

# The Independence

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

## CONGRATS NEW DIGNITY OFFICERS

By acclamation, and popularity, Dignity Philadelphia announced the new slate of officers for June 2012 to May 2013. The new officers are:

Joanne C. is President for a second term, Vice President is Linda B., Secretary is Kevin D., also for a second term; the Treasurer position is Vacant, AND, this office is waiting for you to volunteer to fill it!

Dignity Philadelphia is in need of a Treasurer for this coming year. Preferable we would like someone with accounting experience, a person who has not been convicted of a white collar crime – like embezzlement, and who is willing to help Dignity Philadelphia move forward this coming year. If you qualify, are eager to help out, but lack the “money” experience, don’t be deterred: this position comes with an assistant! Please consider and let one of the 3 officers know of your interest.

## MEMORIAL PANELS DISCUSSION ON JUNE 17, 2012

At the Dignity Semiannual Business Meeting, April 22, 2012, the issue of the Dignity Memorial Panels was brought up by a Dignity member. Do we need to display them every week? Maybe we should display them a couple of times a year? The red panels are looking frayed, and should we consider displaying them in an alternative fashion? This discussion was taken up at the May Steering Committee, where it was decided that we should have a Community Meeting, scheduled for June 17 after Liturgy, since these panels are seen as part of the Sunday Liturgy – and anything affecting the Liturgy needs to go to the general membership for discussion, and then to the Steering Committee who will make the final decision.

To start you thinking about this issue, we have asked 2 long-time members to weigh in with their thoughts. Bill Q. will speak as to why we should consider moving or replacing the panels, and David K., will speak as to why the panels need to stay up and displayed every Sunday. Additionally, you can express your own point of view at the Community meeting, June 17 after Liturgy. Please make every effort to attend.

**Bill Q.’s comments:** A few months ago at a Community Meeting I brought up the subject of the Memorial Panels used during our liturgies. The banners are beginning to show wear and tear with many needing to be replaced. I suggested that the banners might be replaced by a large plaque instead. People who wished could contribute to have engraved name plates for those they wish to continue to remember. I offered to look into the cost of such and suggested it come out of monies recently left to Dignity.

I also expressed my view on the displaying of these banners at every liturgy. I have had people tell me that they have stopped coming to Dignity because they felt they were attending Mass in a cemetery. I believe we should honor our deceased members. However, I feel that the constant display of the panels sends the signal that as a community we appear to dwell too much on the past. For someone coming to our liturgy for the first time this could be seen as almost morbid. I love our Liturgies and want the community to thrive and be future oriented. If the community decides to stay with the panels perhaps we can limit the display to once a month or every two months and make that a special Remembrance Liturgy. You also have to keep in mind that the dead are remembered during every Mass. The focal point of the Eucharist Celebration should be the coming together of a living and thriving community embracing all. Thank you. Bill Quinn.

**David K.’s comments:** I ask you, what do these Memorial Panels represent? They represent the people that have been an important part of this Dignity Philadelphia family. Why do I want them to stay? Because I, for one, look at those names (which can be seen from our seats) and remember and pray for each and every one of them. Seeing those names, remembering them and how they interacted with so many of us should be comforting - not uncomfortable. They were people that sat among us - we loved them, joked with them, prayed with them --- they were part of this family.

So why am I not in favor of a nice plaque with small engraved plates? Our individual family members will become a name we cannot see from our seats. They will become just a name on a nice plaque. Over time, no one will look at it and each and everyone of those individuals will become

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just a name on a nice plaque. I leave you with one question - how many people can you name -from memory - on the beautiful plaque in the Blue Room? Let's not forget them. Keep them visible in our lives. Keep the panels. Thank you.

**Your comments? Join us for the Community Meeting on June 17, 2012 after Liturgy.**

## MOTIONS AND 50/50

At the May Steering Committee Meeting, held Saturday, May 12, the following motions were made:

**Motion 12-05-01** made by Dick O'Malley; seconded by Joanne Collins: Be it moved that the 50/50 recipient for June be Philly Pride and for July be Covenant House in Philadelphia. Passed unanimously.



**Motion 12-05-02** made by Dick O'Malley; seconded by Dolores Vera. Be it moved that a Mark Ratkus Memorial Fund for Retreats be established by Dignity/Philadelphia. Passed unanimously.

