



Newsletter

July 2008



1776—2008

Dignity & St. Ignatius Liturgy Schedules

Ravenna United Methodist Church 5751-33rd Ave NE Seattle
 Every Sunday → 10:30 a.m. St. Ignatius (UPSTAIRS)
 July 13, August 10 → 6:00 p.m. Dignity/Seattle

20th Annual Pride Week Breakfast a Success!

Nearly \$2500 in gross receipts were collected from the raffle and breakfast on Saturday, June 28, 2008. Proceeds will be divided among Multifaith Works, Verbena (through the Pride Foundation Endowment Fund) and Dignity/Seattle. Please patronize these donors and thank them on behalf of Dignity/Seattle.

Raffle Grand Prizes

- Handmade Quilt, made and donated by **Teri Lapetino** and **Janet Voorhies**
- 4-night stay at "The Vermont Street Cottage," San Francisco, donated by **John Weston**.
- 3-night stay at the "Pacific Suite" condominium, Lincoln City, OR, donated by **Joe Weston**.
- 4-hour yacht cruise on the "Distant Drummer" sailboat with gourmet meal served aboard, donated by **Alan Scott**, Dignity member.

Food Donations

- \$100 gift card from the **QFC at Broadway Market** 417 Broadway E. 206/328-6920
- **Laure Hauge**
- **Paula Hills & Patty Dolan**
- **Paula Lavallee & Tish Charette**
- **Jim Rankin**
- **German Rodriguez**
- **Janet Voorhies & Teri Lapetino**



Raffle Prizes

- Dinner for two at any **Julia's Restaurant** 300 Broadway E. 206/860-1818. (Also in Wallingford & Issaquah)
- Two tickets to Le Faux Show at **Julia's Broadway Restaurant**
- Breakfast or lunch for two at **Mae's Café** 6412 Phinney Ave N. 206/782-1222
- \$50 (value) gift certificate from **Market Spice Stores** Pike Place Market. 206/622-6340
- Brunch for two at the **Rosebud Café** 719 E Pike St. 206/323-6636
- Two gift certificates for massages from **John Sabol**, L.M.P., 1122 E Pike 206/860-1267
- Two Handcrafted Rainbow Pillar Candles made and donated by **Beck Eatch**



Volunteers

Friday set-up:

Tish Charette, Laure Hauge, Steve Kearney, Paula Lavallee, Jim Rankin, Jim Weston.

Kitchen Crew:

Patty Dolan, Laure Hauge, Paula Hills, Paula Lavallee, Teri Lapetino, Annah Petersen, Delia Vita, Janet Voorhies
 Dish washers: Elizabeth Payne, Chris Hanssmann, Philip Knowles, Carl Johnston

Greeters/Ticket Sales:

Tish Charette, Jim Marshall, Jim Rankin, Alan Scott

Servers:

Keegan Dolan, Kerry Dolan, Greg Hermsen, Jane Linden, Mike Linden, Pat Roche, Marc Schulte, Joe Talfeski, Jim Weston

Raffle Prizes (continued)

- Two \$25 gift cards to Starbucks donated by **Paula Hills**

Official Business

Dignity/Seattle Board Members

Paula Lavallee	President
Jim Rankin	Vice President
Denise Arceneaux	Secretary (Liturgy chair)
Delia Vita	Treasurer (Social co-chair)
Alan Scott	At large (Social co-chair)

DignityUSA Board Member from Seattle

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.

Board Minutes Summary, June 5 2008

(Edited. For complete minutes, see Secretary)
Meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m. at Delia Vita's house. Dignity prayer was read. All board members were present. Minutes were read.

M/M/S/C: To approve the May 7, 2008 meeting minutes as submitted.

Treasurer's report: (Delia Vita)

Checking Acct.

Beginning Balance:	\$1793.09
Deposit: Collection May '08:	116.00
Donation	140.00
Breakfast Tickets & Raffle	317.00
Total Deposits	\$573.00
Ending Balance:	\$2366.08

Expenses:

SGN ad:	30.00
Phone:	42.30
Rent: RUMC:	75.00
Liturgy: Presider's stipend:	30.00
Total Expenses	\$177.30
Ending Balance:	\$2188.78

Savings Acct.

Beginning Balance:	\$1598.24
Interest income	0.11
Ending Balance:	\$1598.35

M/M/S/C: To accept financial report as submitted.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Social Committee: (Alan Scott and Delia V.)

- Rosebud quarterly Birthday/Anniversary event was a success. 11 people showed up.
- Richard Lannon's get-together was also well attended.
- 35th Anniversary Party – Paula contacted the National Board to see if they would want to meet here for their board meeting in October instead. The National Board, however, indicated that they cannot come to Seattle for their board meeting since they had already been invited to Twin Cities. Their meeting will, however, be on the 2nd weekend in October so there will potentially be no conflict with our meeting date so far. No further progress has been made on making arrangements for the Anniversary Party. Delia still has to contact Rock Salt regarding prices.

