



# Dateline

Monthly News Bulletin  
Volume 16, No. 5  
May 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.*

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## Candidates Announced

The DignityUSA Executive and Nominations Committees are pleased to announce the following candidates following the closure of the extended nominations process on April 30, 2007.

President/Vice-President Slate: Mark Matson (Dignity/Columbus OH) and Lourdes Rodriguez-Nogues (Dignity/Boston MA).

For the National Board of Directors: Gene Corpuz (Dignity/Honolulu HI), Marty Grochala (Dignity/Chicago IL) and Ramon Rodriguez (Dignity/Chicago IL, living in Puerto Rico).

When submitting their slate nomination, Mark Matson and Lourdes Rodriguez-Nogues addressed these remarks to the DignityUSA National Board of Directors:

“We have informed the Executive Committee and Nominations Committee of our decision to present our talent and time in service to DignityUSA in the roles of President and Vice President respectfully. Our decision follows the Board decision to divide the responsibilities of the office of President; and the general tenor of responses to the recent “State of Dignity” document that we have circulated.

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“Our partners and chapters have offered their support, along with other DignityUSA leaders.

“ Our most important supporters will be the Board members themselves. We are both feeling quite positive about shaping a new direction for DignityUSA with you.”

Mark and Lourdes bring a lot of experience as chapter and national leaders of DignityUSA, as well as a vision for DignityUSA to continue to be a spiritual home for GLBT people of faith and a voice for the message of justice and peace alive in the Gospel.

They recognize that the Spirit is alive and that DignityUSA’s mission is still current and viable.

The elected President/Vice-President slate and candidates to the national board of directors will assume their duties on October 1, 2007, for a period of two years.

The Board of Directors thanks the Nominations Committee for their energies and assistance throughout the nominations process.

Ballots for the national election, to be mailed to members in May, must be returned by June 30, 2007.

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

**Registration Deadline  
Extended to May 31, 2007**

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

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## National Board of Directors Meets at Convention Site

The DignityUSA Board of Directors met in Austin, TX the weekend of March 30-April 1, 2007. They met at the Hyatt Regency Austin on Town Lake, the site for our 18th Biennial Convention to be held July 5-8, 2007. The directors were very impressed with the accommodations and staff of the Hyatt. The hotel sits right on the river with a great view and nice walking paths. The rooms are all newly renovated and quite comfortable. The lobby is complete with a river running through it. The directors are looking forward to a great week in Austin in July and hope all members will come and join us.

The meeting began with the traditional sharing of items to celebrate. Some of these Celebrations include:

- Grateful thanks to Lewis Tanner and Gabino Cabanilla for their service to the Board.
- Grateful thanks for the life and service of Bob Lohrentz (Dignity/Denver) for his service on the national board of directors and for his generous gift of his estate to DignityUSA.
- Grateful thanks for the life and service of Linda Rieder (Dignity/San Diego) for her service on the national board of directors.
- Thanks to Leo Egashira and the Communications Committee for their outstanding work.
- Fundraising Committee is working well.
- New office at the Dignity Center is set up and running. Dignity/Washington and DignityUSA are both happy with the arrangement. Thanks to all who helped with the move and unpacking. Special thanks to Michael Seneco, Office Manager, for his work in getting the office moved.
- Convention 2007 plans are coming along. Liturgy Committee has been organized and planning is moving ahead.
- Several chapters have stepped forward with donations and sponsorship of convention speakers.
- The Ohio chapters held a membership meeting where good discussion occurred.

### Committee Reports —

Highlights of the discussions are:

- Fundraising: Processes are in place to track donations made in response to appeals. Looking at grant options and estate donations. Still evaluating new software programs to track membership and donations.
- Finance: Donations were down in Feb/Mar 2007. Audit has been rescheduled several times upon request of auditor. Committee looking at best practices for obtaining and handling estate gifts.
- Human Resources: Do we want/need an executive director or development director? Assessment of office management/staff situations.
- Nominations: Shortage of candidates. Nominations extended to April 30, 2007.
- Convention 2009: San Diego unable to host as planned. San Francisco has people interested.
- Convention 2007: Plans coming along. Speakers in place. Registration packets mailed to members.

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- Membership Growth and Membership Meetings: New ideas are surfacing. Further discussions will be held in July 2007.
- Marketing: Need to redesign committee and assess needs.

