

FEBRUARY 2012



The Independence

The Monthly Newsletter of Dignity/Philadelphia for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Catholics & Friends

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A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

I hope that everyone had an enjoyable holiday season. I can't believe that half my term as President has already gone. I want to thank everyone who has offered their assistance in making the weekly services and socials, as well as our quarterly potlucks possible. You've all been so giving of your time and energy that words are hard to describe the admiration that is felt. I also want to thank those who have offered kind words and encouraging thoughts on how to improve what we have done and what we are planning to do.

One of my main goals that I wanted to accomplish as President was to get more people involved with Dignity and to have open communication with all of you. Our community meeting has given us many ideas of which we have already implemented a significant amount with much success. And in looking at the future, there are many more activities to do as we work hard to continue to keep Dignity Philadelphia active and visible in this community. So please continue to give me your feedback and let me know if there is anything that we can do better. Remember YOU are Dignity Philadelphia and everybody's response is important. If you want to maintain anonymity just let me know. Please email me at President.dignityphila@gmail.com or write at P.O. Box 53348, Phila., Pa 19105. Thank you for your time and devotion.

Respectfully Yours, Joanne

NEW AT BROAD STREET MINISTRY

By Jimmy Calnan

Dignity/Philadelphia members have been volunteers at the monthly No Barriers Dinner at Broad Street Ministry (BSM) for over two years. Their programs are undergoing a transition and the No Barriers Dinner event is on hold until further notice. However, Dignity can continue to offer service to a seasonal program now underway.

The 315 South Cafe is a collaborative effort between BSM and the Bethesda Project. This overnight drop-in center is designed for the most vulnerable living on the streets of our city. Providing a welcoming face, delicious food, and vital services, this program is an effort towards easing suffering for 50-75 guests each night from December 12th to April 15th. The Cafe allows staff to build significant relationships with guests; relationships that they hope will lead to transformation of their circumstances.

How can Dignity help? The Cafe offers essential items from toiletries to socks and underwear to help those in need, your donations of these items are an essential part of this process.

On the last Sundays in February and March, we will have a special collection basket at liturgy to receive your donations for the 315 South Cafe. Please circle February 26 and March 25 for collection dates.

In this issue of *The Independence*, please read about Dignity in 1982 and note that we have always been a generous community. We hope to continue our ministry with the folks at BSM.

DIGNITY PHILADELPHIA IN 1982

The year 1982 began with another successful New Year's Party jointly co-sponsored with the other gay religious groups within the city and netting the chapter a profit of \$203.50. Membership was reported stable at 122 and it was reported that Dignity/Philadelphia had been quite generous in its financial support of other gay groups throughout the community. A total of \$1,900.00 was contributed to such organizations as the Gay Community Center, Community Health Concerns, Eromin Center and the Gay Switchboard. These donations were in excess of those provided to the traditional Catholic Charities, the Hospices, clothing drives, Rice Bowl collections and a canned goods drive. Early in the year the Education Committee, chaired by Mark M., sponsored an Outreach Month (February) with varied events to heighten the awareness of our members as to their duties in reaching out to others.

Michael Rocks was re-elected to a second term as President and a record operating fund budget was adopted by the Steering Committee totaling \$18,839.00 and various Ad Hoc Committees were formed whose work was to continue on through to the present. An Ad Hoc Committee for Fund Raising completed its report to the Steering Committee in March 1982, and the following was approved:

1) that the disbursement of the weekly 50/50 Raffle proceeds be authorized by the Steering Committee

to a specific charity each month with twelve charities to be supported yearly. 2) The Ad Hoc Committee for Women's Concerns was raised from Ad Hoc status to Standing Committee status with full voting privileges in March 1982.

