



# The Independence

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

Facebook: Dignity Philadelphia  
 Twitter: @Pres\_DignityPHL  
 www.dignityphila.org  
 DignityPhila@aol.com  
 (215) 546-2093

## REV. RALPH J. MONTEIRO, O.S.A.

(June 24, 1940 - May 20, 2014)

REV. RALPH J. MONTEIRO, O.S.A., passed away on Tuesday May 20, 2014 in St. Thomas of Villanova Monastery, Villanova, PA. He was the son of Amelia E. [Kupezynski] Monteiro and the late Ralph F. Monteiro. He is survived by his mother and a brother, Robert. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Tuesday May 27, 7:30 PM in St. Thomas of Villanova Church (Univ. Campus), 800 Lancaster Ave., Villanova, PA. He was a presider for Dignity Philadelphia, and when not presiding at Liturgy, he faithfully came to worship with us every Sunday. He played the tambourine at our services, and his presence, and music, will be greatly missed.

**A special Memorial Liturgy in his honor will be celebrated at Dignity, Sunday, July 27, 2014**

Pictured to the right are Father P. Morrissey, Father Ralph and Michael Rocks. The picture was taken at Dignity's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration (2013). Father Morrissey, a long time friend of Father Ralph, gave the homily at his service at Villanova.



*The following is the text of the introduction to the presentation of the Deo Gratias Award at the 39<sup>th</sup> Dignity Philadelphia Anniversary Mass on Sunday May 20, 2012; this award was presented to Father Ralph Monteiro by then-President Joanne Collins, and written by Michael Rocks, another long-time friend of Father Ralph.*

The Deo Gratias Award is the highest honor which Dignity Philadelphia bestows on persons nominated by the Chapter President for outstanding service to the GLBT Roman Catholic community and to Dignity Philadelphia in particular.

Tonight this honor is bestowed on a man who has served this Chapter from the earliest days of the Dignity Home Liturgy to this very day. In the early days of the chapter he served as priest presider at the Dignity Sunday Masses, provided spiritual counseling and direction to countless men and women searching for authenticity, dignity and integrity as GLBT Roman Catholics, and was a liturgical advisor to the Chapter on many occasions. He was not just a spiritual and liturgical leader in the community; he became a personal friend to scores of others who found in him specialness, a lively joy for life, and a sense of self acceptance and integrity. He is a man of truth. His life in and service to Dignity Philadelphia was disrupted under the strong anti-Dignity Philadelphia policy of John Cardinal Krol. Other priests at that time were also forbidden to serve Dignity Philadelphia or threatened with expulsion from the Archdiocese. Undaunted, this great priest went on to serve Dignity Chapters in the West and Northwest of the United States and worked with Native Americans as a priest and spiritual leader for many years. He became well known throughout the United States in many Dignity chapters and would visit our chapter from time to time during his absence from Philadelphia. He often served Dignity in his native New York.

In recent years he has been reassigned to the Philadelphia area and has returned as Eucharistic Presider to Dignity but his decreased mobility and advancing age sometimes make it difficult for him to travel on his own.

During his many years in Dignity he is most remembered as a strong advocate for Gay and Lesbian Catholics, and their families and friends. He could be found on the

dance floors of many gay bars throughout the country, particularly in the big cities. No one really knows if it is really true that the American Indians gave him the name “Dances with Donna Summer” but we old-timers all remember seeing Ralph on the dance floor, by himself or with a partner or partners, but always dancing with all his heart and soul to “Let’s Dance the Last Dance Tonight.” May Donna rest in peace. And may our dear Father Ralph be honored this night.

## **A MEMBER’S TRIBUTE TO RALPH MONTEIRO, OSA**

Yesterday [May 28] we paid tribute to the life of Ralph Monteiro. We were there to grieve his passing from our lives. Grief is not a bad thing rather it is the continued expression of love for a person no longer physically present in our lives. (1)

Usually one can tell how much a person is loved and respected by the number of people that show up at their funeral. Ralph was apparently well loved. People of all ages, races were represented.

