



Newsletter

March 2007

Dignity & St. Ignatius Liturgy Schedules

Ravenna United Methodist Church 5751-33rd Ave NE Seattle
First Sundays at 1:00 p.m. -- St. Ignatius Community Liturgies
Second Sundays at 6:00 p.m. – Dignity/Seattle Liturgies

March 4 & April 1 → 1:00 p.m. St. Ignatius

March 11 & April 8 → 6:00 p.m. Dignity/Seattle

Events of Interest this Month

Lenten Mini-Retreat

Saturday, March 3rd, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Holy Trinity Lutheran, Mercer Island

“Seeking the Desert in the Rain Forest: Lessons in Contemplative Living”

Reflecting on desert images of spaciousness, vulnerability and dryness can teach us what it means to live contemplatively amidst the chaos and demands of contemporary life. This mini-retreat, facilitated by Mary Ellen Weber, will offer opportunities for prayer, reflection, group sharing and journaling. The location is Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 8501 SE 40th St., Mercer Island. To register, contact Eileen Knopf, e.knoff@verizon.net or 425/985-3340, or Mary Ellen Weber ime.weber@earthlink.net or 425/785-6814. Bring a sack lunch and a notebook with you. This is sponsored by Spiritus Dei of the Ecumenical Catholic Community. A free will offering will be collected.

Mary Ellen Weber is a spiritual director who is passionate about encouraging others to expand their concept of God, and to live their lives in response to the presence of God within themselves, others and all of creation. Her ministry includes spiritual growth, groups, workshops, retreats and individual spiritual direction. She holds a Master's Degree in Transforming Spirituality from Seattle University's School of Theology and Ministry.

Dignity/Seattle Board Meeting

Wednesday, March 7th, 7:00 p.m.

Delia's—all welcome to attend ▼

Holy Week Liturgies

Ravenna United Methodist Church

Dignity/Seattle, St. Ignatius Catholic Community and our host, Ravenna United Methodist Church, are all sponsoring special Holy Week liturgies, to which everyone is invited. All services listed below are in the Catholic tradition and will take place at RUMC, 5751-33rd Ave NE in Seattle.

Palm Sunday Mass

April 1st, 1:00 p.m.

St. Ignatius

Holy Thursday Mass

April 5th, 7:00 p.m.

St. Ignatius

Good Friday Taize Service

April 6th, 7:00 p.m.

Joint RUMC and St. Ignatius

The Great Vigil of Easter

Saturday, April 7th, 10:00 p.m.

St. Ignatius

Easter Sunday Mass

April 8th, 6:00 p.m.

Dignity/Seattle ▼

Inside: Washington State Domestic Partnership Bill looks likely to become law.

Official Business

Dignity/Seattle Board Members

| | |
|------------------|----------------------------|
| Jim Rankin | President |
| Steve Kearney | Vice-Pres., Social Chair |
| Denise Arceneaux | Secretary, Liturgy Chair |
| Delia Vita | Treasurer |
| Paula Lavallee | At-large, Membership Chair |

DignityUSA Board Members from Seattle

| | |
|----------------|--------------------------|
| Paula Lavallee | Secretary |
| Leo Egashira | At-large, Communications |

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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.

Domestic Partnership Bill

Passes Washington State Senate March 1st Marriage Equality Bill fails committee

On March 1st, just three days after “Equality Day” at the State Capitol in Olympia, the Washington State Senate voted in a strong majority 28-19, with two abstentions, to allow gay & lesbian couples and unmarried senior citizens to register and secure domestic partnership benefits. The vote was very much along party lines, although four Democrats and one Republican voted against their caucuses.

The State House of Representatives, which will next consider the legislation, is also expected to pass the bill very easily since Democrats hold a 62-to-36 seat advantage over Republicans. Governor Christine Gregoire (D) has indicated she will sign the bill into law when it reaches her desk.

The bill will confer inheritance rights, health care power of attorney, funeral arrangement rights, and organ & tissue donations to gay & lesbian couples and senior citizens over 62 years of age who register with the state and meet certain living arrangement criteria. The decision to include senior citizens was both a calculated political strategy and a matter of fairness for social security beneficiaries who stood to lose deceased spousal benefits upon remarriage.

State Senator Ed Murray (D-Seattle) shepherded the bill through the Senate; last year, as State Representative in the House, he spearheaded the successful effort to pass the “Gay Civil Rights Bill.”

The good news about the pending domestic partnership law becoming a reality is tempered by the failure of the sister “Gay Marriage” bill to get out of committee this legislative session. Proponents of marriage equality acknowledged the difficult political climate for such new, radical legislation, but vowed that this was the first salvo in what is expected to be a multi-year, protracted struggle. Unlike the 29 years it took to pass the Gay Civil Rights Bill, marriage equality is expected to become politically palatable perhaps as early as within five years, according to many observers. The soon-to-be enacted domestic partnership bill is viewed as a first step, correcting some of the most egregious discriminatory provisions of current law.

Washington State will soon join a handful of states that have recognized at least some partnership rights for gay and lesbian couples.

Gay marriage: Massachusetts.

Civil unions: Connecticut, Vermont, New Jersey.

Domestic partnerships: California, Maine, Hawaii, District of Columbia.

Pending domestic partnership legislation: New Hampshire, New Mexico, Oregon, Washington.

Despite slow but palpable progress, political leaders are calling for vigilance, since radical right wing activists are already gathering signatures to repeal both last year’s Gay Civil Rights Bill and this year’s Domestic Partnership Bill through ballot initiatives.

The situation just 120 miles north of Seattle is unbelievably more progressive: Canada has legalized gay marriage at the federal level, becoming only one of five nations to do so (the others are The Netherlands, Belgium, Spain and South Africa). Over a dozen other nations, mostly in Europe, recognize same-sex civil unions. ▼

Dignity/Vancouver BC/Dignité

Dignity/Vancouver BC

604/432-1230

Monday, March 5th. 7:30 p.m. Business meeting. Vince & Peter’s. 604/325-1554.

Saturday, March 17th or 24th. Lenten Day of Reflection. Details to be announced.

Thursday, March 29th. “Dining out for Life” fundraising dinner. Time and venue to be announced.