As a result of a mandate from the 1981 Convention, the chapter appointed an Ad Hoc Committee on Inclusive Language which submitted its final report in November. The Ad Hoc Constitution Committee submitted its report on a revised constitution to the Steering Committee in mid-1982.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT NEEDED

By Dolores Vera

At the January Steering Committee Meeting, we discussed the need for a Community Life Coordinator, or an event person(s). While the SC has great ideas for social and spiritual events, we need someone to coordinate these events. We have gone over some of the brainstorming suggestions from last year's meeting, and we have come up with three possible events.

- 1) Joanne would like to have a "Presidential (not GOP) Spring Fling" instead of the potluck scheduled for Spring. We need someone to look into having it at William Way or maybe at St. Luke's on a Saturday night. We can also look into having music and food.
- 2) Another idea is a cook-off, which I have titled: "My Spaghetti Sauce is Way Better Than Yours." Since everyone has their favorite sauce (or gravy), we could have several Dignity members cook their sauce (at home or at St. Luke's), and a group of judges, or spaghetti aficionados, would judge these sauces. Someone would be in charge of just making the naked spaghetti, and the potential winners would spoon out their entries. We, participants, would actually be the winners since we could sample all these sauces. This event could happen on a Sunday, and if we charge per plate/bowl, we could make some money and split this with the winner of the "My Spaghetti Sauce is Way Better Than Yours" winner.
- 3) Weekend Retreat – assistance is needed in planning for this retreat at Rehoboth Beach in early or late summer; we also need someone to survey topics for the retreat and assist in finding a facilitator. If you have great ideas, please volunteer to work on this event. All on the SC could help with the planning of the event, however we need a point person to coordinate the efforts.

Think about what skills or gifts you have to offer, and how you can undertake any of the above mentioned events, and help them

Monthly Munchie

"A constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriages is a form of gay bashing, and it would do nothing at all to protect traditional marriages."

-Coretta Scott King

Happy Black History Month

materialize for the benefit of the community. We are hoping one or more individuals step forward to help out the community in these social and spiritual-growth events.

GAMES & PIZZA NIGHT

By Jimmy Calnan

It's a cold and dreary Friday night in February and you need something to lift you out of the "why am I not in Florida blues?" This might be just what you could use, a **Games & Pizza Night** with your friends at Dignity.

We are offering Friday, February 24, at 7:00p.m. in St. Luke's as the opportunity. The Steering Committee will provide the pizza, drinks and flavored coffees; you provide the games and the interest. It would be great to have card games like poker, UNO, Old Maid and board games like Trivial Pursuit, Yahtzee, and/or Monopoly. We'll play whatever you can offer for the evening.

Please let one of the Steering Committee members know what you can bring or call Dignity at 215-546-2093. Let's hope the night is nasty cold, no snow and a good time for all.

See you there!

CRAIG SCOTT FUND FOR MUSIC MINISTRY

By Dick O'Malley

Craig Scott may have passed away over two months ago but his spirit will live on in the Dignity community with the establishment of the Craig Scott Fund for the Music Ministry. Craig always considered music as an important part of worship. Perhaps his interest began as an adolescent when his mother got him an upright piano. Once he learned to play, he was soon playing the piano at his Seventh Day Adventist Church in Delaware County.

Craig's love of religious music was evident when he began to attend Dignity's liturgies in 1987. It was not unusual then to have two or more guitarists accompanying Michael Durkin on the piano in singing and playing the new lively hymns which were composed following the Second Vatican Council. Unfortunately the onslaught of AIDS reduced the number of musicians available to Dignity. While Craig never had an opportunity to play the piano at Dignity's liturgies, he loved the music and always asked if we were going to have someone play the keyboard. Since hymns are a form of prayer, he always wanted the musicians at mass to play **all** of the verses as their composers had intended them to be sung.