The interesting thing about Ralph was how many people he has helped over his lifetime no matter where it was; on an Indian reservation, homeless in the street, under a bridge, in a high school or in any faith community. Many of these people became his friends. He went out of his way to reach those who had been disenfranchised by society and the by church, and tried to bring them closer to a God that loved them no matter who they were. When speaking with Ralph one would never realize what he had done to help others. He always spoke of the good each person had accomplished or what they had brought into his life.

So we are grieving the passing of Ralph Monteiro because we loved him and because we will miss him. His memory will live on with each one us. May he rest in peace.

- Antonio F. Cardoso, a friend

(1) 2011, Larry M. Barber, LPC-S, CT in “Love Never Dies: Embracing Grief with Hope and Promise”

## **DIGNITY MEMBERSHIP SURVEY – WHAT DID IT ALL MEAN?**

Several months ago, the members of Dignity Philadelphia and many of the former members of the Chapter were asked to participate in membership survey. Current members could have completed the survey electronically or a paper version of the survey. The former members were asked to complete a paper version of the survey.

From the responses received, the vast majority of current members who responded to the survey have been members in excess of 10 years, while the majority of the former members who responded were members for 5-10 years. In both groups, the majority of respondents identified as gay men and most were over the age of sixty. This demographic information demonstrates the need to invite more younger people, more women and more transgender people to come to our services and hopefully become dues-paying members. Several of the suggestions that we received called for greater outreach to the community. Efforts are being made by the Education Committee to develop a cadre of trained speakers who can effectively communicate the mission of this Chapter at area colleges and to other groups to help expand the uniqueness of our Chapter.

The Community Life Committee coordinates many of the social activities that take place away from our worship space. Those activities have included trips to plays and musicals, to museums, and to sporting events. These events are open to anyone. If you have an idea for a social event that members and non-members might enjoy, please let someone on the Community Life Committee or any member of the Steering Committee know.

Some respondents expressed concerns about the difficulty in parking for our weekly services or who live too far away to get to Dignity. It is not financially feasible for the Chapter to make arrangements for any type of shuttle service to get people to our weekly liturgy. There may be members of the Chapter who would be willing to car pool. Several members receive rides to or from Dignity. With enough advance notice, we may be able to connect people traveling from proximate areas on any given Sunday. If this is something that impacts you, please feel free to reach out to one of the current officers.

In addition, anyone attending services at Dignity on a Sunday night can take advantage of two parking opportunities. With the appropriate placard in one’s car window, people attending services can park either across the street from our worship space on 13<sup>th</sup> Street or in the parking lot next to St. Luke’s. These placards are free and can be picked up on any Sunday night. Jimmy Calnan recently renegotiated the arrangements for the use of the parking lot with the University of the Arts, which owns the actual lot.

This is just a small sample of the suggestions and comments that were received in the survey results. Comments and suggestions are always welcome. Any member can attend any of the Chapter’s committee

meetings. The two groups that meet most frequently are the Liturgy Committee which meets on the second Sunday of the month and the Steering Committee which meets the first Sunday of the month. It is important to remember, though, that all comments and suggestions are welcome at any time. Dignity Philadelphia continues to exist because of a strong active membership. The Steering Committee would like to extend its thanks to everyone who participated in the preparation, data collection, analysis, and in responding to the surveys.

-Submitted by Michael Viola, President

## **MOTIONS MADE AT THE MAY AND JUNE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

The following motions were made at two separate Steering Committee Meetings (May 4 and June 1, 2014):

**Motion 14-05-01** made by Dolores Vera; seconded by Jimmy Calnan. Be it moved that the 2014 Community Service Award be awarded to the John C. Anderson Apartments. Passed unanimously.

**Motion 14-06-02** made by Grant Shea; seconded by Mike Bradley. Be it moved that we use Razoo.com for the process of collecting membership fees and donations. Passed unanimously.

**Motion 14-06-03** made by Jimmy Calnan; seconded by Mike Bradley. Be it moved that a donation be made for two members to attend the Dignity USA Young Adult Caucus in Washington, D.C. with a written report to the Steering Committee to follow. Funds from Mark Ratkus Fund for Retreats. Passed unanimously.