Membership Committee: (Paula Lavallee)

- Paula still has to send out letters and brochures for new and lapsed members.

OLD BUSINESS:

- Public Health : Everything is still set up for Pride Breakfast. The Board decided it wouldn't be worth the time and effort on the Public Health's part to come to a Birthday/Anniversary event since they would be soliciting the same people as with Pride Breakfast and there would be no parking.
- Pride Breakfast: Central Lutheran parking lot sign: We need to have a sign to make sure that once the event is over, everyone involved with the Pride Breakfast will clear the parking lot. Donations: Paula Hills will donate 2 - \$25 certificates for the raffle. Ad: Ads have already been placed in the SGN for two weeks. Workers: The kitchen crew will be there. We are missing some servers. We need as many workers as we can get. Verbena: We need to leave our intention of donating to Verbena as is, despite their current financial difficulties. We will decide upon another organization at a future date only if we cannot safely donate to them.
- Leo's E-mail: Fundraiser: DignityUSA President: We will meet with DignityUSA President who will be visiting friends here on June 20th at 6:00 p.m. We have yet to decide where we will be meeting. We will let Leo decide this with some suggestions from the Board. Possible second monthly Mass? Paula brought up the subject at Mass on Sunday to see how many people will attend. No one was in favor of it.

Next Board Meeting: 6:00 p.m., Wednesday, July 9, 2008, at Delia's home.

Meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.
Respectfully submitted by
Denise Arceneaux, Secretary

Seattle lecture on June 7th

Australian Bishop Geoffrey Robinson cites institutional obsession with “Power” and “Sex” as main obstacles to Roman Catholic Church reform

By Leo N. Egashira



Retired Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Sydney, Australia, Geoffrey Robinson, probably felt much at home when he visited Seattle on Saturday, June 7th. The cool, drizzly weather in Seattle was probably not much different than the current late fall weather in Sydney.

Bishop Robinson was toward the end of a one-month speaking tour of the United States promoting his book, “Confronting Power and Sex in the Catholic Church: Reclaiming the Spirit of Jesus” (Collegeville, Minnesota, Liturgical Press, 2008). His touring schedule and animated vigor at age 71 belies his retirement four years ago for health reasons.

His Seattle appearance was sponsored by the progressive Catholic reform organization, Call to Action--Western Washington (CTAWW), which orchestrated a media blitz in paid radio ads and print notifications. A request to place a paid ad in *The Progress*, the Archdiocese of Seattle’s weekly newspaper, was rejected. Similarly, an attempt to arrange a meeting between Seattle Archbishop Alexander Brunett and Bishop Robinson was also rejected. Indeed, Archbishop Brunett was one of the co-signers of a letter by American bishops requesting that Bishop Robinson cancel his speaking tour.

Despite official opposition and with the timely publication Saturday morning of a very comprehensive *Seattle Times* article (“Australian bishop calls on Catholic Church to take a serious look at sensitive issues,” by Janet I. Tu. http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/localnews/2004463463_robinson07m.html), 300 people streamed into Roosevelt High School to hear Bishop Robinson’s rationale and prescription for change.

After brief welcome statements by Tom & Betty Hill, CTAWW co-chairs, award-winning journalist and Catholic author Robert Blair Kaiser (*R.F.K. Must Die*, 2008, *Cardinal Mahony*, 2008) introduced Bishop Robinson as a “modern day Martin Luther,” challenging the “unreasonable authoritarianism that is driving thinking Catholics away from the Church.”

Bishop Robinson took the stage and immediately invoked the motto of his hero--assassinated Archbishop of San Salvador, Oscar Romero: “To be a voice for the voiceless.”

From 1994 to 2003, Bishop Robinson was the chairman of the committee investigating the sexual abuse crisis in Australia. The experience of listening to the abuse of voiceless children by powerful clergy changed Bishop Robinson profoundly. He started writing, and came to the logical conclusion that the causes of sexual abuse—Power and Sex—permeated the institutional culture of the Catholic Church, which in turn has led to other dysfunctions such as celibacy, misogyny and homophobia.

Addressing sexual abuse properly:

Bishop Robinson stated that addressing abuse in the church properly requires looking at three fundamental issues, and following the arguments to wherever they may lead, including critique of the Church.