Friends of Craig Scott have established a fund for Dignity's Music Ministry in memory of their dear friend. The fund will be receiving \$2000.00 from Craig's estate which will be used to provide financial resources, over and above the money which Dignity has approved for a keyboardist, to improve this ministry; for example, in purchasing new musician hymnals, and perhaps in encouraging the development of its choral ministry. Anyone can make a contribution to this fund by sending a donation to Dignity Philadelphia, P.O. Box 53348, Phila., PA 19105

REFLECTIONS ON THE LORD'S PRAYER

-Fr. J. McOscar

The Lord's Prayer is, at various and sundry times, on the lips of all Christians, whether at Mass or Sunday services or in private prayer outside of a church setting. And so The Lord's Prayer is prayed by all brands of Christianity yet never mentions the doctrines that divide us. It is prayed by Christians who emphasize what it never mentions and also prayed by Christians who ignore what it does mention. It is a Jewish prayer by a Jewish Jesus but there is nothing specifically Christian or Jewish about it. John Dominic Crossan, the Scripture scholar, believes that it is "a prayer from the heart of Judaism on the lips of Christianity for the conscience of the world ... a universal hymn of hope for all humanity."

It is a revolutionary hymn of hope because it proclaims a radical vision of justice in biblical poetic language. Biblical justice is distributive rather than retributive. The biblical God is a God of justice and righteousness. "A God of 'justice and righteousness' is a God who does what is just by doing what is right and does what is right by doing what is just." It is not Liberalism, Socialism, or Communism. It is - if you need an-ism, Godism, Householdism, or, best of all, Enoughism. This, the greatest of all prayers, is best understood in the context of biblical poetic and prophetic tradition. Every line in the prayer reflects that tradition.

It is with this understanding that we need to pray The Lord's Prayer by reflecting on every key word in it. The prayer begins with OUR FATHER rather than my father, meaning that it is a communal prayer. The father addressed is the father/parent of us all. The first (Divinity) half of the prayer addresses God's name, kingdom, and will. The second half of the prayer (Humanity) is about our bread, debt, and temptation. In other words, there is both a heavenly and an earthly meaning in both halves of the prayer. And its hinge is to be found in the phrase "on earth as it is in heaven."

The hallowing of God's name in the prayer means the coming of God's kingdom so that God's will is accomplished on earth. We have a collaborative duty to work with God in bringing the kingdom to earth. We might compare the two halves of the prayer to two sides of the same coin, "one side of the coin proclaims the divine name, divine kingdom, and divine will; the other side announces enough human food for today, no human debt for tomorrow, and the absence of human violence always."

All too often we routinely mumble the words of the greatest prayer without fully understanding the depth of its message. Our challenge, each time we pray The Lord's Prayer, is to discover its deepest meaning in order to pray as we ought to pray!

"LESBIAN/GAY CATHOLICS & RELATIONSHIPS"

How's that for a catchy title for a week-end symposium? This was reported in the December issue of *The Independence*. Now a quick reminder:

The Seventh National Symposium on Catholicism and Homosexuality has this as the theme for the week-end of March 15-17, 2012, in Baltimore MD. New Ways Ministry is the sponsor of this major event which includes some exciting Plenary Session Speakers like Marianne Duddy-Burke of DignityUSA.

Special room rates are available at the Renaissance Baltimore Harborplace Hotel for the duration of the symposium at \$119 per room per night.

Registration information and forms are available through New Ways Ministry at www.newwaysministry.org/regsymp.html or by calling 301-277-5674.

STEERING COMMITTEE MOTIONS

During the Sunday, January 8, 2012, Steering Committee, the following motions were made:

Motion 12-01-01: Be it moved that The Craig Scott Fund for the Music Ministry be set up in an ING account to cover expenses of the ministry over and above the compensation for a keyboardist. Passed unanimously

Motion 12-01-02: Be it moved that D/P renew its annual membership dues of \$100 to the YES Coalition. D/P will be listed as a partner in the coalition. Passed unanimously

Motion 12-01-03: Be it moved that \$300 be allowed to purchase new membership anniversary pins from D/SE. Passed unanimously

RETREAT FOLLOW-UP – BOOK CLUB READY TO GO!