## **50/50 FOR JULY**

**Motion 14-06-01** made by Jimmy Calnan; seconded by Mike Bradley. Be it moved that the 50/50 for July 2014 be donated to Philadelphia AIDS Thrift Shop. Passed unanimously.



## **July 2014 Munchie**

“When you’re finished changing, you’re finished.”

- Benjamin Franklin

**HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY!**

**Philadelphia AIDS Thrift** is incorporated in Pennsylvania as a non-profit business. They are also a federally recognized 501c3 tax-exempt charitable organization. Their mission is to sell the lovely, useful, interesting, amusing, and sometimes mysterious stuff generous people donate to the thrift store, and then distribute the proceeds to local organizations involved in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

## **SAME-SEX MARRIAGE AND DIGNITY PHILADELPHIA**

On May 20, 2014, Federal District Court Judge John E. Jones, III, of the Middle District of Pennsylvania ruled in the case of *Whitewood v. Wolf* that the laws in Pennsylvania which precluded same sex couples from getting married, and which precluded recognition of marriages entered into by same sex couples in other jurisdictions were unconstitutional. Judge Jones further ordered that the Commonwealth must allow same-sex couples to marry and to recognize valid out-of-state marriages. On May 21, 2014, Pennsylvania Governor Corbett decided not to appeal this ruling. **The Chapter is in the process of ascertaining what it can offer to members of the community who wish to have a same-sex marriage performed with a liturgically-based service. Once a determination has been made, the information will be disseminated to the membership.**

In the interim, Philadelphia Judge and former Dignity Philadelphia President Ann Butchart is willing to perform a civil ceremony for interested parties. For Judge Butchart’s contact information, please contact our president Mike Viola at [President.DignityPhila@gmail.com](mailto:President.DignityPhila@gmail.com)

*The following email was received at Dignity Philadelphia after same-sex marriage became legal in the Commonwealth; Presider Eileen DeFranco can be reached via Jim Clay:*

I am also very willing to perform weddings - religious or not. Couples should feel free to contact me. As you know, I am one of Dignity’s Presiders. Would be perfectly willing to do a Nuptial mass.

- Eileen DiFranco

## **DIGNITY PHILADELPHIA IN 2006**

On March 9 the ceremonial swearing-in of Ann Butchart as Judge of the Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas, First Judicial District of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia County, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania was held in City Hall, Courtroom 653. Ann is a longtime member and past president of D/P.



D/P member Pat Kershner and her employer donated a printer to the chapter.

D/P members participated in Focus Groups on March 19 and 26 led by Rachel Schwartz, a senior at Bryn Mawr, who is doing research for her senior thesis.

D/P members attended the Equality Forum showing of the film “Saint of 9/11.” This May 5 showing at the UArts Gershman Hall at Broad and Pine Streets was the Philadelphia premiere.

At the D/USA Convention held in Philadelphia last July, a Membership Task Force was created and charged to determine how local chapters define their membership and what communications concerns exist between the national office and the chapter (membership in particular). As a member of the Task Force, Jimmy Calnan assisted in surveying the larger chapters such as Philadelphia, Washington and Los Angeles.

D/P member Joe Snyder facilitated a series of discussions based on various chapters from Daniel Helminiak’s book “Sex and the Sacred.”

“Sexuality & Spirituality” discussion led by Fr. Dennis McNally drew 30 participants.

D/P placed an ad in the religious section of the Philadelphia Inquirer to solicit interest from disenfranchised Catholics.

D/P member Bethany Davis participated in a meeting to plan for an overnight retreat for college glbt students to be held next year. D/P initiated the retreat and will be coordinated by Fr. Tom Brennan.

President Norman Simmons attended the “Out & Faithful” open house at the William Way Community Center. Barbara Gindhart and Dick O’Malley were on the planning committee. Michelle, Sharon and Jim Clay staffed the D/P table and display.

D/P member Kevin Hanaway led a Day of Retreat entitled “The Gospel and the Changing World” on November 4.

D/P’s 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Christmas Bazaar/Fundraiser held December 10 netted over \$700.

