



# Newsletter

## September 2012

### Dignity & St. Ignatius Liturgy Schedules

Ravenna United Methodist Church	5751-33 <sup>rd</sup> Ave NE	Seattle
Every Sunday	→ 10:00 a.m.	St. Ignatius (UPSTAIRS)
Sep. 9, Oct. 14	→ 6:00 p.m.	Dignity/Seattle

A pancake breakfast following St. Ignatius Mass is held every 4th Sunday (Sept. 23rd), a shared fellowship with our host congregation, Ravenna UMC.

### Dignity/Seattle's Annual Membership Meeting, Elections & Potluck

**Sunday, Sept. 30, 5:00 p.m.**  
**Ravenna United Methodist Church**

All members and other interested persons are encouraged to attend our Annual Membership Meeting. Board Officers will present their annual reports.

Please bring your favorite potluck dish to share. Dinner will be followed by the meeting and elections for 2012-2013.

**Election Ballots** were mailed out to registered members in early September. If you have not received a ballot, please contact Dignity/Seattle at 206-659-5519 or e-mail [plandtish@aol.com](mailto:plandtish@aol.com).

### An Appeal from Catholics for Marriage Equality—Washington

**September 5, 2012**  
**Dear Wonderful CFMEWA Friends,**

**We are almost there!** Seven months ago when a small group of us had the idea of putting a full page ad in the *Seattle Times* and other major print and online publications, one of our participants said, "We need at least 1,000 names of Catholics in Washington State willing to put their names in the ad supporting marriage equality." That number seemed impossible to me, but the signatures keep coming in. And...

We now have 800 names and more are coming in each day. Only 200 more to go: We can do this!

If you are Catholic and you've been meaning to but haven't yet done it, sign the ad! You can go to <http://www.catholicsformarriageequalitywa.org/sign-the-declaration/> or print the attached sign-up sheet and mail it to us at

If you are not sure whether or not you've signed, do it again. We crosscheck all names. And, if you're holding on to sheets that are partially filled out, please go ahead and send them in to CFMEWA, 505 Broadway East #513, Seattle, WA 98102-5023.

Coincidentally, we are up to 1,800 likes on Facebook. Only 200 more to go! Please tell all your friends on Facebook about us and encourage them to "like" us and bring us to 2000.

Well done everyone, we're almost there!

Kathy Morefield  
 CFMEWA

### Upcoming Events of Interest

**Sun, Sept. 9, 6:00 p.m.** Monthly Dignity Mass

**Sun, Sept. 30, 5:00 p.m.** Annual Meeting, Potluck

**Tue, Oct. 2, 6:00 p.m.** Volunteer at Food Lifeline

**Sat, Oct 6.** Bishop Remi de Roo at St. Patrick Parish

**Sun, Oct 14, 1:00 p.m.** National Catholic Reporter's Jamie Manson presents "The Church at a Crossroads" at St. Mark's Cathedral. Sponsored by CTA-Western Washington. For more information: [http://ctaww.org/coming\\_events.htm](http://ctaww.org/coming_events.htm). Registration by October 6 is \$20. Tickets at the door are \$25. More details will be printed in the October Newsletter.

## Board Members & Contact Info

### Dignity/Seattle Board Members

Paula Lavallee	President
Paula Hills	Vice-President
Delia Vita	Treasurer
Denise Arceneaux	Secretary
Alan Scott	Member, Social chair

### DignityUSA Board Member from Seattle

Leo Egashira	At large (Publications)
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Dignity/Seattle	206-659-5519
P.O. Box 20325	Seattle WA 98102
Website	<a href="http://www.DignitySeattle.org">http://www.DignitySeattle.org</a>
E-mail	<a href="mailto:Dignity.Seattle@gmail.com">Dignity.Seattle@gmail.com</a>

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206-723-4759	<a href="mailto:Legashira@yahoo.com">Legashira@yahoo.com</a>

We provide a safe environment for people to reconcile our God-given gifts of sexual orientation and our Catholic faith through gay-affirming liturgies. Being part of the Dignity/Seattle family means claiming ownership of our faith and living up to the responsibilities of that ownership.

