



Fortunate Families Newsletter

Number 22

September 2006

Catholic Families Advocating Respect and Justice for their Gay & Lesbian Children

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Words to ponder

The durability of prejudice is no reason to go slow in pushing for full equality. Speak up for fairness, and trust that the nation will catch up.

-- Deb Price, "Quest for equal rights is arduous," Rochester Democrat & Chronicle, Aug. 10, 2006



I believe that homosexuality is a matter of sexual orientation rather than preference. Discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation is, in my view, comparable to discrimination on other civil

rights grounds. It is wrong, and it should be prohibited by law.... I think that the only purpose served by the campaign for the amendment is the humiliation of gay Americans.... In reality, it is gay bashing.

-- Episcopal priest and former Senator John Danforth, in his book, *Faith and Politics: How the 'Moral Values' Debate Divides America and How to Move Forward Together.*

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Parents Voice Project Survey Update

By Casey Lopata

As of September 15, we have 229 surveys from parents of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender daughters and sons -- from 40 states & three Canadian Provinces.



The survey will continue indefinitely--the more parents who respond, the stronger the network and the louder the Parent Voice. Please help get the survey to more parents and encourage them to respond.

In the August newsletter, we reported that more than half of parent respondents are willing to be "peer counselors" (we're still looking for a title that more accurately reflects that this is about parents, generally not trained counselors, sharing their experience with other parents to support them in this journey—for now we'll use "peer sharers").

The next most frequently checked ways in which parents are willing to help (slightly more than 100 for each) are:

- work with others to maintain and supply resources
- help plan/implement a workshop for Catholic parents of LGBT children
- work with others to start a support group.

This willingness to help others speaks to the isolation many parents experienced in their own journey from the realization that their daughter or son is lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender to acceptance and affirmation. Parents who've experienced this want to make that journey easier for other parents in a world—and a church—that considers LGBT people somehow less equal than heterosexual people.

With the help of Dr. Tim Franz, Associate Professor of Psychology at St. John Fisher College, we are fortunate (how apt!) to have two advanced statistics students to help analyze the survey data. In addition to basic statistical analyses, they will also conduct a thematic analysis of the responses to open-ended questions. We expect their final report in December.

Meanwhile we will continue to work on developing networks of parents with common interests. If you submitted a survey and provided contact information, please be patient, you'll be hearing from us!

Kidnapped in Iraq: The closet or death

Peace activist James Loney knew he would be killed if his Iraqi captors found out he is gay. So did his partner, Dan, back in Canada, who had to go back into the closet.

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The night before Canadian peace activist James Loney was due to leave Toronto for Baghdad, his longtime partner, Dan Hunt, held him close in the darkness of their bedroom.



“James turned to me and said, ‘What would you do if this was going to be our last night together? How would we spend it?’ ” Hunt remembers.

Earlier that evening they’d played “500 Miles” by the Proclaimers and danced together. They thought of it as their song, and the next day they played it in the car on the way to the airport. “I realized that the present was all we ever have,” Hunt says, “and that it was beautiful.”

Loney was making his third trip to Iraq as a member of the Christian Peacemaker Teams—an ecumenical Christian organization opposed to violence and dedicated to spreading peace. The couple had talked about the possibility that Loney could die over there. “But, I said, ‘My worst nightmare would be if you got kidnapped and I saw videos of you on television,’ ” Hunt recalls.

On November 26, 2005, Loney was ambushed near the Umm al-Qura mosque in western Baghdad and kidnapped along with three colleagues. Their kidnappers, a previously unknown insurgent group calling themselves the Swords of Righteousness Brigade, demanded the release of all Iraqi prisoners being held by coalition forces. Otherwise, they said, they would kill the hostages.

Back home Hunt was forced into a kind of captivity all his own. Should Loney’s sexual orientation become known by his captors, he would almost certainly be killed. It had to be hidden. Officials handling the kidnapping, including Canada’s external affairs department, asked Hunt to stay out of the story. A widely reproduced photograph of a handsome, smiling Loney appeared in print with Hunt cropped out. Hunt couldn’t talk about the pain he was feeling. Outside a small circle of close friends, he couldn’t tap in to the

kind of public sympathy and support that the spouses and families of the other captives were getting. “I called Dan right away,” says Loney’s brother Matt, a meteorologist in Vancouver who was traveling in Ecuador when he first heard the news. “I knew Dan would be affected very deeply by what was going on.”

