

Hopes for the Future

Dignity USA Jubilee Discussion

Dignity/Washington Chapter Response

Date: Sunday, January 26, 2019

Time: 7:30 pm to 8:30 pm

Venue: St. Margaret's Church

Participants: 25 people members

Facilitator: Martin Witchger

Note Taker: Daniel Barutta

What do you hope for Dignity/Washington in 10 to 15 years?

- **Increase membership to 300**
- **Increased diversity in our community**
 - A place where more families are welcome
 - More women and allies are part of the community.
 - Larger youth/millennial presence
 - Many parishes are losing young people, but we may have what young people want
- **Recognition in the Church/Diocese**
 - As a parish by the Archdiocese.
 - As a non-profit by the Conference of Catholic Bishops
 - Supporting gay clergy, out and not out
 - (if not recognized – show up / participate in archdiocesan events, make our presence known
- **Expanded Outreach**
 - Have contact cards for visitors/new folks - to collect their info & stay in touch
 - Communications work: Presence in the media, publications, and social media.
 - Use of technology: pro-active videos, testimonials
 - Support for LGBTQI people who are alone
 - Dignity chapters/groups in local Catholic high schools & colleges
 - An active welcome / diversity committee (this is in the works!)

- **Expanded mission** (especially as LGBTQ issues more accepted, within Church and society)
 - Leading charge ecumenical issues of social justice (*not everyone in agreement with this*)
 - Continue leaders in local Washington DC progressive faith community
 - Integrated with other marginalized groups of the Catholic Church
- **Overall:** We continue to be a successful, strong example of a lay-lead community in the Roman Catholic Church that has put on mass for over 40 years with strong liturgy and preaching. This is what the Church needs to learn. (same for Dignity USA)

What do you hope for Dignity USA in 10 to 15 years?

- **Continue challenging to the Bishops and Hierarchy**
 - Especially contacting and targeting younger Bishops.
 - Foster less hypocrisy and more transparency with our church leaders.
- **Resource and a messenger for the progressive Catholic movement**
 - Library of resources of inclusive language for accepting communities.
 - Formation curriculum for queer families like a CCD program.
 - Promote & facilitate resources/writings/publications from theologians, thinkers, organizers
 - Sponsoring seminars and symposiums on theology, etc.
 - Have a prophetic presence in a publication that clearly states OUR truths.
- **Robust network of engagement**
 - Expanded chapters across the country
 - Allies or chapters on dozens of Catholic college campus
 - Presence of local leaders at LGBTQ conferences whenever they happen
 - Established and expected regular communications with members
- **Mobilize a policy advocacy team** – advocate for queer issues nationally
 - For example what is happening in our military with transgender troops.
- **Celebrating years of a financial stability and health**
- **Headquartered in DC**

How do we get to this future? (Taking advantage of opportunities; Tackling challenges, etc)

- Establish better communications with the chapter

- Some local board members recognized their role in the lack of communication to D/W members
- Get more non-board members on national committees.
- Establish DignityUSA as go-to response / counter voice to the Pope or hierarchy
 - Hire a PR firm – to help issue guidance and response
 - Get someone with stature/recognizable name as spokesperson to represent Dignity USA on national news – convey our voice every day our issue is in news
 - Dignity USA should send a “white paper” to the Pope with our issues that need to be addressed.
- Everpresent need for fundraising to support staff to do the work currently done by volunteers
- Membership Growth
 - Target areas where there are no chapters.
 - Target Chapter growth.
- Possibly with a new national leadership structure
 - Return to regional & delegate representation?