## **BOOK REVIEW – TEACHING THE CAT TO SIT**

In the opening pages of *Teaching the Cat to Sit*, Michelle Theall begins to tell the story of her son’s baptism and the internal struggle she faced as two facets of her identity collide. Michelle, who was raised Catholic and her partner Jill, who was raised Baptist, made the decision to raise their

son in the Catholic Church despite the Church’s stance on same sex relationships. After being accepted and even embraced in their local parish’s pre-school, and making all the arrangements for their child’s baptism, the couple was caught off guard when their priest informed them that the decision to baptize their son was being rescinded.\* Michelle tells of the struggles she faced in 1) convincing Church leaders to separate their opinions of her lifestyle from their views of whether her son was worthy of Baptism and 2) coming to terms with the realization that it just might be okay to walk away from the Church in which she was raised, instead of fighting to remain in an institution that denounced her and her family.

As if that story were not enough to fill the pages of this compelling memoir, the author tells the story of her past concurrently. It is one of growing up in the Catholic Church and struggling to figure out what that powerful seed inside her was; the one that let her know that she was different from almost everyone she knew. The tale included the often volatile relationship with her mother that dictated the decisions Michelle made throughout much of her life. With a great deal of courage, Theall told candid details of her past and does much more than tell you the chain of events that led her to where she is today. She gives readers an unflinching account of the demons she faced and shares bare details that most would only trust with a soul mate.

In the end, my favorite part is that the story is not tied up with a pretty bow. Instead, Michelle Theall leaves you with the notion that there’s still more of the story that needs to unfold and more growing left to do. For everyone.

*\*The decision to not christen the child was backed by the Bishop of the Archdiocese; none other than our current Archbishop Charles Chaput.*

Thank you to Erin M. for reviewing the book, as well writing this excellent review. Dignity Philadelphia has one copy and it can be borrowed; ask any SC member to get on the reading list.



At Dignity’s 41st Anniversary Mass, the community also celebrated Father Joe McOscar’s 50th Anniversary as a priest. Pictured are Barbara McOscar, Bill Quinn (demonstrating his art skills), and our celebrant, Father Joe McOscar. It was an honor to have him celebrate this occasion with us. Picture by BJ Welsh

**UPCOMING ACTIVITIES – DIGNITY AND DIGNITY-RELATED**

July 2, Broad Street Ministry, note the new date; we are moving from last Wednesday of the month to the first Wednesday of the month. The time for this event is 3 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. They are also in need of men’s clothing, summer style jackets, pants and shirts.

Birthday cakes - near the middle Sunday of each month we provide a half-sheet birthday cake from Acme for all members celebrating that month; upcoming Birthday Sundays are July13 and August 17.

Emergency Funds – we have money in this fund for people who need a little bit of help in buying groceries. We have three supermarket cards for local grocery chains; please let Jimmy Calnan know of your need. Don’t be embarrassed to ask! This fund was specifically created to help out the members in our community.


That’s So Gay, Gay history in the collections of the Library Company of Philadelphia, 1314 Locust St.; thru Oct. 17; recommended for individual tours.

**LGBT Films at local library** - The Free Library of Philadelphia, Independence Branch at 18 S. 7th Street, is showing a series of films of interest to our community. Films begin at 6:00 but snacks come out at 5:30. Join other Dignettes in watching the following:

- July 21**        **Saving Face**
- August 18**   **Making Love**

A Chorus Line - Sunday, August 17, at 2:00 in the Broadway Theatre, Pitman NJ; tickets about \$25

**12<sup>th</sup> Annual Gay Community Night at the Phillies**  
**Phillies vs. Astros**  
 Citizens Bank Park  
 Tues., August 5 @ 7:05 p.m.



**Mummer’s Museum** presents “String Band Music Under the Sky” – Thursday nights @ 8 p.m. Concerts for June, July and August are as follows:

- July 10            South Philly
- July 17            Woodland
- July 24            Broomal
- July 31            Quaker City
- August 7          Greater Kensington
- August 14        Hegeman
- August 21        Avalon
- August 28        Fallinger

Bring your folding chairs; refreshments will be available for sale, and let’s support our Mummer’s Dignity member with our presence at these events. The location is 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and Washington Avenue. Rain or shine, outdoor weather permitting and we can all go in to the Museum (215-336-3050) if it rains!



