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MEDIA ADVISORY

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For Immediate Release

Gay Catholics to Demonstrate before Pope's Speech at U.N.
Group Will Focus on Global Impact of Benedict XVI's Anti-Gay Campaign,
Celebrate Advances Made by Gay Catholics

WHEN: Saturday, April 12

PRESS CONFERENCE: 11:30 AM, *Location Details near U.N. to be announced*

DEMONSTRATION: 12 Noon, Ralph J. Bunche Park, 43rd Street and First Avenue, Manhattan

New York, NY. DignityUSA – the nation's oldest and most progressive organization of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Catholics and their supporters – and one of its largest local chapters, Dignity/New York, will hold a press conference and demonstration near the United Nations on Saturday, April 12, just a few days before Pope Benedict XVI's speech there on April 18. DignityUSA and Dignity/Washington will also sponsor several events in Washington, D.C., during the Pope's visit there from April 15-17.

Marianne Duddy-Burke, DignityUSA's Executive Director, said, "Our events will be peaceful, prayerful, and positive. At the same time, we are called by our faith to draw attention to the great harm that the Pope's harsh anti-gay words and actions have caused countless individuals and families throughout the world. We witness on their behalf."

Jeff Stone, a spokesperson for Dignity/New York, said, "We will focus on Pope Benedict's strident campaigns against civil rights and civil marriage for gay people in many nations, as well as his opposition to the use of condoms to slow the spread of HIV/AIDS. But we will also highlight growing support for gay civil rights and civil unions among Catholics in countries around the world."

Besides Duddy-Burke and Stone, speakers will include Lourdes Rodriguez-Nogues, a Cuban immigrant and lesbian activist who also serves as DignityUSA's Vice President; and gay Catholic activist and filmmaker Brendan Fay. Fay has recently been caught up in an international controversy involving the unauthorized use of images of his wedding to Dr. Thomas Moulton in a nationally televised speech by President Lech Kaczynski of Poland. Kaczynski views same-sex marriage as a threat to his overwhelmingly Catholic nation.

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