



# DATELINE

## Monthly News Bulletin

April 2014

Vol. 23 No. 04

*DignityUSA works for respect and justice for people of all sexual orientations, genders, and gender identities—especially gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender persons—in the Catholic Church and the world through education, advocacy, and support.*

### This issue:

Update from the President	p. 1
DignityUSA Joins Fundraising Campaign	p. 2
Chapter/Caucus News	p. 3

## Update from the President

By Lourdes Rodriguez-Nogues, DignityUSA President



We are now in the midst of our Lenten season, and as believers we use this time as a preparation to celebrate the mystery of the Death and Resurrection of Christ Jesus.

In whatever way we have chosen to prepare our minds, bodies, and souls for the joy of Easter, we know that as a people rooted in the

promise of Redemption, our work does not end at the Easter Sunday celebration. Our faith calls us to faith in action, and to the work of building the kingdom of God. That is the exciting reality of the work of Dignity at the local and national levels.

Many of us currently participate in many local actions through our chapter or caucus affiliations. We continue to need that voice at the local level to be present in media statements; in local challenges to oppressive Church leaders and in support of all people unfairly treated by those forces; in working with local charities who serve the marginalized; in speaking about the truth of our faith and LGBT identity, and the list goes on.

Many of us have answered the call to work at the national level by being members of the Board of Directors of DignityUSA or one of its national committees. It is indeed an exciting time for our Dignity work. Pope Francis has been in office now for a year, and he has not ceased to amaze us. That

he means to renew the Church and send a message to all Church leaders about what it really means to minister to the people of God is an understatement. He wants to and he will; even if it is not as fast, as all of us who have been waiting for this renewal would want. I believe that what Pope Francis' call means for us is not the answer that comes out of relief and complacency. I believe that what that means for us is more work; work that is wiser and more strategic; work that needs more planning, more alliances, and collaboration; more funding from external sources; more outreach to the faithful in the pews. And we will respond to that call, for now is the acceptable time to be an inclusive and life-giving Church, not only for all LGBT faithful but for all who, like us, believe in a kingdom of Peace and Justice.

Having in mind the challenges and the work ahead, and guided by the strategic vision that we presented to all of you at Convention 2013, the Board will meet in Boston, April 11-13 with Monique Meadows, a consultant who will work with your Board of Directors and Dignity staff on new fundraising strategies to take us into the future. We are really excited about Monique's skills and her enthusiasm and understanding of our work. We look forward to this weekend together and to the challenges and rewards that a fresh look at our fundraising and development strategies will give us. You will hear back from us about this in the near future. This meeting in Boston will also give us the opportunity to spend time with members of the Boston chapter. We are looking forward to our dinner together.

As we prepare, as individuals and as a community, to greet Easter in just a few weeks, the Board would like to send out to you and all your families and communities a message of HOPE and LIGHT. May the wonder and joy of that first Easter morn fill your hearts and renew your faith in the Promise of eternal life.

**DignityUSA Board of Directors****Officers**

Lourdes Rodriguez-Nogues - President  
 Lewis Speaks-Tanner - Vice President  
 Mary Kaye Radtke - Secretary  
 Glenn Crane - Treasurer

**Directors**

Bill Baird	Deborah Myers
Bob Butts	Leo Egashira
Jack Frielingsdorf	Alice Knowles
Ray Panas	Victor Postemski
Allen Rose	Patricia Russell

**National Office**

DignityUSA  
 PO Box 376  
 Medford, MA 02155-0004  
 Voice: 202-861-0017 or 800-877-8797  
 Fax: 781-397-0584  
[www.dignityusa.org](http://www.dignityusa.org)  
[Info@dignityusa.org](mailto:Info@dignityusa.org)  
<http://facebook.com/DignityUSA>  
<http://twitter.com/DignityUSA>

**Staff**

Marianne Duddy-Burke – Executive Director  
[executivedirector@dignityusa.org](mailto:executivedirector@dignityusa.org)  
 Voice: 617-669-7810

Peggy Burns – Operations Manager  
[Info@dignityusa.org](mailto:Info@dignityusa.org)

Logan Bear – Technology Program Manager  
[webminister@dignityusa.org](mailto:webminister@dignityusa.org)

Jim Smith – Associate Director  
[assocdir@dignityusa.org](mailto:assocdir@dignityusa.org)

**Dateline & QV: Quarterly Voice Publications Team**

Leo Egashira – Publications Committee Chair  
[Legashira@yahoo.com](mailto:Legashira@yahoo.com)

Laura Monroe – Editor  
[lauramonroe57@gmail.com](mailto:lauramonroe57@gmail.com)

Peggy Burns – Proofreader  
 Paul Keaveney – Proofreader

DignityUSA is a not-for-profit religious corporation organized under U.S. IRS Service Code 501(c)(3).