A few topics surfaced over the weekend in which long discussions took place:

- No minimum dues policy: Has it worked? Does it accomplish what we wanted? Would members be more committed to DignityUSA if they did pay dues? A task force will be assembled to examine the current policy and make recommendations to the board to continue it or change it.
- Ways to share the responsibilities of the offices of president and vice president.
- How do we get more members involved? Volunteers are needed for committee work and projects.

During the Saturday afternoon session, members of the Convention 2007 committee joined the board to discuss progress and plans for the convention. A member of the Hyatt Regency Austin staff gave the directors a tour of the hotel meeting spaces and discussed options available.

The Board of Directors hopes to see many of our members at the convention in July. Several sessions are being set up to allow membership feedback to the board on some key issues facing DignityUSA.

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## Convention 2009 Possibilities?

In the minutes of the meeting of the National Board of Directors, held March 30 - April 1, 2007, in Austin, TX, shown above, mention is made that San Diego is unable to host Convention 2009 as planned.

Though not officially approved by the Board of Directors yet, there is a lot of energy in San Francisco for hosting DignityUSA's 40th Anniversary Convention in 2009.

Many of us recall DignityUSA's terrific 20th Anniversary Convention extravaganza in that wonderful City of St. Francis by the Bay.

Contact Mario Torrigino at [MarioDignity@aol.com](mailto:MarioDignity@aol.com) if you are interested in helping to plan and organize another fabulous San Francisco convention experience.

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## National Office Manager Resigns

DignityUSA accepted, with regret, the resignation of our Office Manager in Washington, D.C., Michael Seneco, effective May 4, 2007.

Michael informed DignityUSA President, Sam Sinnett, that he enjoyed serving DignityUSA during his three plus year tenure, but wished to focus full-time on building his ministry as the founder and current Father General of The Society of Pope Saint Anacletus, and Rector of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Old Catholic Church in Washington DC.

Michael faithfully served DignityUSA through several leadership transitions. Michael made personal sacrifices in this

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position, including no increase in pay and a temporary and voluntary decrease in working hours last year. He facilitated the move of our national office from Massachusetts Avenue to our new location in the Dignity Washington Center. We are grateful for his work and generous service and wish him well on his new path.

The Board of Directors has hired Peter Edwards, a twenty-year member of Dignity/Washington, to temporarily assume Michael's responsibilities, which include financial and member records maintenance, correspondence, and member relations. Peter has generously offered to serve the organization during this transfer, working with Board Member Tom Yates and with Michael in his last week to transfer knowledge of the operation.

Peter brings extensive experience as a marketing, production, logistics and event consultant and manager, as well as knowledge of our organization. Peter will work to document our core processes and will advise the Board on a succession plan. He will also work with our Database Manager, Richard Ressa.

Mark Matson, Chair of the Human Resources Committee of the Board, indicated that DignityUSA was in discussion with a local human resources management organization, which works exclusively with non-profit organizations, about working with Peter and the Board to assess DignityUSA's future staffing needs in the office.

## Happy Anniversary & Congratulations to:

**San Fernando Valley, CA - 11 years**

**Northern Virginia, VA - 15 years**

**\* Madison, WI - 30 years**

**Dayton, OH - 32 years**

**Detroit, MI - 33 years**

**Philadelphia, PA - 34 years**

**Chicago, IL - 35 years**

**San Diego, CA - 35 years**

**\* A Dignity/Integrity Chapter**

## Church Should Repent, Not Gays

By Bishop John Shelby Spong

Posted to the Internet by John Shelby Spong on March 1, 2007 8:20 AM

Reprinted with permission from Waterfront Media. See [www.johnshelbyspong.com](http://www.johnshelbyspong.com).

"Why would I form my belief about gay unions and gay clergy from my faith?"

"That is not where one goes for the knowledge that is the catalyst for destroying prejudice.



"Historically my faith has taught that sex was evil, that celibacy was the higher path of virtue, that marriage was a compromise with sin, that slavery was a legitimate human institution and that women were created to be second class citizens.

"Some have tried to use the old 'separate but equal' argument, but it did not work in segregationist America and it will not work for religious systems trying to justify their patriarchal sexism. With that kind of a track record why would anybody go to their faith tradition to inform their attitudes toward homosexuality?"

Is the Bible's presumed condemnation of homosexuality more virtuous or lasting than its commitment to polygamy, slavery or the hatred that God was portrayed as expressing for other religious traditions than that of the chosen people?

"The revolution in attitudes toward homosexual people in our generation has been fueled by the recognition that sexual orientation is neither a sickness that needs to be cured, nor a choice that needs to be challenged. It is also not a sin for which repentance is required.

