



The Independence

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

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SUNDAY WEDDINGS AT DIGNITY

By Dick O'Malley

The Steering Committee of Dignity Philadelphia has approved allowing a couple to have a civil wedding ceremony during a regular Sunday liturgy as long as one of them has been a member of Dignity Philadelphia for at least six months.

If the presider is not able to do the civil ceremony, the couple can choose someone else, not necessarily a priest, to do the civil ceremony. For example, Barbara Gindhart, Dignity's Chaplain, is legally authorized to perform civil marriages in Pennsylvania. In this way, the couple will be legally married and will also have their union blessed. Marriages performed in Pennsylvania would be recognized in NJ, Delaware, and other states. The marrying couple needs to take the appropriate steps to obtain a marriage license.

The civil marriage should take place in approximately five minutes probably after the homily, and before the Liturgy of the Eucharist. The Mass itself will be a regular Sunday liturgy using the assigned readings for that day.

2015 EASTER SCHEDULE

The following schedule has been approved by the Liturgy Committee and will be featured in the PGN a week before Palm Sunday. Please mark your calendars:.

Easter Reminder

March 29 – **Passion/Palm Sunday** – 7 pm in Dignity's worship space, downstairs

April 2 – **Holy Thursday**, 7:30 pm in Dignity office space

April 3 – **Good Friday** – Stations of the Cross with St. Luke's upstairs, 7pm

April 4 – (Sat. 10 p.m.) **Easter Vigil** in Dignity's worship space, downstairs

April 5 – **Easter Sunday** – no service at Dignity

Please join us for these events.

FYI: In future newsletters, Michael Rocks will interview Dignity Philadelphia's women presiders – so stay tuned!

SUPPORTING DIGNITY PHILADELPHIA

As you all know, the Chapter is financially supported in several ways. Each Sunday, the weekly collection is used to pay the Chapter's expenses, which include the use of the worship space, liturgical expenses, maintaining our phone number and post office box, paying for the newsletter, and other expenses. Unfortunately, the weekly collection is not enough to pay all of our expenses. Fortunately, annual membership dues,

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stewardship contributions, and direct donations to the Chapter as part of the Christmas and Easter appeals help defray our regular costs.

There are some funds, however, that are specifically earmarked for certain purposes. For example, the money in the **Durkin Fund** can only be used to issues related to women. These funds were given to the Chapter by the estate of Michael Durkin for that specific purpose. Usually, these funds are used to underwrite the membership dues for women.

From the estate of Dan Estes came funds, in the appropriately named **Estes Fund**, which are used only for expenses related to individuals who have HIV/AIDS. These funds can be used to underwrite the membership costs for someone who has HIV/AIDS. More frequently, these funds are used to underwrite some of the expenses for our annual Christmas party at Calcutta House, which provides housing and support services for people living with AIDS in Philadelphia area.

The money that is in the **Community Emergency Fund** is used to purchase gift cards at area grocery stores for members who are experiencing financial difficulty.

If anyone would like assistance from any of these accounts, please contact a member of the Steering Committee. All requests are confidential.

In the past, the Chapter has given a scholarship to an area college student interested in studying LGBT issues. Due to the low funds in the **Scholarship Fund**, it has been a few years since such a scholarship was given.

It was through the benevolence of member Mark Ratkus, who left some funds to the Chapter from his estate, which are earmarked for expenses related to retreats. The **Mark Ratkus Fund for Retreats** can help defray the costs of retreats organized by the Chapter or which members are attending organized by our sister organizations, such as the Dignity Young Adult Caucus.

Since music was one of the components of the liturgy loved by Craig Scott, the money the chapter received from his estate, held in the **Craig Scott Fund**, helps to pay the cost to have a keyboardist for our weekly liturgy and certain holy days.

Anyone is welcome to make donations specifically to one of these accounts. Please be sure that your payment clearly indicates that it is to be applied to a particular fund. If you are making your donation through our Razoo page,

<http://www.razoo.com/story/Dignity-Philadelphia>, please indicate that your donation is for a particular fund. If you are making a donation by check, please indicate the fund in the memo of the check. For those who would like to make a cash contribution, please place your donation in an envelope marked with the name of the fund.

Since the Chapter has 501(c)(3) status from the Internal Revenue Service, your contributions to the Chapter, as part of the Stewardship program, as part of the weekly collection, or any donation to the specific funds mentioned above, are all tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

The Chapter is looking into participating in the Amazon Smile program by which a portion of your purchase through Amazon is donated to the chapter. More information will be shared with members via email and/or the newsletter once those arrangements have been finalized.