**DignityUSA Joins Fundraising Campaign**

By Jim Smith, DignityUSA Associate Director



We are excited to announce our participation in an online fundraising campaign that is active for a 24-hour period on May 15, 2014. You may be very familiar with Dignity's annual PRIDE fundraiser. This year we are offering Give OUT Day as an option to the traditional Pride campaign.

On May 15, LGBT organizations are invited to be part of history and participate in the second annual Give OUT Day. Give OUT Day is a national initiative that will engage hundreds of organizations and mobilize thousands of people on a single day across the country to give in support of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer community. DignityUSA is among those organizations.

**What is Give OUT Day?**

- It's a chance for LGBT groups, large and small, to work across the wide range of issues and activities that matter to the LGBT community: policy change, advocacy for families and within faith communities, and the arts, among others.
- It's a chance for members of the LGBT community and our many allies to stand up and show support on one day. It's a chance to make history.
- It is an online fundraiser that only LGBT-related non-profit organizations can participate in.

**Why Give OUT?**

- It is an easy way to give. You simply go online to our [Give OUT Day DignityUSA](http://www.giveoutdaydignityusa.org) page and make your gift, and it takes just a few minutes.
- It allows persons who are not members of Dignity to donate easily, too.
- The Give OUT Day sponsors offer **prize money** for the LGBT organization that inspires the largest number of individual donors to give. Last year, the LGBT organization with the most givers

*Continued on page 3*

*DignityUSA Joins Fundraising Campaign, continued from page 2*

in the 24-hour period received an extra \$5,000 prize! Other prizes are given, too.

- It's a great way to join other LGBT organizations, and a fun way to compete!

You will hear much more about **Give OUT Day** as we lead up to May 15! Please consider a donation to Dignity on that day. Or you can also make your donation any time prior to May 15, and it will be processed on May 15. Schedule a donation NOW from our Give OUT Day webpage:

<http://giveout.razoo.com/story/Dignity>

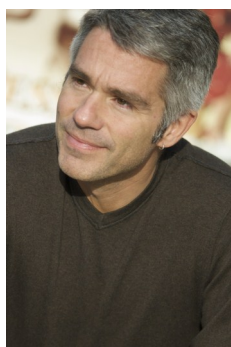
## Chapter/Caucus News

### Dignity/San Francisco News

#### Dignity/San Francisco Hosts

#### Documentarian and Screens *Alfredo's Fire*

By Emmanuel Romero, Dignity/San Francisco Board member



Andy Abrahams  
Wilson

Dignity San Francisco kicked off the Lenten season by hosting a community screening of *Alfredo's Fire* on Sunday, March 9. This short documentary tells the story of Alfredo Ormando, a gay Italian writer who traveled from Palermo to St. Peter's Square, where he set himself on fire on January 13, 1998.

The demonstration was an act of protest against the Roman Catholic Church's historic persecution

against LGBT people.

As part of the screening, Dignity San Francisco invited the Producer/Director/Cinematographer of the film, Andy Abrahams Wilson, who graciously appeared to introduce the movie and participate in a post-screening Q&A. The lively exchange between Wilson and the audience, which included guests from outside Dignity San Francisco, touched upon issues surrounding the closet, mental health, spirituality versus religiosity for LGBT people, the LGBT rights movement in Italy and beyond, and other topics.

"It was a pleasure to screen *Alfredo's Fire* with such a captive audience as Dignity, who cared about and could relate to Alfredo's struggles," Wilson said. "Had the support of such a group as Dignity been available to Alfredo, it is likely he wouldn't have chosen the fate that he did. May his story be a reminder and a beacon of light for us all."

