



DATELINE

Monthly News Bulletin

October 2015

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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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DignityUSA's Excitement on the Eve of the Pope's Visit to the U.S.

By Allen Rose, DignityUSA Board Member

What an exciting time for members of Dignity giving prophetic witness to the sacredness of our lives as lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender Catholics. DignityUSA has supported 12 families at the World Meeting of Families who are sharing their lived experience as LGBT Catholics, or as the parents of LGBT Catholics, through the Equally Blessed Coalition.

I am writing this as the papal jet "Shepherd 1" is landing at Andrews Air Force Base to bring Pope Francis to the United States for the first time. Many members of Dignity have written editorials or have been interviewed recently by various members the media about their lives, and about their thoughts regarding Pope Francis. I am sure many more will be interviewed this week.

Members of Dignity/New York were interviewed by the BBC, and my husband and I were interviewed by a reporter and a videographer from SVT, Swedish Public TV. Many media outlets believe that our perspective on Papa Francisco and Catholicism are an important part of the story of the modern Catholic Church.

A number of members of Dignity have been invited to the White House to attend the welcoming ceremony for Pope Francis that President Obama is

hosting. I am told that Mayor Nutter of Philadelphia will quote three paragraphs of DignityUSA's letter to Pope Francis in his official welcoming statement when he welcomes the Holy Father to Philadelphia.

This is heady stuff for those of us who remember what it was like to be largely ignored and barely visible. It might seem like the battle is over and we have won. Once the World Meeting of Families has ended, the Pope has left, and the bishops have had their synod in Rome, it will be good to hear our members' experience with all of the witness we have given in a relatively short period of time. After that, however, it may also be important to take some time and reflect on our mission and where we are as movement.

For those of us who are involved in Dignity faith communities, whether the traditional chapter-based kind or the virtual communities that are now being created, we know that speaking truth to power and sharing our experience with others is important. We also know that continuing to create community is important. How we blend these missions together will define the type of service that we are able to provide for ourselves and for others as we move into the future.

Theresa Kane Young Feminist Award Presented to Jamie Manson at the WOW Conference

By Patricia Russell, Dignity/New York

At the 2015 [Women's Ordination Worldwide](#) Conference (WOW) the Women's Ordination Conference (WOC) used the opportunity to celebrate its 40th Anniversary by inaugurating the "Theresa Kane Woman of Vision and Courage Awards." As part of the registration process for the Conference participants were asked to nominate

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those, “who, like Theresa Kane, prophetically live out their visions of an inclusive, equal, and just Roman Catholic Church.”

Margaret Johnson, a member of the WOC Board of Directors presented the “Young Feminist Award” to Jamie Manson “Jamie is a fierce speaker, retreat leader, and media commentator on issues related to LGBT Catholics, Young Adult Catholics, and the future of the Church She is editor of *Changing the Questions: Explorations in Christian Ethics*, a collection of writings by Margaret Farley (Orbis, 2015) Her writing has won numerous awards, including most recently the Wilbur Award for best online religion news story: “*Feminism in Faith: Sister Elizabeth Johnson’s Challenge to The Vatican*,” (Jamie Manson, BuzzFeed.com) I can



Theresa Kane (L) with Jamie Manson (R)

always count on Jamie’s *Grace on the Margins* column to lift up the prophetic voices that are often missing in discussions on Church and world matters,” said Margaret Johnson to a room filled with 500 WOW participants from 19 countries

Equally Blessed (of which DignityUSA is a constituent member) was represented as an exhibitor at the WOW Conference in anticipation of the World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia Our LGBTQ Catholic families will carry the message to Pope Francis that “we are all equally blessed.” Find out more and support their pilgrimage at wmf.equallyblessed.org.

Lauren Carpenter and Patricia Russell represented DignityUSA at the Equally Blessed table where many people stopped by to renew old friendships and to request information about the ministry Lauren was especially excited to tell everyone about the upcoming pilgrimage since she and her mother will participate in it.

Dignity/Washington In the News for Preparing for Papal Visit

Dignity/Washington's President Daniel Barutta and member Jeff Vomund talked to the *Washington Post* in preparation for Pope Francis' visit to the United States.

Please see their complete video interviews at: <http://wapo.st/1Ma4oDV>

Jeff Vomund invited Pope Francis to "come and see" the witness of the Dignity/Washington community.

This article was published in the *Washington Post* on September 21, 2015. Click on this link to read the full article: https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/an-invitation-to-pope-francis-from-dcs-gay-catholic-community/2015/09/20/680ef5aa-5d77-11e5-b38e-06883aacba64_story.html

Dignity/Washington was featured in a *Wall Street Journal* video.

The Dignity/Washington community was featured in this video produced by *The Wall Street Journal*. Follow this link to view the video: <http://www.wsj.com/video/gay-catholics-seeking-church-acceptance-pin-hopes-on-pope/4DA1F80E-B439-47DD-A914-5F3AEBD61CDB.html>

Dignity/Washington members are among the LGBT Catholics to greet Pope Francis outside the HRC building.

The following article appeared in the *Washington Blade* on September 18, 2015. Click on this link to read the full article: <https://shar.es/17fdQ7>

Transgender Resources

Do you wish to learn more about transgender issues? Here are a few resources you might want to bookmark:

United States Transgender Advocacy, Inc.

<http://www.ustransgenderadvocacy.org/>
Our Mission: To help transgender individuals become accepted in society through visibility, educating the public, forming allies, and a focus of protecting transgender individuals from violence.

National Center for Transgender Equality

<http://transequality.org/>
NCTE was founded in 2003 by transgender activists who recognized the urgent need for policy change to advance transgender equality.

Trans Advocacy Network (TAN)

www.transadvocacynetwork.org
Our Mission: The Trans Advocacy Network (TAN) is an alliance of transgender organizations that work at the state and local level, coming together to build a stronger trans movement by facilitating the sharing of resources, best practices, and organizing strategies.



A PLACE AT THE TABLE
Boston, MA

July 6-9, 2017

You still have time to take advantage of the pre-registration offer for DignityUSA Convention in 2017.

Reserve your place at the table NOW!

Pre-register now, with a deposit of \$100 dollars, and receive 10% off final regular registration price.

Go to: <https://dignityusa.org/conv2017>

Address questions to: info@dignityusa.org

This offer will not last long! Do it now and you will be able to participate in a drawing for a gift card to be drawn soon!

Complete the U.S. Trans Survey at
www.USTransSurvey.org



Dignity in the News

Here is a sampling of recent media stories that included DignityUSA. Many were covered in multiple outlets; only one is given as an example.

Catholic Word Report: Catholic radical right attacks: [Sacramental equality for LGBT](#)

New York Times: [DignityUSA leads effort to get Pope to meet with LGBT Catholics, families during visit.](#)

PRI: LGBT group [anticipates Pope's visit, hopes for change](#)

Huffington Post: Equally Blessed programs [evicted from Philadelphia church](#)

Religion Dispatches: World Meeting of Families has [celibate gay speaker](#)

Washington Post Civilities column: [What does a lesbian Mom do when the bishop insults gay people at confirmation?](#)

The Patriot-News: Overview of the [state of LGBT people in the Catholic Church](#)



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