Loney’s roots as an activist run deep. Eschewing any traditional aspiration to wealth or success, Loney has lived a near-monastic life, working with underprivileged children, the poor, the homeless, and the sick. “In the Christian life we’re called to live according to God’s imagination,” Loney says. “The Bottom line, for the Christian, is a life of love, and of self-giving.”

Hunt and Loney met at 16 when they were both counselors at Columbus Boys Camp for underprivileged boys in Orilla, Canada. Hunt fell in love with Loney when they were in college together, but Loney was focused on his life in the church and his desire to help others. After nearly joining the priesthood, Loney discovered the Catholic Worker Movement when his friend William Payne invited him to a “house of hospitality.” Founded in 1933, the CWM is predicated on voluntary poverty and communal living in, and cofounding, CWM houses.

But the communal living arrangement was not without its stresses on Loney and Hunt. Hunt moved out in 1993 but stayed close by. By then the two men were a couple. “Those commandments that we share in common, those values are the foundation of our relationship,” Loney says of the Catholic Worker experience. “I would describe it as an anchor for us.”

Joining the Christian Peacemaker Teams in 2000 was a logical next step for Loney. Like the CWM, CPT is a pacifist organization, founded on the notion that no Christian should, in any manner, participate in acts of war. His 2005 trip to Iraq was to be a 10-day fact-finding visit. Ever suspicious of the media, Loney wanted his own answers. “The purpose was to try to understand the conflict from a grassroots point of view and bring that news home with us,” he says.

Four days after his arrival, Loney and three colleagues had just finished a meeting with the Muslim Scholars Association when their vehicle was nearly hit by a white car. Four men with guns got out and climbed into the Peacemakers’ vehicle. They drove for 20 minutes to a compound behind a long wall. “We were taken one by one into the living room of the house, and we were searched. They took our cameras, my cell phone,

notebooks, our money, passports, my belt, all our belts. They handcuffed us behind our backs.”

Although none of the Peacemakers spoke Arabic, they were able to make rudimentary conversation with one of the captors who spoke some English. They nicknamed the man “Number One.” “We have this piece of paper we call ‘magic sheet,’ and it’s an Arabic-English explanation of what we are doing,” Loney says. He gave it to Number One, who seemed frustrated by what it said. To Loney, his reaction indicated they might have abducted the wrong men. “He told me, ‘You are a peaceful man, and I love the peaceful man, but this does not change anything,’” Loney recalls. “‘We must fight the Americans who have invade our country.’”

Number One showed Loney photographs of his young nieces and nephews whom he said had been killed by American soldiers at a checkpoint. The man told Loney that he was actually sympathetic to the American soldiers. “He said, ‘Why are [American] parents sending their children to do this?’” Loney told the man about the work of peace activist Cindy Sheehan in the United States. “Number One said, ‘Yes, we know this story, it’s very famous. But it doesn’t change anything. What are we going to do? We have to fight to get the Americans put. This is our country.’”


The next day Loney began to fear that his sexuality might be discovered. The kidnappers told him they would be checking into the backgrounds of the hostages to see if they really were peace activists. Loney thought of the Internet articles he had written about gay life and worried that his partner would come out to the media. “It was a really big fear for the first couple of weeks,” he says. “Really big.”

Back in Canada, Loney’s friends and family—including Hunt—were one step ahead. They managed to have several of his articles taken off the Internet, and the cone of silence regarding his homosexuality was proving effective, if excruciating for Hunt. In a cruel twist of fate, Hunt had no legal standing as Loney’s partner and thus could not demand to be kept informed by authorities.

“Dan and I kept in touch by cell phone,” says Matt Loney, who acted as a family spokesman to the media. “He was telling me things like the [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] and foreign affairs weren’t keeping him in the loop.”

There was also a measure of tension within the Loney family regarding James’s relationship with Hunt. “There was tremendous pressure on my family,” Matt Loney

explains. “This caused a lot of behind-the-scenes tension. My parents come from another generation. They’re intensely Catholic and very conservative, and they haven’t been able to put my brother’s sexuality in a context that works. They were forced to confront that as part of this. And come to the realization that Dan was a much bigger part of James’s life than they had previously been led to believe.”