This Chapter would not have survived for almost 42 years without the financial support of its members. Thank you for that support and God bless.

Mike Viola
President, Dignity Philadelphia

ELECTION SCHEDULE

This is just a reminder, and hopefully plants a seed in your Catholic mind, that Dignity Philadelphia is due to elect new members for the Steering Committee this year.

We know that the President, Vice President, Treasurer and possibly Secretary for 2014-15 are NOT running again for office. This is a perfect opportunity for Dignity members to be thinking in terms of leadership roles. As a member of the Steering Committee you can help the Chapter continue to move forward and have visibility, especially with the World Meeting being held here this September. Please think about your contribution to the community, and if interested, do not hesitate to talk to any of the present officers regarding the duties of the position. Announcements will be made during the coming months, and the formal schedule is as follows:



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- April 12 - first announcement
- April 19 - second announcement
- April 26 - first nominations
- May 3 - second nominations
- May 10 - meet the candidates (if necessary)
- May 11 - mail the ballots
- Sunday, May 24 - all ballots due (or postmarked by Sunday, May 24)

DIGNITY PHILADELPHIA IN 2010

On March 7, at 5pm Eileen DiFranco was the presider at this liturgy. This was in addition to our regular liturgy at 7pm.

At the March 21 Semiannual Business Meeting, the following motion was presented by John Grillone and seconded by Dolores Vera. Be it moved that any woman ordained as a priest in the Roman Catholic tradition be allowed and included in the Dignity Philadelphia list of presiders, specifically be permitted to preside at any Dignity Philadelphia service including and especially masses for regular weekly and special occasions. (As information, any motion presented at a business meeting cannot be voted on until the next business meeting.)

On April 11, the Steering Committee discussed the motion from the business meeting and decided to have a community meeting on May 2.

On May 8, the Steering Committee interpreted that our Constitution with regard to our “Statement of Position and Purpose”, as well as the By-laws “Chapter XV Sacramental Liturgies” falls in line with the dictates of these documents to allow for ordained Roman Catholic women priests to be regular presiders at our liturgies.

D/USA conducted their Board Meeting in Philadelphia the weekend April 16-18 at the Lowes Hotel.

On April 17 at 5:30pm at the William Way Community Center, D/P hosted a dinner (“A Taste of Philly”) for the D/USA Board members and members of D/P.

D/USA Board met with the Steering Committee on April 18 at 2pm and with the D/P community at 4:30pm.

D/P’s program “A Journey with God” presented at the Equality Forum on May 1.

D/P members contributed to the William Way “Wrestling with Angels” display at the Community Center.

On September 12, D/P staffed a table at Southern NJ

GLBTIQ Pride Festival at Cooper River Park.

Jimmy Calnan attended the Dignity USA Leadership Summit in St. Louis on October 1 and 2.

D/P participated in the annual AIDS Walk on October 17.

D/P sponsored a Day of Retreat on October 23 at St. Luke’s.

D/P members who volunteer at the Broad Street Ministry were treated to a dinner catered by the Ritz Carlton on December 8.

The annual D/P holiday gift giving party at Calcutta House reached a milestone. Barry T. was the recipient of the 1000th gift, a watch with large numbers because of his vision impairment.

D/P members attended the Mazzoni Center’s 20th Anniversary of the death of Dr. Peter Mazzoni who was a member of D/P.

DIGNITY AND THE WORLD MEETING ON FAMILIES

Later this year, from September 22 through 27, 2015, to be exact, thousands of Catholics will be converging on Philadelphia to participate in the World Meeting on Families



(<http://www.worldmeeting2015.org/>). It is quite incredible to think that, of all the cities in the US, our fair city, the City of Brotherly Love and Sisterly Affection, will be the host for this international event. It has been reported that his Holiness, Pope Francis, will be coming to Philadelphia, as well as to several other US cities, during this time. The eyes of the world will surely be on Philadelphia. Specific details about the Papal Visit have not yet been confirmed. However, the Chapter has registered to receive updates about the visit. Once additional information has been received it will be shared with the Chapter.

During this 6-day conference, there will be scores of conferences, workshops, meetings, and events that one can attend. Registration information can be found at this link: <http://www.worldmeeting2015.org/plan-your-visit/register/>. A summary of the pricing information for the conference

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can be found here: <http://www.worldmeeting2015.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Registration-Info-11.6.pdf>. Specific information about the workshops currently scheduled can be found at this link: <http://www.worldmeeting2015.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Preliminary-Agenda-reg-announcement.pdf>.

