

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.

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Spring is Here

By Lewis Speaks-Tanner, DignityUSA Vice President



Spring is finally here! It has been a long winter with colder temperatures and more snow than we usually have in a winter. Dignity members throughout the northern states have experienced that same long winter. Dignity members in southern and western climates escaped winter, but not all: those in Texas did get colder weather than they are used to. During this time, DignityUSA has been very busy.

On Friday, April 11-13, your DignityUSA Board of Directors met in Boston. During the meeting, the Board and staff worked on improving the Board's fundraising skills and techniques. In addition to being a 100% giving Board, each member is expected to help in the fundraising goals of DignityUSA. Each Board member gives up his or her time for Board meetings, weekly emails,

monthly committee commitments, and the costs of traveling and staying in the various cities in which it meets. The commitment is significant but the rewards are great!

Speaking of fundraising, hopefully you saw the article in April's *Dateline* about DignityUSA's participation in Give OUT Day. This is an amazing opportunity to contribute to DignityUSA's mission. 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. To give or learn more, go to: <https://www.dignityusa.org/content/dignityusa-joins-one-day-online-fundraising-campaign>.

We hope you will participate, especially during those non-peak daytime hours. Please broadcast this day to family and friends so they can support DignityUSA. A few extra clicks to share this website URL with your Facebook networks and friends will help fund the work of Dignity.

If you are not in a position to give financially, we are always looking for more people to join our committees. We have the following active Board committees: chapter relations, national convention, nominations, elections, finance, marketing, publications, technology, and fundraising. Talented human resource professionals are also needed to assist the Board as part of a human resources committee. We also have several special interest caucuses: transgender, women's, young adult, and the Defenders.

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Another online auction is coming! It would be wonderful if we had more items – large, small, or miniature! As long as it is an item or experience that others would enjoy. Please email me at lspeakstanner@gmail.com if you have something to contribute. Once the auction is live, we are always looking for our members to cast the net far and wide to everyone, including sharing it on their own Facebook page and with email contacts. More bids on each item helps DignityUSA raise more money: yes, it does increase the price of an item you are bidding on, but it is all for a wonderful cause: DignityUSA!

During this busy time, you might find it helpful to carve out some time for a retreat: there is still time for women to sign up for the third annual Women's Retreat, June –13-15, 2014, cosponsored by DignityUSA and Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics and Ritual (WATER). Details can be found at, <http://www.dignityusa.org/civcrm/event/info?reset=1&id=56>. Additionally, young adults can sign up for the Dignity Young Adult Caucus Retreat, July –25-27, 2014 in Washington, D.C. Jamie Manson will help lead the weekend's theme, "Discovering Our Place at the Table." For more details and registration, email dycarmartin@dignityusa.org.

Lastly, it is never too early to plan for the next DignityUSA Convention which will be in Seattle, Washington, July –2-5, 2015. Pre-registration allows you to leave a deposit now so that when you register next year for the convention you will receive a discount.. Seattle is certainly to be a lot of fun, and we hope to see you there. Preregister here: <http://www.dignityusa.org/civcrm/event/info?id=48&reset=1>

Correction: In last month's Dateline, we inadvertently named Bob Allen in a Dignity/Washington photo. The correct name is Ben Allen. Our apologies.

Help Support Transgender

To the readership of DignityUSA Publications:

Due to competing budgetary needs, as well as the difficulty in soliciting thematically-based submissions, the Board of DignityUSA has authorized a temporary cutback in the frequency of publication of the *Quarterly Voice* (QV). The most recent QV published was the large Convention issue, which came out in the fall of 2013. We are currently working on putting out the next issue, which will be a compilation of interesting, but unrelated, articles.

Recently, we had the good fortune to explore collaborative publication of two or three QVs with Jim and Evelyn Whitehead, a clinical psychologist and theologian couple, who have been longtime supporters of DignityUSA. Over the past couple of years, they have written six robust articles (and have secured republication rights to two 12-page articles) on the topic of “Transgender Spirituality.”