June: PHILLY PRIDE PRESENTS, Inc. (PPP) is a group of volunteer coordinators under the leadership of an Executive Director and Senior Advisor which organize "PrideDay" in June and "OutFest" in October. The purpose of the pride events shall be the advancement of LGBT rights through the visibility and awareness that the parades and festivals create. This purpose is to be achieved, through the annual PrideDay parade and festival, the annual National Coming Out Day Block Party (OutFest) and other forms of community outreach as may be appropriate. (See article on parade in this newsletter.)

July: Established in 1999, services began at **Covenant House** Pennsylvania with a Community Outreach Center where young people were offered a place to eat, and get referrals for more complex needs such as housing and medical care. They are the largest private child welfare agency in the Delaware Valley, and the largest provider of services to homeless and runaway youth in Philadelphia.

## GAMES & PIZZA NIGHT – AGAIN!

The last two Friday Games and Pizza Nights have been BIG Hits! More than a dozen people learned how to play Apples to Apples, and we all had had a great time. Half of the people attending were non-Dignity members. So, by popular demand, we will be having another **Games & Pizza Night on Friday, June 29 at 7 p.m.** So, if you don't have a date, come join us, bring your appetite, and enjoy a wonderful evening with Dignity members and friends of Dignity members. Based on the interest in "Apples," and the numerous cards, we may split up and have two tables going – but show up, learn a new game and join us in having a great time. Yes, pizza will be ordered!

## DIGNITY PHILADELPHIA – MAY 6, 2012

Dignity Philadelphia had a table which was staffed by various members during the day at the Equality Forum, May 6, 2012, at the Piazza. Thank you to all the people who made this possible.



*Joe, Joanne and David by the Dignity table.*



*Joe, Brandon and Melissa staffing the table.*

## PRIDE NIGHT AT CAMDEN RIVERSHARKS

Dignity members will be going out to Camden, Thursday, June 21, 2012 to participate in the first Pride Night with the Riversharks. They are a Minor league baseball game, playing in Campbell Field, which is a 12 minute walk from the City Hall Station in Camden. They will be playing against the Long Island Ducks. Tickets are \$7 or \$9, depending on Level 1 or 2. The game starts at 7:00 p.m. Please see Jimmy Calnan for tickets, as soon possible. He can be reached at [year1826@aol.com](mailto:year1826@aol.com), or see him after Mass on Sundays.

(P.S. We are also planning on attending a Major league baseball game – Phillies – on August 28, 2012. More info on this in the July newsletter.)

## PHILLY PRIDE PARADE

Dignity Philadelphia will once again participate in the Philly Pride Parade. As noted in the Motions for May, the Philly Pride Parade is Sunday, June 10, 2012, forming at 13th and Locust, in the heart of the Gayborhood; it kicks off at exactly 12:00 noon. New this year

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will be the spectacular appearance of the Wells Fargo Stagecoach, complete with horses! There will be four (4) performance locations at 12th and Locust, 11th and Locust, Judging Stand at Independence Mall and finally at 2nd and Market.

The parade continues over Market Street, then proceeds over the ramp across I-95, and ends at the main gate of the Great Plaza at Penn's Landing, where Dignity Philadelphia will have a table set with tent! The gates at the Festival will also open at 12:00 noon. The crowds grow steadily until the parade arrives around 1:30 p.m. The LGBT Festival is the largest single day event at Penn's Landing. Admission is \$10. Your admission pays for the rental of the facility, the parade, all costs involved, the performers, with a little seed money left over for Outfest 2012. (Wording for the above is from PPP website.)

Dignity Philadelphia will have a pick-up truck, with a rainbow arc made of balloons, and feature the theme, "Taking a Chance on God" which is the theme of the film we are sponsoring in the July Gay Filmfest. Some of us Prima Donnas will ride in the back of the truck, regally waving, gently throwing out candies and info on the film, and on Dignity Philadelphia. The younger, healthier members will be walking beside the truck acting as "eye candy" to attract attention. HOWEVER, we need your help for this parade and table staffing for this event to be a success. We need people to help set up the table prior to the parade, (and afterwards to breakdown), staff the table in 2 hour intervals, and march with the Dignity delegation; we will meet at noon by St. Luke's gates. A sign-up sheet will be available June 3 during Social for you to sign up. Please consider helping us out in any way you can. If you have a Dignity T-shirt, please consider wearing this, or just wear anything with Dignity colors, red and white. Thank you – in advance - all for being such a participating community!