1. A more profound study of the immediate cause of abuse
 - a. Unhealthy psychology
 - b. Unhealthy ideas
 - c. Unhealthy living conditions
2. Rectifying the currently inadequate response to abuse
 - a. It’s not enough to blame bishops
 - b. Why did otherwise good people act that way?
 - institutional factor
3. A study of all aspects of Power and Sex (really more about Power than Sex)

Some aspects of Power in the Church: Hebrews 5:1-2 states, “Every high priest is taken from among men and made their representative before God.” In the Greek text, “taken from” implies equality, whereas in the Latin text, it implies assumption or taking over. This latter interpretation which the church adopted, codifies the false relationship of a perfect priest and his followers at the heart of community. Priests are human, however, and when mistakes occur, the perfection ascribed to them precludes a judgment of understanding failings and instead leads to a judgment of ultimate hypocrisy.

So much institutional energy has been invested in Papal Authority that it is difficult to challenge it. Confounding this is the separate notion of infallibility which is used to augment that authority. Pope Paul IV’s 1667 encyclical *Humanae Vitae* (opposing contraception and abortion) was not infallible, but to question it and accept arguments against it would have the effect of refuting 1000 years of papal teachings and challenge other teachings, such as women’s ordination, homosexuality and celibacy.

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Bishop Geoffrey Robinson
(continued from page 3)

When a priest is ordained, he swears fealty to the Pope, not God. In the course of investigating the sexual abuse scandal, Bishop Robinson said "I experienced a profound conflict between being the Pope's man and the victims' man."

Some aspects of Sex in the Church:

Modern church "understanding" of sex is based on the Old Testament ethics of "Property" and "Purity" that were explicitly refuted by Jesus and the New Testament. In the Old Testament, human relationships were defined in ownership terms: Wives, concubines, children and slaves were all property of the male master. Women were sexual property. When Jesus said that a man committing adultery against his wife was sinning, Jesus was stating clearly that women were no longer property, but human beings with rights.

The concept of "Purity" was well-recorded in Old Testament writings and rituals. Women were unclean during menstruation; relations without ritual purification were deemed unclean. Leviticus lists a whole slate of actions that are "unclean," "impure" or an "abomination." Bishop Robinson puts these Levitical admonitions in their place: "Homosexuality is an abomination, but so is eating lobster!"

"Jesus demolished both ethics, but left no roadmap or substitution. So, the Church replaced them with the concept of 'Natural' and 'Unnatural.' This is an untenable idea. According to the Church, 'Natural Sex' must be unitive and procreative. This stance has led to unhealthy ideas: Even thinking about sex is a sin! And a mortal one at that, not a venial sin! Sex has become a 'sin against God.'"

Under this logic, "this 'sin against God' is a greater offense than a 'sin against a minor.' It is offensive to God because it harms innocents. The bishops' solution is to rehabilitate, repent and restore: Forgiving past wrong and preventing future wrong.

Read Chapter Ten! ("The Return to an Original Sexual Ethic"):

"We must completely abandon the sexual morality of the Roman Catholic Church, and replace it with one that emphasizes persons and relationships."

How do we bring about change?

"It is most difficult to change a thousand year old culture. But, it has as its starting point a relationship with church authority. Sometimes confrontation is essential, but that alone will not lead to change. Any confrontation must lead to conversation.

"Changes sought must come from Papal Authority; we must work with the bishops. But, don't spend all your energies with bishops. Work 'sideways' with other Catholics. As Gandhi said, 'We must be the change we want to see.'

"The sexual abuse issue is the topic to open the conversation.

"John-Paul II did nothing when incidents of sexual abuse were brought to his attention: Had he addressed the issue in 1988, bishops' loyalty to the Pope would have worked for victims instead of against them.

Conclusion & personal observations:

Bishop Robinson remains the eternal optimist. He feels that the needed changes in the Church will occur . . . eventually. His argument to engage the hierarchy is a difficult message for many frustrated reform Catholics who have formed authentic faith communities outside institutional structures and informed by experience and conscience.

On a personal note, Bishop Robinson is one of the all-too-few beacons of hope and change in the church. That they are few, retired or otherwise relieved of pastoral duties is no accident. For U.S. Catholics, Bishop Robinson would stand in good company with the likes of retired Seattle Archbishop Raymond G. Hunthausen and retired Auxiliary Bishop Thomas J. Gumbleton of Detroit.

The painful hemorrhaging of morals and the faithful from the Church has gone on much too long. For its own sake, the Church must abandon its myopic lack of vision and embrace Bishop Robinson's blueprint for meaningful reform and spiritual renewal. ▼

Dignity/VancouverBC/Dignité

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July 1
1867—2008
Happy Canada Day!

As of press time, information on July events had not been received. Please contact D/V if you are planning to visit our neighbour to the north.

Vancouver Gay Pride Weekend:
Friday-Monday, August 1-4, 2009