Transgender Spirituality is a topic that challenges the outermost boundaries of traditional Catholic thinking on spirituality and is a topic that speaks to the very core of DignityUSA’s mission.

In order to bring these articles to a readership much larger than Jim and Evelyn’s contacts and the DignityUSA mailing list, the Publications Committee would like to solicit sponsorships of two or three special QV issues on Transgender Spirituality. Each 20-24 page issue will cost \$13,000 or more. We are hoping to leverage the interest expected to be generated and reach the broader transgender audience, as well make inroads in the much larger progressive communities of faith.

If you, your community, Dignity chapter, or organization is interested in sponsoring or underwriting publication of one such QV issue, in whole or in concert with other donors, please contact DignityUSA Publications Committee Chair, Leo Egashira, at Legsshira@yahoo.com. Your sponsorship of an invaluable resource will be prominently acknowledged in these truly groundbreaking compilations.

Chapter/Caucus News

Transgender Caucus News

Transcending Boundaries Conference a Success

By Peggy Burns, DignityUSA Operations Manager



The author staffed an information table at the Conference

The Transcending Boundaries Conference (TBC) is a convention in the northeast United States for the bisexual community: genderqueer; transgender; intersex and polyamorous people; their family, friends, and straight allies.

This year’s Conference was held in Connecticut during the weekend of April 4-6. DignityUSA was a Conference sponsor and I attended and staffed an information table.

The theme this year was “Inclusion in Action.” TBC strives to be inclusive of people representing all aspects of the gender, sexuality, and relationship spectrum.

The weekend included workshops, discussions, and presentations from professionals, community members, and activists from across the country.

Some two hundred people from every imaginable gender identity, sexual orientation, and relationship style had the opportunity to attend over fifty presentations, panels, and workshops to better understand the rich tapestry of diversity. Most presenters didn’t just lecture, but had interactive activities and plenty of time for Q&A.

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Transcending Boundaries Conference...., continued from page 3

Wintersong Tashlin was the guest speaker at lunch. He (preferred pronoun) wears many hats as an educator, event producer, blogger, and shaman, teaching workshops on such diverse topics as queer/LGBT issues, BDSM, pagan spirituality, polyamory, and disabilities.

The conference organizers have posted educational materials on a variety of topics on their website: <http://www.transcendingboundaries.org/resources.html>

Below are some useful transgender terms:

Gender Identity – The gender that a person feels they are. The gender you are when you wake up in the morning and go to sleep at night.

Gender Presentation – The gender that a person shows to others and often to the world at large. It is the "performance" of gender that we all do, whether consciously or unconsciously.

Transgender – A person who transitions from one gender to another.

Cisgender – A person who identifies as the gender they were identified as at birth.

HRT – Hormone Replacement Therapy. The artificial hormone regimen that many transgender people use to physically realign their bodies to their chosen gender.

SRS – Sex Reassignment Surgery. The operation performed to change the genitals of a transsexual person. Also often referred to as GRS, Gender Reassignment Surgery, or Gender/Sex Affirmation/Confirmation Surgery or other variants. It usually refers specifically to Vaginoplasty (the construction of an artificial vagina, or Phalloplasty (the construction of an artificial penis).

Passing – Being perceived as one's chosen gender.

Gender Role – Societal expectations of gender.

Popular Gender Variant and Gender Neutral Pronouns – ze, hir, herm, they, them, and their all may be used at various times to refer to a person without specifying gender. When in doubt about a person's preferred pronouns, it is best to simply ask.

Mx – An honorific, like Mr, Mrs, or Ms, sometimes used by GenderQueer folks.

Zister – A similarly gender variant or gender neutral honorific. Also sometimes used to refer to a gender variant or gender neutral sibling.