Melissa Waldo and Sister Jeannine Gramick. Sister Jeannine, Cofounder, New Ways Ministry, presented at a panel at the National Religious Collogay, May 3, 2014. (Picture by DO’Malley)



Pictured above is Joe McOscar, getting a special award for his 50 years as a priest, Rick Lombardo, Board member of the Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld Fund, accepted the 2014 Community Service Award for the John C. Anderson Apts., Dignity President Michael Viola, Ed Hermance, owner of Giovanni’s Room, received a special recognition award, and Larry Sutter, Vice President of our Chapter. These awards were given out at Dignity’s 41th Anniversary Potluck, May 18, 2014



Treasurer Mike Bradley with Education Committee Co-Coordinator, BJ Welsh. This picture was taken at Gay Pride Day, May 8, at Penn’s Landing.

# Calendar of Events | *Weekly mass at 330 S 13th Street between Pine and Spruce Streets*

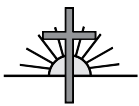
## July is National Ice Cream Month

Wednesday, July 2	Broad Street Ministry, 3 – 5:30 p.m.
Friday, July 4	Independence Day
Sunday, July 6	Eucharistic Liturgy, 7 p.m., Steering Committee Meeting, 4:30 p.m.
Thursday, July 10	Mummer's Museum String Band
Sunday, July 13	Eucharistic Liturgy, 7 p.m., Liturgy Committee Meeting, 4:30 p.m. Birthday Cake Sunday
Thursday, July 17	Mummer's Museum String Band
Sunday, July 20	Eucharistic Liturgy, 7 p.m., Mary Magdalene Commemoration
Monday, July 21	Movie at Independence Library - Saving Face
Thursday, July 24	Mummer's Museum String Band
Sunday, July 27	Eucharistic Liturgy, 7 p.m., Memorial Service for Rev. Ralph Monteiro
Thursday, July 31	Mummer's Museum String Band

## August is Art Appreciation Month

Sunday, August 3	Eucharistic Liturgy, 7 p.m., Memorial Service for Charlie Kinsky
Tuesday, August 5	Gay Night at the Phillies, 7:05 p.m.
Wednesday, August 6	Broad Street Ministry, 3 – 5:30 p.m.
Thursday, August 7	Mummer's Museum String Band
Sunday, August 10	Eucharistic Liturgy, 7 p.m.
Thursday, August 14	Mummer's Museum String Band
Friday, August 15	Assumption Service, 7:30 p.m.
Sunday, August 17	Eucharistic Liturgy, 7 p.m., A Chorus Line, 2 p.m. in New Jersey Birthday Cake Sunday
Monday, August 18	Movie at Independence Library - Making Love
Thursday, August 21	Mummer's Museum String Band
Sunday, August 24	Eucharistic Liturgy, 7 p.m.
Thursday, August 28	Mummer's Museum String Band
Sunday, August 31	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 submission for the August/September newsletter is August 10, 2014.**

*Articles published in the Dignity/Philadelphia newsletter, The Independence, are not necessarily the opinions of the Steering Committee of Dignity/Philadelphia, or of the Communications Co-chairs. Publication of names, organizations, and/or photographs in The Independence is not to be construed as any indication of the sexual orientation of such persons, employees, and/or members of organizations.*

## Steering Committee

**Michael Viola** – President  
**Jimmy Calnan** – Vice President  
**Kevin Davies** – Secretary  
**Mike Bradley** – Treasurer  
**Jim Clay/Grant Shea** – Liturgy Committee Co-coordinators  
**Vacant** – Community Life Committee Coordinator  
**Michelle Perrone/Dolores Vera** – Communications Co-coordinators  
**David Kalinowski/B.J. Welsh** – Education Committee Co-coordinator  
**Chaplains:** Barbara Gindhart and 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**