

Communal Strategies for Action

- **Encourage Inner Work as a Community**
 - Without the difficult work of examining our own prejudices, attitudes and behaviors, communal strategies will fall short. As a community, encourage and create structures for members to educate themselves, to journal, and to discuss oppression and privilege.
- **Examine your Communal Structures through an Anti-Sexism, Anti-Heterosexim Lens:**
 - Liturgy
 - How your house is funded, staffed, etc.
 - What your public face is
 - Community Culture (What is celebrated? What are the expectations of behavior? How do we interact?)
 - Leadership & Decision Making (How are decisions made, in and out of meetings? What voices are most strongly heard, and do roles fall into sexist gender roles?)
 - What coalitions do we build – what kinds of groups do we seek out?
- **Host Fishbowls and Listening Sessions**
 - A small group openly discusses an issue, surrounded by the larger group. The fishbowl helps promote understanding and is useful when some people have a lot of information, experience or interpersonal dynamics that others might not share. People within the fishbowl can alternate between people in dominant or targeted groups. Women can talk about sexism they experience in community, and then men can share how patriarchy has hurt them.
- **Do Community Check Ins**
 - Within meetings, have regular time to discuss a particular oppression. Where did you notice racism this week - within yourself, in the world? Where did you succeed and fail in combatting heterosexism this week?
- **Take a Retreat**
 - Take time away to address a specific oppression in a community-building format. Develop a common language, understanding, and expectations about the oppressions and power dynamics that influence your community interactions.
- **Host Support Groups**
 - Outside of the community meeting, host a regular gathering, as a safe space to discuss internalized sexism, homophobia, etc.
- **Communal Agreements: Being Allies for Each Other**
 - Discuss and create shared expectations for each other in regards to your anti-oppression work. Some possible examples of communal expectations:
 - Men will commit to being allies for women when discussions of sexism and patriarchy arise
 - Straight people will handle anti-LGBTQ comments made by volunteers

More Specific Ideas for Communal Action

Be public in your support of LGBTQ individuals and their relationships:

- Hanging Rainbow Flags etc.
- Post a statement: This is an open and affirming place.....
- Include this statement in your newsletter, website, etc.
- Celebrate International Womens Day and National Coming Out Day

Resistance

- Host discussions on issues that affect the LGBTQ community
- Show up for actions around queer issues.
- Build coalitions with feminist groups, LGBTQ advocacy groups
- In resistance campaigns, ensure equal representation between genders in leadership

Spirituality

- Delve into the feminist theology and gay-liberation theology
- Worship in a way that celebrates the spiritual insights and leadership of all people
- Challenge sexism and homophobia in religious institutions

Communal Relationships

- Ask LGBTQs and women for feedback on how their identity shapes their experience of life in community.
- Create support groups for women and LGBTQ individuals to talk about their experience of sexism and heterosexism within the Catholic Worker
- Develop a communal understanding and agreement about how you will respond to homophobic, sexist, or transphobic language, from guests or volunteers, as individuals and as a community?
- Host book groups and events to educate community about sexism and heterosexism

Consider your participation with groups that discriminate against women or LGBTQs:

- Humbly ask them to change their policies
- Consider not participating with them
- Build relationships with them and share your insights
- If you do choose to participate in such a group, commit to do so as an agent for change (“critical acquiescence”)

Seize the Dream Now