## Dignity/Vancouver BC/Dignité



**Box 3016**  
**Vancouver, B.C., V6B 3X5**      **604/432-1230**  
**[dennisl-h@telus.net](mailto:dennisl-h@telus.net)**

Sunday, Sept. 9th, 5:00 p.m. Preparing and serving Dinner for "Friends for Life Society" at Diamond Centre, 1459 Barclay Street, (WestEnd), Vancouver.

Friday—Sunday, Sept. 21-23. Annual DIGNITY CAN-ADA House of Delegates, hosted by the Vancouver Chapter.

## Dignity/Seattle's Summer Picnic & Barbeque, August 4, 2012

Thanks to all who attended and had a great time.

Special thanks go to Alan S., who organized the outing, and to Tom S., for slaving over the hot grill and making perfect patties!





## Frank DeBernardo & Sr. Jeannine Gramick of New Ways Ministry present a forum on Marriage Equality in Seattle: August 22, 2012

Notes taken by Leo N. Egashira

Approximately 80 people attended a forum on Marriage Equality (which will be on the Nov. 6th ballot in Washington State) at St. Mark Episcopal Cathedral's Bloedel Hall. The forum was sponsored by Call To Action—Western Washington and facilitated by New Ways Ministry's Frank DeBernardo and Sister Jeannine Gramick.

Attendees included representatives from Catholics for Marriage Equality—Washington, Washington United for Marriage, Call To Action, Dignity/Seattle, as well as the prime mover of Washington State's Marriage Equality Law, State Sen. Ed Murray.

To start the discussion, Frank related two stories: When Marriage Equality was first proposed in Massachusetts in 2002, a New Yorker Magazine cartoon showed a heterosexual couple watching TV, saying "Marriage for gays & lesbians? Haven't those people suffered enough already?" The second story occurred in 1995 in Milwaukee. Two women in their mid-60s found each other during a self-introduction. One was married 37 years with nine children; the other was married 35 years and also had nine children. Each found the other a pillar of support. They moved in together, and within one week, heard a phrase almost never heard in marriage: "Dinner is ready." That's really another way of saying, "I love you."



Frank then presented statistics, and then reasons why Catholics support Marriage Equality (M.E.). A 2011 poll by the Public Religion Research Institute showed that, "Catholics are more supportive of M.E. than any other Christian group. 71% support civil marriage. 56% of Catholics agreed that it was "not a sin to express love among GLBT persons" vs. 46% of general population.

When Catholics go to church, 25% hear some message about GLBT people. Fully two-thirds say the message is negative. People who wield the microphone give a negative message, but people in the pews give a positive message on GLBT issues and M.E. Simply stated, Catholics support M.E.

Even among Latino Catholics, who are assumed to be socially conservative, 57% support M.E. vs. 53% of the general population.

Why? Overall, Catholics' support of M.E. is not in spite of being Catholic, but because they are Catholic: The social justice tradition calls for dignity, equality and respect in all aspects of society.

Seven reasons illustrate the role social justice plays in Catholic support for M.E.:

1. They recognize that love makes a family, not gender. This is in accord with Catholic theologians' thought.
2. Not to have M.E. is discriminatory, and my faith is against discrimination.
3. I support M.E. because I want to protect children.
4. Support protection of couples with all benefits of societal rights. This is especially the case if the Catholic asked has GLBT relatives.
5. M.E. helps develop strong families and a better society.
6. Church should not dictate public policy for all people. M.E. is an issue of civil marriage, not religious marriage.
7. Some Catholics are not on-board with GLBTs, but "I as a Catholic believe in equality and fairness, which should be in place for all people."

When we're inviting everyone to the table, we want to say "Dinner is ready for everyone."

Sister Jeannine spoke next: Facts are certainly important, but heart and emotion are important. Here is a historical fact. The anti M.E. side always states, "Marriage has always been between a man & a woman," but they ignore that "Polygamy was common in the Bible."