"This documentary provided a real opportunity for us today to reflect on the spiritual dimensions of an act which stirred the minds and hearts of the Italian LGBT community and the LGBT community worldwide a number of years ago," said Ed Malcolm, co-chair of Dignity San Francisco. "We cannot help but be touched by this human tragedy, and the documentarian has helped us to see it in very personal way."

During the Q&A, when Wilson was asked what he, as someone from a non-Catholic background, thought of Ormando's story in the context of today's Church under Pope Francis, he replied that he hopes Ormando will inspire compassion in all people, regardless of whether they believe in equal rights for LGBT individuals. Wilson would also love it if Pope Francis were somehow able to watch *Alfredo's Fire*.

Anyone interested in learning more about *Alfredo's Fire*, and how they can view or screen it, can contact the filmmakers at [www.alfredosfire.com](http://www.alfredosfire.com).

### Dignity/San Antonio News

#### Deb Myers and Nickie Valdez Celebrate 25 Years

By Chris Kohn, Dignity/San Antonio Board member

On February 15, 2014, on a sunny and brisk Valentine's Day weekend, Deb Myers and Nickie Valdez celebrated their 25th Anniversary of Holy Union with a liturgy at Beacon Hill Presbyterian Church in San Antonio, Texas. Officiating for Deb and Nickie was Daniel Helminiak, a long-time friend and Dignity supporter.

Today Deb and Nickie celebrated with their friends in the LGBT community, including many couples who have worked hard to sustain lifelong relationships. Dignity/San Antonio continues to meet at

*Continued on page 4*



*Deb Myers and Nickie Valdez Celebrate..., continued from page 3*

Beacon Hill. It's very seldom that the both of them are not at liturgy together, unless Deb has an out of town meeting with the DignityUSA Board.

After the community witnessed their Union, all were invited to Club Miami for dinner and dancing. The food was great, as was their cake. Everyone had a great time dancing, taking photos, and mostly enjoying fellowship.

Thank you Deb and Nickie for sharing with our LGBT community and the San Antonio community your time and talents. Dignity/San Antonio would not be the same without you both. May you be blessed with many more anniversaries and for truly being a testament that our relationships can be and are life giving and life affirming.

God Bless You Both.



Nickie (front, center) and Deb (front, right) pose with well wishers at their celebration dinner

## Dignity/Boston News

### Dignity/Boston and Arlington Street Church Celebrate 30th Anniversary

By Peggy Hayes, Dignity/Boston Board member



Dignity/Boston stalwart volunteers pictured clockwise from bottom left: Peggy Burns, Ned Goslin, Joe Gatto, Kathy Ann Gianino, Jon Schum

The simple pleasure of a meal at the end of the day on Friday, usually coming at the end of a long week for most of us, was, for a long time, not something that the most vulnerable members of the Boston area community could count on. But in 1984, members of two faith communities, [Dignity/Boston](#) and the Arlington Street Church, decided to change that by founding the [Friday Night Supper](#) Program, to fill a gap in the schedule of area meals for people in need. Here is how the program describes its mission: "The Friday Night Supper Program provides a warm, nutritious meal to anyone in need in a safe and dignified environment every Friday night."

Gritty determination, countless volunteer hours, and a loving spirit of giving have kept the Program alive for three decades, a bittersweet anniversary for staff, volunteers, and guests. While all celebrate the staying power of the Friday Night Supper Program, the thousands of meals served, and respite from the busy city streets it has offered, over and over volunteers and staff voice the wish the Program would no longer be needed.

At the founding of Friday Night Supper, Dig-

*Continued on page 5*

*Dignity/Boston, and Arlington Street...., continued from page 4*

nity/Boston and Arlington Street Church worshipped at the Arlington Street Church, a community with a social justice mission reaching back to its efforts to abolish slavery. When Dignity/Boston moved across Boston Common in 1988 to St. John the Evangelist Church, the chapter maintained its commitment to Friday Night Supper.

A loyal corps of volunteers, many of them longtime Dignity members, work each Friday afternoon to prepare the meal, and each Friday evening to serve it and attend to other basic needs with a clothing closet and toiletries, or simply providing a friendly welcome and a place at the table out of the rain, wind, sun, or snow of New England weather.