As mentioned at the December 3 retreat, there were several books mentioned that appeared to spark interest with the participants. We are now forming a group for a book club-like discussion, and we now have a facilitator who will lead us in discussing two particular books:

- 1) **Where the Hell Is God?** by Richard Leonard, S.J. Copyright 2010. Mahwah, NJ: Hidden Spring (An imprint of Paulist Press), and
- 2) **Why God won't go away: Brain Science and the Biology of Belief**, by Andrew Newberg, Eugene D'Aquili and Vince Rause (Mar 26, 2002)

We will be having the first meeting on February 19th, 5:15 to 6:30 p.m., and will then choose the book and chapters that we want to discuss. We are looking into 6 possible meetings – all 5:15 to 6:30 - and are considering the following dates: February 19 and 26, March 4, 11, 18, and 25. These dates were suggested by the facilitator, based on his schedule. We can negotiate the dates provided there is a conflict with a Dignity event.

Again, if you didn't attend the retreat, you can still be part of this book discussion. Please let me know if you are interested in being part of this group, either by email, msm.vera@comcast.net, or phone-wise, 215/476-8578, or at church on Sundays. I hope to hear from some of

you. Let me know before Feb. 19 since I plan to get some refreshments and snacks, and need to know how many people plan to attend.

A WORD ABOUT MONDAY AIDS MINISTRY AT ST. LUKE'S

- Dolores Vera, editor

As evident-proof of Dignity Philadelphia's generous spirit, I thank you profusely for your donations of groceries. While I have nothing to do with these food donations, or the AIDS Ministry for that matter, I see how much food has been coming in every Sunday. Everyone has been extremely generous. Thank you all for picking up extra cans, fruit and vegetables for this group of men who come to St. Luke's on Mondays, and don't, fortunately, go home empty handed. And I hope you are feeling good about yourself, since:

There is overwhelming evidence that the higher the level of self-esteem, the more likely one will be to treat others with respect, kindness, and generosity. - Nathaniel Branden

TEMPLE WOMEN'S BASKETBALL GAME IS NOT FOR WOMEN ONLY!

A great time was had by all who attended the Temple v Duke Women's basketball game on December 30, 2011. And as noted in the picture below, only one little male came to the game! ¿Porque? This game was held at McGonigle Hall, and there was a good amount of MEN and women at this game. It was also good to see so many people with their children, especially young girls, at the game. Perhaps due to the date (between Christmas and New Year's) not everyone got the word – as to how cheap tickets are – or people were just busy. Unfortunately Temple lost, but we are not discouraged.

The next Temple Women's game is scheduled for February 22 at 7 p.m., and it is against St. Joseph Women's basketball team; game will be played at Temple. Joanne will be making announcements during late January and early February and will have a sign-up sheet. Please sign-up and join us for this event. The tickets are only \$7 but the fun you will have is priceless.



Top row are Joanne, Alice, Eleanor, Dolores and Melissa; front row are Linda, with her and Joanne's grandkids, Sarah and Stanley. Joanne caught this flying T-shirt at the game.

HOLIDAY PARTY AT CALCUTTA HOUSE

On the Monday before Christmas, twenty-nine residents at Calcutta House were treated to a festive holiday party, their 15th and the 18th for Dignity at an HIV/AIDS residential center. Each resident received two gifts from their personal wish list which Dignity members had interviewed them for in November.

The party was hosted by our own inimitable Fr. Ron Hoskins who led us in a prayer service followed by gift-giving, cake, ice cream and soda with some holiday songs to move us along. This year Dignity members were joined by members the GLBT Bible Study Group who helped with the gift purchases.

Everyone who attended was moved by Ron's service and the joy on the faces of the residents who received gifts, and the Dignity members and friends who provided them. Barry, the resident who was recipient of the 1000th gift last year, was elated that we returned yet another year.

Thank you all who contributed towards these gifts and to all who joined us in this party. Special thanks to the GLBT Bible Study Group members.



Pictured around the refreshment table are Larry, Bill Q., Michael F., Rob B., Louis, Linda and Joanne.