All the while, Hunt was trying to process the thought that his partner might never come home. “The first 24 hours were like moving through molasses,” he says. “The second week I was laying in bed and I started thinking about Jim’s funeral. I started to think about what I would say in a eulogy. And then, basically, I spent the whole day crying.”  Several weeks passed, and Loney noticed that the kidnappers seemed to know very little about him. They were still asking rudimentary questions about his life. This meant his secret might be safe. “I thought about Dan a lot at the beginning and wondered what he would be doing and how he would be coping,” Loney recalls. “I wondered that about all my family. I had the profound feeling of gratitude, and then that sort of gradually...I just stopped doing that. The desire to think about people at home just evaporated.”

As the months rolled on, a routine took shape inside the Baghdad house. Loney prayed, using his fingers to count off the decades of a rosary. At night the captives slept handcuffed to one another, and they were individually handcuffed through the day except when they went to the bathroom. Three times a day they would receive a piece of pita bread with some cheese, or a few French fries. Loney would eventually lose more than 30 pounds.

The captives shared their life stories, including the story of Loney’s painful struggle with his homosexuality. For his part, Loney tried to remain human to his captors, and even in his vulnerable state he attempted to minister to them in the same non-proselytizing way he had ministered to the homeless as a Catholic Worker.

“I treated them with respect and with a certain amount of care,” he says. “Part of that comes from the Christian gospel idea of ‘Love your enemy.’” Loney was particularly interested by the kidnapper they had nicknamed “Junior,” who claimed he had lost both his parents, his sister, his best friend, and his fiancée in a bombing by coalition forces. Near Christmas, the young man confided to Loney that he was considering becoming a suicide bomber to avenge his family. “How do you reach somebody who wants to use his body as a

weapon because he was so consumed with hatred and despair?" Loney muses. "I didn't know, but it profoundly disturbed me. I wanted to pray for him. But I wanted it to be a prayer that he could feel in his body somehow, in a tangible, physical way. So, I thought, *Maybe I could give him a massage?*"


One morning Loney offered, and Junior accepted. "I had this feeling that he had never been touched that way before," Loney says. While he acknowledges the danger he might have been in had Junior known he was being massaged by a gay man, Loney was determined to reach him—to heal some of his pain and bring him a measure of peace. Later, in halting English, Junior told Loney that he no longer wished to be a suicide bomber. "We'd Had conversations about this, and he would ask me about it. I would tell him, 'No, no, no. Not good.' In our last conversation he said, 'Me no suicide bomb.'" 

On February 12, fellow hostage Tom Fox, the only American in the group, was taken to another part of the house. Weeks later, according to Loney, the kidnapers told the rest of the hostages that they were going to make an announcement the Fox would be killed but assured them that it was only a ruse to put pressure on the Canadian and British governments, because, the captors said, the American government didn't care about him. That night, Loney caught a brief glimpse of an Aljazeera broadcast. Fox's bound body had been discovered in western Baghdad on March 10 and had been recovered by U.S. Forces. He'd been shot in the head and chest.

"After Tom was murdered and his body was found, I knew Jim would be next," Hunt says. "We had not been able to communicate [with the captors]. We'd had no communication, and they had killed someone. Our response—which had been to try to raise the profile of the case—to contain the issues, to be available, everything we could do—had failed. They had killed Tom."

On the morning of March 23, Loney and his fellow hostages heard the sounds of a tank, of breaking glass, and boots on the ground. A contingent of British, American, Canadian, and Iraqi forces stormed the house and freed the hostages. One of the soldiers pushed forward a dirty, blindfolded man. When the man's hood was removed, Loney saw that it was the captor they had nicknamed, "Medicine Man."

"I guess he had been found or had been captured," Loney says. "He may have been detained earlier and had brought the troops to the house." Loney walked

through the door of the house. Noticing Medicine Man, blindfolded and facing the all, Loney reached over and touched his shoulder in a gesture of compassion and empathy. The man flinched. "I wish now that I had said my name to him or something," Loney says. "I wish I could know who he was as a person, and he could know me." 

James Loney landed at Toronto's Lester B. Pearson International Airport on March 26, 2006, a Sunday. He was met by his family, who had come with Hunt. Unable, perhaps, to shake off the bonds of that temporary closet, Hunt asked Loney if he was ready to come out to the press. "James just said, 'Dan, no more prisons,'" Hunt remembers. "We've suffered enough."