Dignity/Washington News

Dignity/Washington Retreat Held on *Be Not Afraid* Theme



Jamie Manson, a Catholic lay minister who has served two Manhattan churches and the homeless population of NYC, led a day of reflection on the theme *Be Not Afraid: A Retreat For LGBT Catholics in a Changing Church* on April 5 at the Dignity Center. Jamie holds a Master's of Divinity degree from Yale Divinity School, is a writer for the weekly column, "Grace on the Margins," for the *National Catholic Reporter* and has led retreats and workshops nationally. Through sharing her own faith experience, she encouraged the group to reflect on why it was important for each of us to be Catholic and call ourselves Catholic, and how we welcomed others into the Church. Dignity/Washington member Tony Gryzmala presented an experiential introduction to Centering Prayer and Lectio Divina which was for many in the group a highlight of the retreat. The day ended with a very fine communal Brazilian dinner.

Dignity/Washington News (Cont.)

A Prayerful and Ecumenical Holy Week, Triduum for Dignity/Washington



The group gathers at the Franciscan Monastery

On Saturday April 12, a larger than usual group of members from Dignity/Washington journeyed the **Stations of the Cross** together in the Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land's very beautiful garden near the campus of

Catholic University in NE D.C. The gardens are settled in many acres of the Monastery grounds with outdoor shrines and, of course, the Stations which lead you uphill to the eleventh station. That day everyone took turns reading the meditations as well as a prayer before each station. The majority of the group gathered for lunch and fellowship at a nearby Mexican restaurant afterward.

On Holy Thursday (Maundy Thursday)

Dignity/Washington and St. Margaret's Episcopal Church celebrated an ecumenical liturgy. Both communities gathered in the social hall for the Liturgy of the Word, before feasting on a beautiful Agape meal (Love feast) of lamb or vegetarian stews, nuts, olives, and wine. Rev. Emily Guthrie provided an amazing welcome and homily centered on service and love, even referencing the great works of Dorothy Day.



Attendants enjoy the Agape meal



After the meal, both communities gathered in the church, and the procession began. During the washing of the feet, all were invited to have their feet washed and wash the

feet of others. Numerous members expressed how moved they were by the experience. The Eucharist was concelebrated by St. Margaret's Rev. Kym and Dignity/Washington's Fr. Denis. After communion, both communities processed the Eucharist to the Altar of Repose where a vigil was held until 6:00 the following morning.

On Good Friday members of Dignity/Northern Virginia

joined Dignity/Washington for a lay-led service presided by members of both communities. The narrative and reflections of the "Seven Last Words" by Rev. Richard Fairchild were read, and a



Veneration of the cross

candle was extinguished in Tenebrae style. A traditional procession of the cross to the foot of the altar and veneration took place before communion was distributed.



Jason with his sponsors

Dignity/Washington celebrated the **Great Vigil of Easter** at 10:00 in the evening on Holy Saturday with all of the incredibly traditional and powerful grandeur. Some passersby along Dupont Circle's busy Connecticut Avenue even stopped to witness the lighting of the Paschal Candle. It was an exceptionally Holy Night for the Dignity/Washington community as Jason, a young adult member, received the Sacrament of Confirmation after several months of formation and preparation. His sponsors, Kenneth and Alexander, and all in the community were invited to extend their hands during the laying of hands and anointing of his head with the Sacred Chrism. Jason chose the name "Francis" for his confirmation. After Mass, members gathered in the social hall for a late-night dessert social and to present Jason with gifts.

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 or 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.

Ballots for the DignityUSA Board of Directors election will be sent via Survey-Monkey and US mail this month.

All members are encouraged to vote for four individuals to fill the at-large Director seats open this year.



Transitions

Robert Van Etten
Feb. 15, 1939 – Mar 13, 2014
Dignity/Palm Springs

Lt. Colonel Joseph James O'Hare, Jr. of McLean, VA, father of Father Joe O'Hare of Dignity/Washington, entered into eternal life on April 7