"Homosexuality is one of the givens in the world of human experience. We are born with different hues of skin. We are born male and female, left-handed, right-handed, gay and straight. Acceptance of the givens in life is the first step into wholeness.

"The attempt in the name of religion to impose ancient and dying prejudices on any segment of the population is a sinful act. Many in the Christian Church at the highest levels of ecclesiastical leadership are today guilty of that sin.

"The repentance needed is not the repentance of homosexual people who are increasingly self-accepting people; the repentance that is needed must come from religious leaders and religious people whose ignorance on this subject has led the Christian Church to act toward gay and lesbian people in a way that violates everything that Christianity has ever taught.

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“Minds, even religious minds, will change. The alternative is that these minds will die and the minds of the next generation will change. Either way, however, religious homophobia is doomed.”

**NOTE: Bishop John Shelby Spong will be our keynote speaker at DignityUSA's Convention 2007 in Austin, TX.**

## Silent Auction at Convention 2007

The following was sent to some chapters during April 2007

Dear Dignity Chapter,

Your chapter has been sent information regarding a request for chapters to contribute to the Silent Auction Dignity USA fundraiser at the convention in Austin. This has been successful at past conventions and we hope your chapter will donate a package for this fundraiser.

Since individuals bidding on the chapter packages should be able to take them home in their suitcases, we ask that the items donated are not large or bulky. We suggest gift certificates for lodging, restaurants, shopping, or personal services, that would feature the best of your chapter city.

Please let me know as soon as you can if your chapter will be donating a package for the Silent Auction in July. You can contact me by email: [GeneCMSPH@aol.com](mailto:GeneCMSPH@aol.com). We hope you can contribute to this fundraiser and a successful convention.

Sincerely,  
Gene Corpuz  
Convention Silent Auction Committee

### Pastoral Care Letter Feedback

**We are eager to receive your comments about DignityUSA's Pastoral Care Letter of November 12, 2006.**

**For the complete text, see**

<http://www.dignityusa.org/pastoral/pastoral-1.html>.

**If any chapter or individual has any feedback about it, please send an e-mail with the subject heading "Pastoral Letter" to [info@dignityusa.org](mailto:info@dignityusa.org) as soon as possible.**

**Thank You.**

## Young Adults

From the Editor

In the March 2007 Dateline, mention was made that during some recent gatherings within DignityUSA, there were conversations and discussions by and with young adults on such items as:

- roles and participation within DignityUSA,
- needs differentiation,
- outlook on church, spirituality, community, human sexuality, human and social justice issues,
- contributions to shifting paradigms,
- views on leadership, mentors and ministry.

Such discussions merit our attention and further development.

I went on to say, “The next DignityUSA membership meeting will take place during our 18th Biennial Convention in Austin, TX. Realizing that many young adults will not be in attendance for numerous reasons, I believe we need to welcome and accommodate their voice. Therefore, as a prelude to that membership meeting, scheduled for Saturday, July 7, 2007, I invite our young adults to submit their needs, suggestions, and comments on what they are looking for and the contributions they can make, for consideration by and within DignityUSA at the national and local levels.”

I requested you send your input to my e-mail address and said, “We will report on your feedback in the *QV*: Quarterly Voice for the 2nd Quarter 2007.... This will allow for wider dissemination of young adults’ thoughts and concerns, as well as material for discussion during forthcoming membership and national board of directors meetings.”

I just released the referenced publication. You won’t find any of the suggested discussion therein. I am sorry to report that no input was received.

I understand an in-person opportunity will be available at the membership meeting scheduled for Saturday, July 7, 2007, at Convention 2007 in Austin, TX.

## Fundraising News:

### DIGNITY/Washington Sponsors Greek Cuisine Dinner and Social

On Saturday, April 28, 2007, about two dozen members of Dignity/Washington gathered at the Dignity Center to celebrate the Washington community’s support for DignityUSA. The food was Greek (spanikopita, baklava, galaktoboureko, retsina, etc.). There was a re-screening of “A Taste of Italian Cinema,” a collection of Italian film clips (compiled for the community’s St. Joseph’s Day dinner). It was a chance to support DignityUSA and enjoy the pleasure of each other’s company. About \$2,100 was raised and donated to DignityUSA. Thank you, generous donors and to Board Member, Tom Yates, who organized the fundraiser.

