s contingent appeared on no fewer than 6 major television local television stations. No sound bites, but great visuals!

In a 2-minute impromptu interview done on the street in the middle of the parade, Jeff Stone, chapter secretary, said he was hopeful the church would someday change its stance in opposition to homosexuality. “We see that the opinion of ordinary Catholics is changing. Eventually what happens at the grass roots percolates up in the church.”

### Dignity/Seattle (WA)

Dignity/Seattle hosted its 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Pride Breakfast on Saturday, June 23, 2007. Nearly \$2,000 was raised to support AIDS/terminal illness, women’s health and Dignity/Seattle.

Pictured with permission: The Kitchen Crew



### Dignity/Southern Colorado (CO)

Dignity/Southern Colorado celebrated its 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a chapter cookout on Saturday evening, June 16, 2007.

Pictured left to right with permission: Mark Newman, President; Michael Solano, Past President, and Bernard L. McNamara, Secretary-Treasurer.



## Religious Institute on Sexual Morality, Justice and Healing Releases Open Letter

On June 4, 2007, a coalition of national faith leaders issued an "Open Letter to Religious Leaders on Sexual and Gender Diversity." The document was developed at a colloquium of theologians sponsored by the Religious Institute on Sexual Morality, Justice and Healing. The participants included theologians and ordained clergy from Jewish, Baptist, Brethren, Episcopal, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic, United Church of Christ and Unitarian Universalist traditions.

The historic proclamation challenges religious leaders to use the pulpit to address the complex realities of diversity and to advocate in secular and faith-based contexts for justice and full inclusion of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons. That includes advocating for the ordination of LGBT clergy, family recognition and marriage equality.

Founded in 2001, the Religious Institute on Sexual Morality, Justice, and Healing is a multi-faith organization dedicated to advocating for sexual health, education, and justice in faith communities and society as expressed in a vision statement, "All persons have the right and responsibility to lead sexual lives that express love, justice, mutuality, commitment, consent, and pleasure."

A link to the "Open Letter to Religious Leaders on Sexual and Gender Diversity" will be found at <http://www.religioustheology.org/diversity.html>.

Further information on the organization will be found at <http://www.religioustheology.org>.

---

## Women's Justice Coalition Expresses Appreciation for Work of Linda Rieder

In the March 2007 Dateline, we reported the death of our beloved friend Linda Rieder, as well as recognizing her long-time volunteer activism in the Catholic Church and work at the local, regional and national level on behalf of DignityUSA and Call to Action.

In the Acknowledgements section of the "State of Women in the U.S. Roman Catholic Church: A Report Card, Women's Justice Coalition, 5/22/2007," is the following. "We especially wish to thank the family of Linda Reider, a church reform activist from San Diego, Calif. She courageously took on the laborious task of data entry while recovering from surgery for brain cancer. She died before we were able to complete the study. This project was, literally, her dying contribution to the church she loved. Thank you to her husband, Larry, and her daughters, Jane and Monica, for sharing her precious last days with us."

The **Women's Justice Coalition** is a coalition of organizations for reform and renewal within the Roman Catholic Church in a variety of ways. **Catholics Speak Out**, a program of the **Quixote Center**, coordinates the coalition.

For more information on the coalition and its Report Card Project visit <http://womensjusticecoalition.org>.

## Announcements

### Retreat for Lesbian, Bisexual, and Questioning (LBQ) Women of Faith

The Sisters of Loretto Community will host "Called to Become: Reflections on Sexuality and Faith," a retreat for lesbian, bisexual, and questioning (LBQ) women of faith.

The event will be held at the Sisters of Loretto Motherhouse, in Nerinx, KY, outside of Louisville, Saturday, September 15, 2007, 9:00 a.m. through Sunday, September 16, 2007, 1:00 p.m. The cost is \$40/night per person (negotiable based on ability to pay).

Facilitators: Amy Stenson, Anna Koop, Molly Menster, and Tina Sio.

Retreatants will reflect and pray on "becoming" as a lesbian/bisexual/questioning person of faith and connect with people with similar interests.

For more information please contact Molly Menster (563) 564-9944.

---

### Sister Jeannine Gramick to Lead GLBT-Friendly Pilgrimage

Sr. Jeannine Gramick, SL, will be leading a GLBT-friendly pilgrimage to Sicily, Naples and Rome, March 4-14, 2008.

Further information is available on the New Ways Ministry web site at [www.newwaysministry.org/2007PilgrimageBrochure.pdf](http://www.newwaysministry.org/2007PilgrimageBrochure.pdf) or phone Sister Jeannine at (301) 864-3604, or e-mail [gramick@juno.com](mailto:gramick@juno.com).