Months later, Loney and Hunt are sitting in the living room of the Spartan but comfortable communal house they share on a shady street near Lake Ontario. Dressed in faded jeans and a T-shirt, Loney looks sunburned and rested, having regained most of the weight he lost during the four months he spent in captivity. Although he bears only a nominal resemblance to the emaciated captive with the wide, haunted eyes whose image was broadcast on Aljazeera, the ordeal is never far from his thoughts. He says the war in Iraq was predicated on lies, and while acutely aware of the paradox inherent in a peacemaker being rescued from captivity by soldiers, Loney is resolute and unapologetic.

"Our captors would say to us, as time dragged on and on, 'Be patient. When you are free, we will be free,'" Loney says. "I don't know if I would have had the strength—maybe by God's grace I would have—but if it meant that the violence could have stopped, I would have offered my life."

For Hunt too the wounds have been slow to heal. "People don't know me," he says. "I was sitting around with people who were hearing the story of Jim's kidnapping. They weren't close friends, they were acquaintances. They spoke of Jim's family and coming to terms and what they did, and how strongly they must have missed him. But nobody said to me, 'What was it like for you? How did you endure that?' It's only queer people who have recognized that. That's how powerful the myth was, and that is how deep the wound is. The closet is the place of debasement, diminishment, and suffocation. We cannot be in there. During the kidnapping I felt every form of homophobia out there, including the kind that lives in ourselves."

Rowe is an award-winning Toronto-based journalist and the author of the essay collection Looking for Brothers.



Extending family

Is there really only one way to make a Catholic household?

By Bryan Cones, associate editor of U.S. Catholic

Early in June, just as the U.S. Senate was debating a constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage, the Pontifical Council on the Family issued a document that in no uncertain terms rejected that and more. “Family and Human Procreation” not only lamented “gay couples [who] claim for themselves the same rights as those that are specific to husband and wife, [even] the right to adopt” but also heterosexual couples “willingly made sterile” by having only one or two children.

Behind the nuclear issues of same-sex marriage and adoption, however, is a larger more complicated question: Just what is a family? The Vatican and the



U.S. bishops of late have defined it quite simply as marriage between a man and a woman, which Pope Benedict praised in his first encyclical, *Deus caritas est*, as “the very epitome of love [such that] all other

kinds of love immediately seem to fade in comparison.” Although I wouldn’t want to take anything away from the holiness and importance of marriage, I wonder if in our desire to defend it as an institution we aren’t overlooking some resources our tradition can offer us as we struggle with these difficult issues.

Indeed, from the very beginning Christianity proposed a new kind of family, God’s “household,” that went beyond biology and ethnicity, one that included not only married couples and their children but others as well. Jesus himself, the gospels imply, was unmarried, and he gathered as disciples both married and unmarried men and women. Soon after Pentecost the early church joined both Jews and Greeks in one household (though not without difficulty) in which all was shared in common.

For some early Christians the traditional Greco-Roman household headed by the *paterfamilias* was replaced either with a form of common desert life, in which the *abbas* and *ammās* were spiritual directors rather than biological parents, or with outright isolation. The medieval church saw an explosion of new “families”: the

monastic movement of St. Benedict and St. Scholastica; the mendicant groups of St. Francis and St. Clare; the Beguine women’s communities of the late Middle Ages; the secret service orders of the modern period. These religious refer to themselves still today as “sisters” and “brothers” not because they are biologically related but because they share a common commitment and mission.

Indeed, as we well know, marriage was judged a lesser path than celibacy for most of church history. Pope Benedict’s spiritual father, St. Augustine of Hippo, considered marriage a mere remedy for sexual desire and would probably be a little surprised to see marriage’s glorious, if appropriate, rehabilitation as the “epitome of love.”

Our own age, too, has seen new Catholic families created. Catholic workers forge family ties with the poor by sharing their lives; the communities of L’Arche create households of developmentally disabled people and their “assistants.” The growing church movements often gather as one family married couples, single people, and vowed celibates.

Parishes—church households usually headed by a celibate man—are the most obvious places where “family” in all its diversity is on display. Gathered together are nuclear families, of course, but there are also widows and widowers, singles of all ages, religious, single parents and their children, children raised by relatives, families created by adoption, and, yes, some households headed by same-sex couples and individual lesbian and gay people. And I think it safe to say that this variety is part of what makes us Catholic, though it’s not always easy.



The challenges outlined by the Vatican document on family aren’t going away, of course, and the fall U.S. congressional elections are not likely to bring out the best in us when it comes to this issue. And there’s no doubt that the mixture of sex, birth control, and the new technologies of procreation complicate matters more than a little.