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**Interested in putting on a fundraiser for DignityUSA?**

Wine & cheese tasting? Progressive dinner? Spare change collection boxes? Silent auctions? Garage sales? For more ideas and suggestions on putting on a successful (and fun!) event, please contact DignityUSA National Board Member Tom Yates [tyates02@comcast.net](mailto:tyates02@comcast.net).

**May 2007 Chapter Anniversary Event Announcements**

**Dignity/Chicago 35th Anniversary Liturgy and Party on May 19**

Celebrating 35 years of service, the chapter is hosting a special liturgy, dinner & program at The New Center On Halsted (at Waveland), on Saturday, May 19<sup>th</sup>. Liturgy will commence at 5:00 p.m., followed by the dinner & program at 7:00 p.m. The keynote speaker will be Mary E. Hunt. Entertainment will be provided by Jeff Latergott.

Tickets for individuals are \$55 each; couples, \$100 each, and can be purchased on-line at [www.DignityChicago.org](http://www.DignityChicago.org). For further information, contact [mvcubs3@yahoo.com](mailto:mvcubs3@yahoo.com).

**Dignity/Detroit 33rd Anniversary Dinner & Dance on May 19; Anniversary Mass on May 20**

The celebration will be held at Park Place, 23400 Park St (at Outer Dr) in Dearborn, MI on Saturday, May 19<sup>th</sup>. Cocktails at 6:30 p.m., followed by dinner at 7:00 p.m.. Soulforce Equality Rider Brandon Kneefel will speak at dinner. Tickets are \$50 per person and must be purchased by May 13<sup>th</sup> (no tickets available at door).

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The following day, Sunday, May 20<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m., the Anniversary Mass will be celebrated at Sacred Heart Chapel, Marygrove College, Liberal Arts Building, 8425 W McNichols (at Wyoming).

For ticket purchases and more information, please contact Dignity/Detroit: 312/278-4786, [dignitydetroit74@yahoo.com](mailto:dignitydetroit74@yahoo.com) and [www.dignitydetroit.org](http://www.dignitydetroit.org).

**Dignity/Philadelphia 34th Anniversary Mass & Potluck Dinner on May 20**

The potluck dinner & community service award presentations will commence at 4:30 p.m., with the Special Anniversary Mass at 7:00 p.m., followed by a celebratory champagne & sparkling cider toast. The venue is the regular weekly mass location: 330 S 13th St (between Pine & Spruce Sts). Contact information: 215/546-2093 or [DignityPhila@aol.com](mailto:DignityPhila@aol.com).

**Integrity-Dignity/Madison 30th Anniversary Eucharistic Celebration & Social on May 26**

At St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church, 6205 University Ave in Madison, WI on Saturday, May 26<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. Our Pentecost Presider: The Rev. Maurine Lewis (host pastor). Homilist: Rev. Scott Anderson (Wisconsin Council of Churches): "Why should GLBT persons bother with organized religion?"

Following liturgy will be a reception featuring ham & turkey sandwiches, cake and other refreshments. Potluck contributions are welcome, but not required.

Please R.S.V.P. by email to [bjdiedergreen1@mac.com](mailto:bjdiedergreen1@mac.com).

*Editor's note: If your chapter is celebrating a special anniversary event, or is sponsoring a major community event, please provide details to Bill Welch, [DUSAEditor@comcast.net](mailto:DUSAEditor@comcast.net) or Leo Egashira, [Legashira@yahoo.com](mailto:Legashira@yahoo.com) by the 15th of the prior month.*

**DignityUSA Revenue & Expense Summary — 1 Oct 2006 to 31 Mar 2007**

<b>REVENUES</b>	<b>ACTUAL</b>	<b>BUDGET</b>	<b>VARIANCE</b>	<b>PERCENT</b>
General Unrestricted & Restricted Support	\$ 47,954	\$ 61,150	(\$ 13,196)	-22%
Fundraising Letters	18,550	20,125	(1,575)	-8%
In-Kind Board of Directors Contributions	7,661	3,500	4,161	119%
Other Revenue	5,599	5,965	(366)	-6%
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>79,764</b>	<b>90,740</b>	<b>(10,976)</b>	<b>-12%</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>				
Total Personnel & Staff Travel	35,867	38,062	2,195	6%
Total Operating Expenses	36,524	36,072	(452)	-1%
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>72,391</b>	<b>74,134</b>	<b>1,743</b>	<b>0%</b>
Excess/Deficit Revenue Over Expenses	7,373	16,606	(9,233)	-56%