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EQUALLY BLESSED ASKS UNITED NATIONS VATICAN OBSERVER
TO CONDEMN UGANDAN VIOLENCE
Coalition calls on faithful Catholics to write to Archbishop Chullikatt

FEBRUARY 1, 2011—Equally Blessed, a coalition of four Roman Catholic organizations that support full equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people and their families both in the church and in civil society, today asked the Most Rev. Francis Chullikatt, the Vatican's permanent observer to the United Nations, to condemn violence against lesbian and gay people in Uganda.

In a letter signed by leaders of the four coalition members, Equally Blessed asked Chullikatt to renew the call of his predecessor, Archbishop Celestino Migliore, who condemned cruel and unusual punishment for homosexuality in December 2009. Chullikatt replaced Migliore in July 2010.

"All of us with lesbian or gay children can imagine the sickening horror of Ugandan parents as they see their children terrorized," said Casey Lopata, co-founder of Fortunate Families, a ministry for Catholic parents with LGBT children. "We implore Archbishop Chullikatt to help save the lives of these children of God by raising his voice in the international community."

Equally Blessed also encouraged other faithful Catholics to send their own letters to Archbishop Chullikatt respectfully asking him to use the Vatican's moral authority to safeguard gay and lesbian people in Uganda. Chullikatt's address is:

The Most Rev. Francis Chullikatt
Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See to the United Nations
25 East 39th Street
New York, NY 10016-0903

The text of Equally Blessed letter is below.

Equally Blessed is a coalition of faithful Catholics who support full equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people both in the church and in civil society. Equally Blessed includes four organizations that have spent a combined 112 years working on behalf of LGBT people and their families: Call to Action, DignityUSA, Fortunate Families, and New Ways Ministry.

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January 31, 2011

The Most Reverend Francis A. Chullikatt
Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See to the United Nations
25 East 39th St.
New York, NY 10016-0903

Dear Archbishop Chullikatt:

We write today as faithful Catholics who are deeply troubled by the violence and hatred being perpetrated on gay and lesbian people in Uganda. Just this week, activist David Kato

was murdered brutally after a magazine published his photograph and a caption urging that he be killed.

As shocking as Kato's death is, we fear that it will not be an isolated incident. Legislation that would make homosexuality a serious criminal offence, punished even by death, is pending in the Ugandan parliament and could be considered as early as February. We fear that this legislation has fanned the flames of hatred in Uganda and put the lives of many lesbian and gay children of God in danger. As Christians, we feel a particular obligation to stand in solidarity with our brothers and sisters in Uganda because, horrifyingly, it is Christians who are most responsible for the climate of terror that now exists.

We were grateful for the leadership of your predecessor, Archbishop Migliore, who, in December 2009, spoke out against "cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment" for homosexuality. We implore you, as His Holiness Benedict XVI's new representative to the United Nations, to renew the Vatican's voice against both the terror being visited on lesbian and gay people in Uganda and the possible legislative enshrinement of their cruel and inhuman treatment. Please use the moral authority of the Catholic Church to unify the international community in opposition to these violations of the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights and the inherent dignity of all people.

Thank you for considering our request to raise your voice and that of the Holy Father to save the lives of gay and lesbian people in Uganda. We will be grateful for your leadership and commitment to the Gospel.

Faithfully,

The partners of Equally Blessed

Francis DeBernardo
Sr. Jennine Gramick, SL
New Ways Ministry

Casey Lopata
Mary Ellen Lopata
Fortunate Families

Jim FitzGerald
Call To Action

Marianne Duddy-Burke
DignityUSA