But our Catholic tradition has more to offer than a one-size-fits-all approach to what a family is, and the many kinds of families that make up God’s household deserve their rightful place in our assembly. Perhaps Jesus’ own description of his family might guide us on the difficult road ahead: “Who are my mother and my brothers?... Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother” (Mark 3:33-35).

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The Sixth National Symposium on Catholicism and Homosexuality

For Catholic leaders, ministers, laity, educators, lesbian/gay persons and their friends, family, & advocates

Outward Signs: Lesbian/Gay Catholics in a Sacramental Church



March 16-18, 2007, 6:30 pm Friday to 1 pm Sunday
Sheraton Bloomington Hotel, Minneapolis, Minnesota

General Session Speakers and Topics

Brian McNaught - *Baptism and the Experience of "Coming Out"*

Margaret Farley, RSM - *Matrimony and Same-Sex Relationships*

Panel: Archbishop Francis Hurley, Bishop Leroy Matthiesen, and Bishop Joseph Sullivan
- *Healing our Wounds and Building a Eucharistic Community*

Richard McBrien - *Ordination to the Priesthood and Gay Men*

Helen Prejean, CSJ - *Reconciliation, Liberation, and Lesbian/Gay People*

Focus Session Speakers and Topics

Michael Bayly - *Breaking Bread: Gay and Lesbian Parish Ministry*

Sharon Casey, OP - *Lesbian Nuns: Steps, Stumbles, and Strides*

Fran Ferder, FSPA - *Sacraments, Psychology, and Lesbian/Gay People*

Christine Gudorf - *Intersex, Transgendered Persons, and the Sacraments*

Diana Hayes - *The Sacrament of Reconciliation and Homophobia*

Luke Timothy Johnson - *Word Made Flesh: Scripture and Homosexuality*

Anthony Kall, OFM Conv - *Gay Men in the Priesthood and Religious Life*

Brenda Kirby - *US Catholic Attitudes toward Homosexuality*

Daniel Maguire - *Conscience, Lesbian/Gay Catholics, and the Sacraments*

Gregory Maguire - *Baptism and Gay Parenting*

Pre-Symposium Conference

Friday, March 16th, 9 am to 4 pm, with British theologian James Alison

Navigating Uncharted Waters: The Gift of Faith and Growing Up GLBT

The Shape of a Daring Imagination: Coming Out and Coming Home

Special tracks: parents of lesbian/gay people, Catholic university & college personnel, lesbian/gay youth, pastoral ministers

For more information, or to receive a registration form (available in October), please contact
New Ways Ministry, 4012 29th Street, Mt. Rainier, Maryland 20712

Email: NewWaysM@verizon.net

Phone: 301-277-5674



News Notes

Jamie Raskin upset an incumbent Democrat in the Maryland state legislature primary. You might recall that Raskin, in a March hearing on a proposed amendment to the state constitution that would ban same-sex marriage, had this to say in response to an assertion that marriage is a biblical principle and it is solely between a man and a woman: 'People place their hand on a Bible and swear to uphold the Constitution. They don't put their hand on the Constitution and swear to uphold the Bible.'

63% said the will of the American people should have more influence on U.S. laws than the Bible (32% said the Bible).

Among Catholics 72% said the will of the American people (23% said the Bible).

-- July 6-19, 2006 Pew Research Center national survey - sample of 2003 adults.

In a survey of 13-18 year-old high schoolers:

- 7% of high schoolers identify themselves as gay.
- 65% say they were verbally or physically harassed or assaulted during the past year because of their perceived or actual appearance, gender, sexual orientation, gender expression, race/ethnicity, disability or religion.

-- The reason most commonly cited for being harassed frequently is a student's appearance, the way they look or their body size (39%).

-- The next most common reason for frequent harassment is perceived sexual orientation (33%).

- LGBT students are three times as likely as non-LGBT students to say they do not feel safe at school (22% vs. 7%).

- 90% of LGBT students vs. 62% of non-LGBT teens were harassed or assaulted during the past year.

-- Harris Interactive Poll of over 3400 students aged 13-18 and over 1,000 secondary school teachers conducted Jan. 13-31, 2005.

In June 2006, The Arkansas Supreme Court upheld a lower court ruling that a policy banning

gay and lesbian people from becoming foster parents is unconstitutional. In his opinion, Associate Justice Donald Corbin, said: "There is no correlation between the health, welfare and safety of foster children and the blanket exclusion of any individual who is a homosexual or who resides in a household with a homosexual."