## Dignity/Washington News

### Mardi Gras Celebration at the Dignity Center



A snow storm on the night of March 3-4 forced many metro DC groups to cancel their Mardi Gras festivities, but not Dignity/Washington's Young Adult Group. They hosted an evening escape from the winter cold with traditional fare of pancakes, drinks, and other treats to the delight of all twenty-five attendees. The whole community appreciated the party spirit before the start of Lent.



## Reflection on the Centrality of the Eucharist and a Key Decision To Be Made



Dr. Mary Hunt at Dignity/Washington's community reflection and study night

Mary Hunt, noted theologian and founder of Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics and Ritual (WATER) was the featured speaker in the most recent Dignity/Washington community conversation held on March 16 to study and reflect upon the importance of the Eucharist in the life of the chapter.

Another objective of the event was to discern whether Dignity/Washington will allow Roman Catholic ordained women to preside at its liturgies. Dr. Hunt presented various responses from women of faith to the Washington, D.C. pivotal address of Sr. Theresa Kane, then president of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious, before Pope John Paul II in 1979. These responses continue to spark renewal and creative engagement today. The Q & A period sharpened the focus on several key considerations, including whether we need a presider to have a Eucharist, and how we foster the emergence of a more horizontal form of leadership in the Church where there is a discipleship of equals that fully includes women. More community nights like this one are planned into the fall of 2014, leading to a final decision by the Dignity/Washington Board. All are asked to include the community in their prayers during this discernment process.

## After the Celluloid Closet Film Presentation on March 22

As part of Dignity/Washington's ongoing speaker series, on March 22 longtime member Tom Yates produced and narrated a special film presentation titled *After The Celluloid Closet: LGBT Film Since 1995*. Using the 1995 documentary *The Celluloid Closet* as a point of departure, Tom covered the major highlights in gay film history from 1995 to the present. Held at the Dignity Center, it was free, open to the public, and followed by light refreshments.



# Holy, Wholly Holy

## Catholic Women's Routes to Holiness

A Gathering for All Women

**June 13-15, 2014**

Retreat and Conference Center at Bon Secours

Marriottsville, MD

Near Baltimore, easily accessible to BWI Airport



The Women of DignityUSA and Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics and Ritual (WATER) team up for a third retreat led by lesbian and queer women. This year we will focus on holiness, sainthood—our own and other's—and how we get there. The weekend will include prayer, quiet, recreation, celebration, and conversation. Women saints will guide our way. Wholly holy women will emerge.

Our weekend will run from 6:00 PM Friday when we gather for dinner through the conclusion of lunch on Sunday at 1:00 PM. The fee includes six meals, snacks, beverages and all costs associated with participation in the retreat. There are both commuter and residential rates. All sleeping rooms have double beds and private baths.

For more information contact [info@dignityusa.org](mailto:info@dignityusa.org) or [waterstaff@hers.com](mailto:waterstaff@hers.com).

### Discovering Our Place at the Table: The DYAC 2014 National Retreat

**Sharing our Passion / Nurturing Our Spirits / Building our Community**

**Young Adults:** Mark you calendars: July 25-27, 2014 in Washington, DC.

**Dignity chapter leaders:** Please share this opportunity with the young adults in your community! And please consider, if possible, offering your resources to young adults in your community for travel to DC.

Jamie Manson, columnist for the National Catholic Reporter, will be leading us in some inspiring talks, reflections, and discussions.

Some scholarships for travel will be available.

### Happy Easter!

Christ is Risen: The world below lies desolate  
Christ is Risen: The spirits of evil are fallen  
Christ is Risen: The angels of God are rejoicing  
Christ is Risen: The tombs of the dead are empty  
Christ is Risen indeed from the dead,  
the first of the sleepers,  
Glory and power are his forever and ever



### Transitions

*In memoriam:*

Bob Allen  
Jan 27, 2014  
Dignity/Washington

Fr. Larry Crawford  
Jul 26, 1940-Feb 28, 2014  
Dignity/Indianapolis

Jack "Hedda" Abraham  
Mar 19, 1923-Jun 29, 2011  
Dignity/San Francisco