## MARK RATKUS MEMORIAL FUND FOR RETREATS

*By Dick O'Malley*

Dignity has established a special fund to memorialize Mark Ratkus and his great interest in the retreats which Dignity Philadelphia has sponsored throughout its history. He was particularly good at composing the Prayers of the Hours which usually occur at the beginning of a retreat. Hopefully this fund will help to minimize the expenses of a retreat so that more people will be able to attend.

Donations can be made in Mark's memory for this purpose by sending them to: Dignity Philadelphia, P.O. Box 53348, Phila. PA 19105

## DIGNITY PHILADELPHIA IN 1986

In January 1986 the Education Committee unveiled its new brochure, providing new friends and guests an overview of the chapter and its various committees. The last Sunday of the month marked our final liturgy at Trinity Memorial Church at 22<sup>nd</sup> and Spruce Sts. In our nearly 10 years at that location we had outgrown not only the parish hall but eventually the church building itself. The exit liturgy was something of an emotional event for many of us as we were leaving a home in which we had come to find comfort and self-respect and in which we had gotten to know many of our dearest friends. The following Sunday, February 2, 1986, became a day marked by different emotions. On that evening we celebrated our welcome to a new home at St. Luke & the Epiphany Church on South 13<sup>th</sup> Street. Our new home had the advantage of additional space and a location in the very heart of Philadelphia. From the very first week it was evident that attendance at Mass and the social hour was significantly higher.

In March our Chapter was honored to receive its first Lambda Award, gaining recognition as "Best Religious Organization serving the gay and lesbian community in Philadelphia." In April, 1986 we took time to mark our 13<sup>th</sup> Anniversary as a chapter. As usual we celebrated with a dinner dance which included guest speakers and the awarding of a community service award. Our speaker that year was a religious woman who ministers to homeless women in and around Center City.

During the month of May, the Spiritual Life Committee hosted a retreat which was conducted by Fr. Bernard Lynch. This was a most successful event which was roundly applauded by those who participated. During the year the Coalition on Lesbian and Gay Bar Policies published its report on discrimination. In November plans for regular trips to New York clubs were sponsored by the Social Committee. June of that year is also noteworthy for the successful "Family Night" hosted by the Education Committee. In one of the most uplifting liturgies in the community's history, a sizeable number of people brought their parents, siblings, and other friends and relatives to Mass and the social hour. Members of the committee sponsored a special discussion after the social hour to help relatives and friends become familiar with the important work of Dignity.

### Monthly Munchie

Today, I was asked a direct question and gave a direct answer:

I believe that same-sex couples should be allowed to marry.

I respect the beliefs of others, and the right of religious institutions to act in accordance with their own doctrines. But I believe that in the eyes of the law, all Americans should be treated equally. And where states enact same-sex marriage, no federal act should invalidate them.

**President Barack Obama, May 9, 2012**

**Happy Pride Month**



## COMMUNITY LIFE COMMITTEE EVENTS

by Jimmy Calnan

Yes folks, the Community Life Committee is back. All those great social events that were coordinated by folks who went out of their way to entertain us will now be sponsored by this committee with your help. We intend to meet on the last Sunday of each month at 5:00 p.m. in the Blue Room at St. Luke's to brainstorm and plan events of interest to Dignity. Come with an idea and a plan of action to implement it.

### For now, here is what we are offering:

- the Philadelphia Gay Men's Chorus celebrates their 30th Anniversary concerts; we suggest that Dignity folks book individual \$25 tickets for the Friday, June 15 show at 8:00p.m. at [www.pgmc.org](http://www.pgmc.org) or 1-877-462-7464. We can meet there and plan for afterwards.
- Pride Night at the Camden Riversharks in Campbell Field on Thursday, June 21 at 7:05p.m. Tickets are \$9.00 for the 100 level and money is being collected now during social hour. We will coordinate car pools from St. Luke's.
- 10th Annual Gay Community Night at the Phillies in Citizens Bank Park will be on Tuesday, August 28 at 7:05p.m. Tickets are \$20 and all money must be in by July 1 because this game sells out.

Join us for these events and join us on June 24th to plan even more. Did I hear summer picnic, monthly birthday cakes, and theatre events?