How has marriage evolved in the Christian Era? During the early Roman Empire, marriage had no religious significance. Weddings were private affairs among families.

They gradually became civil affairs in order to define rights and responsibilities (inheritance, cohesiveness, etc.). Some early Christian writers stated that the Church should not be involved in marriage at all—since it involves sexual intercourse! As centuries passed, civil society collapsed with the demise of Roman Empire, so Church leaders assumed responsibilities of state leaders.

This development occurred in four stages::

1. The secular ceremony was performed "near a church."
2. Ceremony performed on steps of church
3. Then, inside the church
4. Church stated that priest or bishop must assume role of state.

(continued on page 4)

(continued from page 3)

By the year 1000, all institutional marriages were controlled by the Church. In 12<sup>th</sup> Century, marriage was elevated to a Sacrament.



It was during the Council of Trent in 1563, that the marriage ceremony became standardized (e.g., it had to be conducted by priest, the couple had to announce banns of marriage three weeks before marriage, etc.)

With the French Revolution and its anti-clericalism and the Enlightenment of the 18th & 19th Centuries popularized the notion of the separation of church

& state: Civil marriage plus religious blessing.

**What we are talking about today is in the civil arena; it has nothing to do with the sacrament of marriage.**

In closing, I want to relate the role of Conscience in discerning the issue of Marriage Equality: For a long time, I didn't think about my actions. What I have learned is that, we are talking about making moral decisions personally, making them our own. They may be in alignment with religious leaders . . . or not. We trust we are being led when we are young. As we get older, we need to start questioning assumptions and authorities and make conscientious decisions; otherwise, we still remain children

Here are points we all should consider when making moral decisions:

1. Theology
2. Scripture
3. Scientific findings; Vatican II's "Science of the times"
4. Experiences, e.g., if I'm GLBT, is my relationship furthering my relationship with God?
5. Consultation with spiritual director—could be a close friend
6. Then go into my own private space and talk with God

No human being has the whole truth; no-one is infallible. We have a responsibility to speak our truth. What conscious and moral decisions have we made? We need to help our Church.

A spirited Q&A session followed, some of which has been condensed and presented below::

Q How can I find the historical information you provided?

A In NWM pamphlet's Question 8.

Q How can I talk with family members who are not in the same page. Can you explain how this relates to sacramental marriage?

A The Referendum only addresses civil marriage and does not force religious groups to perform ceremonies for same-sex couples. If we do not pass this Referendum, we are restricting the rights of progressive churches to perform same-sex marriage.

A Sacramental life resides within the relationship, not via sanction by civil or religious authorities.

Q Do the bishops contend that they may be sued?

A Bishops say many things that aren't true: They will not be sued. There are strong provisions to ensure religious right not to marry.

A See St. Joseph website which presents both sides of argument. Ignation spirituality session in October.

A If your pastor does not support M.E., have a discussion.

Q Are any Catholic churches/dioceses having fruitful dialogue?

A Important to realize that "We Are Church"

A Look for allies in Protestant churches.

A Spoke with four diocesan priests who represent one of the Deaneries in Seattle. That Deanery refused to circulate Ref. 74 petitions.

A Nuns represent the spirit of Vatican II.

Q Difficult to stay Catholic when the Pope is against everything I believe in. Thoughts?

A Jeannine: I've been there; actually I am there. It's important to be in a faith community that nourishes your spiritual life. I want to work for reform to make it look like the face of Jesus.

Q In 2008, the 18-29 year old vote carried Obama. How do we get youth involved?

A For youth—GLBT rights is a non-issue. Duh? That is the challenge.

Q Where is New Ways Ministry today?

A NWM is alive and well. Where are we? On the Internet. Daily blog = Bondings 2.0. Good way to keep up with GLBT Catholic issues, as well as our ministry. In "real life," Next Steps program (weekend or day-long) helps GLBTs discern next steps they can do, based on own gifts & limitations and what needs to be done. M.E. work. Retreats. Workshops. Program developing resources for Catholic colleges. Lesbian nuns and leaders of religious communities.