Calendar

Oct. 6-8

Catholic Diocese of Cleveland **Emmaus 2006: Retreat for Gay & Lesbian Catholics & their Parents.** Parma, OH. Info: 440-884-9300 or <http://www.jrh-cleveland.org/emmaus.html>.

Oct. 8

Solidarity Sunday - a faith-based anti-violence initiative begun in 1995 by DignityUSA as a way of making opposition to anti-gay violence visible. For materials and ways to participate in Solidarity Sunday: www.dignityusa.org/solidarity

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Yes, I want to help *Fortunate Families*

Enclosed is my contribution: \$100.00 \$80.00 \$60.00 \$40.00 Other \$_____

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Pay by check; make your check payable to: Fortunate Families, Inc. **Please, U.S. dollars only, or charge.**

Charge your contribution by completing the information on the reverse side of this card.

Return to: **Fortunate Families, 239 Highland Parkway, Rochester, NY 14620**

Check here if you do not want your name listed in our Annual Report.

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Oct. 14 (Sat)

Retreat for Gay/Lesbian couples. Mercy Prayer Center (**Rochester, NY**). Info: Jim at 585-520-1925 or Jean at 585-244-3438, or jgb4tun8family@aol.com.

Oct 19 (Thurs)

Catholic Gay & Lesbian Family Ministry (**Rochester, NY**) sponsors the **Catholic Parents Rainbow Network** which usually meets the 3rd Thursday of each month from 7 to 9 PM at Good Shepherd Church in Henrietta, NY. Join other parents for prayers, sharing, and refreshments -- and for discussion with the Nazareth College GLBT ministry group. Info: 385-8170 or 671-6796, or email jksechrist@rochester.rr.com or maob@rochester.rr.com.

Nov. 3-5

Call To Action. Milwaukee, WI. Includes workshop presented by Mary Ellen and Casey Lopata, and a caucus for Catholic parents of LGBT daughters and sons. Info: 773-404-0004; cta@cta-usa.org; http://www.cta-usa.org.

Nov. 8-12

Creating Change Conference, Kansas City, MO. Sponsored by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, it includes a workshop presented by Mary Ellen and Casey Lopata.

Feb. 9 (Fri), 2007

Colloquium: "The Dawning Smile: Gay Contributions to Catholic

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Faithfulness" – **James Alison. Nazareth College (Rochester, NY), 1:30 PM.** Info: http://www.naz.edu/events/ShannonLecture/index.html.

March 16-18, 2007

New Ways Ministry's Sixth National Symposium -- Outward Signs: Lesbian/Gay Catholics in a Sacramental Church. Sheraton Bloomington Hotel, **Minneapolis, MN.** (See p.6 for more info).

July 5-8, 2007

DignityUSA Conference, Austin, TX. Contact info: info@dignityusa.org or http://www.dignityusa.org.

Sept. 27-30, 2007

National Association of Catholic Diocesan Lesbian and Gay Ministries Conference, Cleveland, OH. Contact info: office@nacdlgm.org or www.nacdlgm.org.



Thank you for your prayers and support. Since our August newsletter, 22 people and/or groups contributed! We are grateful for your support!!!

And we're thrilled that Mary's Pence awarded Fortunate Families a \$2500 grant for operational expenses! Likewise, for a \$400

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(see reverse side)

Charge my contribution: Visa _____ MC _____ Amount \$ _____
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\$20.00 \$25.00 \$50.00 Other \$ _____/month for # of months _____
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sponsorship for a conference exhibit table from the HRC Religion and Faith Project.

Fortunate Families, Inc. is a non-profit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3) public charity organization. Your contributions are fully tax-deductible.

Your donations help produce this newsletter; produce resources for ministers, parents, and other family members; and develop networks of parents throughout the U.S. and Canada.

Contributions to the Len Szumiloski Memorial Resource Fund enable us to send Fortunate Families resources, including our book, Fortunate Families, and our resource manuals, Seeds of Hope and More Seeds, to pastoral ministers who may not be able to afford them. It also enables us to purchase resources, books, CDs, videos, and DVDs for use in Fortunate Families ministry.



You can contribute by check or charge, or by going to this link: http://www.fortunatefamilies.com/make_a_contribution.htm

Your prayers and support strengthen our commitment to help families with gay, lesbian, and bisexual and transgender members to know they are indeed fortunate families.