## CRAIG SCOTT MEMORIAL SERVICE (APRIL 29TH)

By Dick O'Malley

Craig Scott was memorialized at Dignity's weekly Liturgy on Sunday, April 29<sup>th</sup>. The congregation included Craig's many friends as well as members of his family, including his niece, Kimberly and her husband, Ronald Bloom, and their two children, Kelly and Glenn, all of whom helped minister to Craig in his last days. Fr. Ron Hoskins, who took communion to Craig during his battle against cancer and presided at Craig's mother's funeral said the Mass and gave a moving homily in his memory.



(l-r) Christine, David, Kimberly, and Ron

Among the remembrances was one from Craig's boss at Radwell International who had just flown in from an overseas trip and who had high words of praise for him. Craig's close friend, Christine, remembered her friend in a very personal way as if he had been a member of her family. After the liturgy, everyone had a chance to reminisce about him at a great social. In the long run, Craig Scott will be remembered at Dignity partly because of the Craig Scott Fund for the Music Ministry.

## EQUALITY FORUM'S NATIONAL RELIGIOUS COLLOQUY

Dignity Philadelphia was well represented at the National Religious Colloquy, May 3, entitled "Roman Catholicism."



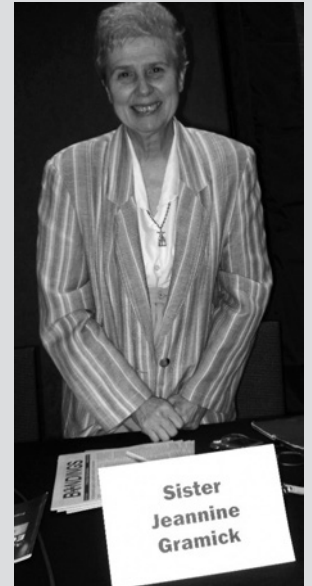
From left to right are Dr. Leonard Swidler, Prof. of Religious Studies at Temple, Sr. Jeannine Gramick, Co-founder of New Ways Ministry, Dr./Sr. Elizabeth Linehan, Prof. of Philosophy at St. Joseph's University, Michael Rocks, past president of Dignity Philadelphia, and member of COR (Catholics Organized for Renewal), and Rev. Eileen DiFranco, co-pastor of the Community of St. Mary Magdalene Church in Drexel Hill and Dignity presider.



Joe and Mary Byers



Panelist Rev. Eileen DiFranco, and past Dignity Philadelphia President David K..



Sr. Jeannine Gramick, Prof. of Philosophy at St. Joseph's University, and Co-founder of New Ways Ministry;

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

## June 2012 – Pride Month

- Friday, June 1 Prayer Around the Cross, 7 p.m.
- Sunday, June 3 Eucharistic Liturgy, Trinity Sunday, at 7 p.m. and Investiture of Officers Steering Committee Meeting at 4:30 p.m.
- Sunday, June 10 Eucharistic Liturgy, Corpus Christi Sunday, at 7 p.m. Philly Pride Parade, Float and Table, noon (see article) Liturgy Committee Meeting at 4:30 p.m.
- Friday, June 15 Gay Men’s Chorus (see Community Life in this newsletter.)
- Sunday, June 17 Eucharistic Liturgy at 7 p.m., Father’s Day Community Meeting re: Memorial Panels after Mass
- Thursday, June 21 Gay Night at Camden Riversharks in Camden, N. J. – 7 p.m. (see article)
- Sunday, June 24 Eucharistic Liturgy at 7 p.m.
- Friday, June 29 Games and Pizza Night at Dignity, 7 p.m. (see article)

## July 2012 –

- Sunday, July 1 Eucharistic Liturgy, 7 p.m. Steering Committee at 4:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, July 4 Independence Day
- Friday, July 6 Prayer Around the Cross, 7 p.m.
- Sunday, July 8 Eucharistic Liturgy, 7 p.m., Liturgy Committee Meeting
- Sunday, July 15 Eucharistic Liturgy, 7 p.m.
- Sunday, July 22 Eucharistic Liturgy, 7 p.m. Mary Magdalene Feast Day
- Sunday July 29 Eucharistic Liturgy, 7 p.m.

## PRAYER INTENTIONS



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

**The deadline date for submissions for the July newsletter is June 17, 2012.**

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**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](mailto: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**