Dignity Philadelphia's Calcutta House Christmas Gift Coordinator, Jimmy Calnan and Allen P. (from GLBT Bible Study Group)



Standing by the gift table are Pat, Dick, Louis, Bill Q., and a little bit of Rob. Special thanks to the 3 men in the back from the GLBT Bible Study Group.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS (weekly mass at 330 S 13th Street between Pine and Spruce Streets)

February 2012 - Black History Month

Friday, February 3 Prayer Around the Cross, 7 p.m.

Sunday, February 5 Eucharistic Liturgy at 7 p.m.
Steering Committee Meeting at 4:30 p.m.

Sunday, February 12 Eucharistic Liturgy at 7 p.m.
Liturgy Committee Meeting at 4:30 p.m.

Tuesday, February 14 St. Valentine's Day

Sunday, February 19 Eucharistic Liturgy at 7 p.m. -
Healing Mass

Wednesday, February 22 Ash Wednesday, Mass at 7:30 p.m.
Temple Women's Basketball Game
(see Joanne for tickets)

Friday, February 24 Game and Pizza Night at Dignity, 7 p.m.

Sunday, February 26 Eucharistic Liturgy at 7 p.m.,
First Sunday in Lent
Fast and Prayer for AIDS

March 2012 - Women's History Month

Friday, March 2 Prayer Around the Cross, 7 p.m.

Sunday, March 4 Eucharistic Liturgy at 7 p.m.
Steering Committee Meeting at 4:30 p.m.

Thursday, March 8 International Women's Day

Sunday, March 11 Eucharistic Liturgy at 7 p.m.
Liturgy Committee Meeting at 4:30 p.m.

Saturday, March 17 Saint Patrick's Day

Sunday, March 18 Eucharistic Liturgy at 7 p.m.

Monday, March 19 Feast of Saint Joseph

Sunday, March 25 Eucharistic Liturgy at 7 p.m.
International Day of Prayer for
Women's Ordination



PRAYER INTENTIONS

Please sign our Prayer Intentions book if you have anyone you would like the community to remember in our prayers.

The deadline for submission of articles for the March newsletter is February 19.

Steering Committee

Joanne Collins – President
Jimmy Calnan – Vice President
Kevin Davies – Secretary
Linda Barrett – Treasurer
Jim Clay/Dick O'Malley - Liturgy Committee Co-Coordinators
Vacant – Community Life Committee Co-coordinators
M. Dolores Vera, Michelle Perrone - Communications Co-coordinators
Vacant – Education Committee Coordinator
Chaplains: Barbara Gindhart & Father Ron Hoskins



The Catholic Christian Tradition in the L/G/B/T Community
Celebrate Who You Are And Embrace The Person God Calls You To Be!
Yes, I want to be a member of the Dignity family!

I am joining as a **new member** I am **renewing my membership** **Address Change**

Name(s): _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone Numbers: cell _____ **home** _____ **work** _____

Email address: _____ to receive Dignity/Philadelphia's Newsletter (*The Independence*) and the latest news via email blasts. Your support through your dues to Dignity/USA will entitle you to voting privileges in national elections; subscriptions to the monthly Dateline and Quarterly Voice; discounted registration for biennial conventions and other Dignity/USA events; and access to Dignity News email list and chat groups.

Scholarships are available for Dignity/Philadelphia and Dignity/USA memberships. Contact the Dignity/Philadelphia Vice President for more information (vp.dignityphila@gmail.com).

The total amount of your dues and donations to both Dignity/Philadelphia and Dignity/USA may be included in one check. We will forward your Dignity/USA dues/donations and your contact information to the Dignity/USA national office.

Please enclose your check, payable to Dignity/Philadelphia, and mail to: Dignity/Philadelphia, P.O. Box 53348, Philadelphia, PA 19105.

Individual annual dues:
Dignity/Phila \$20;
Dignity/USA \$30
\$ _____ Total

Couple's annual dues:
Dignity/Phila \$35;
Dignity/USA \$60
\$ _____ Total