Efforts were made by LGBT-supportive organizations to include LGBT issues as part of this conference. Unfortunately, those efforts were not successful. Still it is expected that there will be scores of LGBT individuals and LGBT families coming to Philadelphia for the World Meeting on Families (WMF). It is the intention to make sure there is a visible presence of LGBT individuals and families to remind the members of the Roman Catholic Church throughout the world, especially the hierarchy of the Catholic Church, that LGBT Catholics have significant gifts that can benefit the Church and our communities, to paraphrase the first draft of last year's Extraordinary Synod on the Family.

Dignity/USA and other LGBT-friendly organizations have several events in the works. We hope that as a chapter and as individual members, Dignity/Philadelphia will be able to participate in the events to the extent possible. One way in which people can get involved is to host LGBT individuals or families who will be coming to Philadelphia for the WMF. If anyone has a guestroom or other space at which he or she is willing to allow someone to stay during the conference at no charge, please contact Christine Haider-Winnett, the coordinator of Equally Blessed, at coordinator@equally-blessed.org if you are able to host during the WMF. Please be sure to let her know how many people you are able to accommodate and other information that you think someone would need to know (things like whether you have any pets, whether smoking is allowed in your home, etc.).

Dignity/USA is also considering placing an ad in *The Philadelphia Inquirer* or having some other visible statement, like a roving truck ad, to express the needs of LGBT Catholics and families. This would be timed more for the Pope's arrival.

Finally, Dignity/USA is working with celebrity chef, Art Smith, to host a dinner for WMF attendees, and Philadelphia-area foster children and other children in need. The tentative date for this event is Thursday, September 24, 2015. Dignity/USA is still finalizing the details for this event. Additional information will be shared via newsletter, via e-mail, on

Dignity's Facebook page and website once it is available.

This fall will truly be an exciting time to be a Catholic in Philadelphia. Hopefully, many members of Dignity/Philadelphia, their families and friends will be able to participate in the World Meeting on Families and related events. We need to remind the Church that LGBT people and our families are an important part of the Catholic Church.

Mike Viola
President, Dignity Philadelphia

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL MUMMER

While it is still a little cold outside, Joe T. would like us to be thinking of Spring and Summer, sitting outside at the Mummer's Museum, listening to some of the most popular Mummers groups. So mark your calendar for these upcoming concerts, and join us Thursday nights at 8 pm for great music. Many Dignity Philadelphia members attend the concerts, and we are looking forward to seeing you there. The museum is located at 1100 South 2nd Street, Philadelphia, PA 19147 (2nd Street at Washington Avenue); phone number is 215-336-3050 for more info. Featured here are concerts for May and June events.

May 14	Duffy
May 28	Avalon
June 4	Woodland
June 11	Greater Overbrook
June 18	Hegeman
June 25	Fralinger

July, August and September concerts will appear in future newsletters.

Dignity/Philadelphia Agenda for Semiannual Business Meeting

Dignity Philadelphia will hold its Semiannual Business Meeting on Sunday, March 22, 2015, after social. Everyone is invited to attend. The agenda is almost finished; items to be discussed are Dignity Philadelphia's presence at pride events in June and October, Dignity USA planned events for the upcoming Pope visit, housing associated with this visit, and so much more! Don't forget to mark your calendars!

UPCOMING EVENTS FROM COMMUNITY LIFE

- Broad Street Ministry dates: March 4 and April 1, from 3-5:30 pm
- Birthday Sundays: March 15 and April 12

Music Ministry's BIG event:

Friday, March 6, come and cheer on Dan F., Dignity's Sunday Liturgy keyboardist, as he performs for his Senior Piano Recital. This momentous event will take place at 7 pm at Terra Hall, Caplan Recital Hall which is located at 211 S. Broad. And we get to see him perform FREE; for sure J. Clay will be there.



MOTIONS FROM THE STEERING COMMITTEE

The following motions were made at two separate Steering Committee Meetings, January 4 and February 1, 2015:

Motion 15-01-01 made by Jimmy Calnan; seconded by Mike Bradley. Be it moved that the February 50/50 be designated for Camden Area Health Center for HIV/AIDS (KIS). Passed unanimously.

Motion 15-01-02 made by Jimmy Calnan; seconded by Henry Chau. Be it moved that D/P sign up for Amazon Smile and that any funds generated be deposited to the Community Emergency Fund on a trial basis of 6 months. Passed unanimously.

Motion 15-01-03 made by Kevin Davies; seconded by Dolores Vera. Be it moved that the Ad Hoc Committee for Elections be created for the 2015 elections; to be

chaired by Kevin Davies who will search out other members. Passed unanimously.

Motion 15-02-01 made by Jimmy Calnan; seconded by Mike Bradley. Be it moved that the 50/50 for March 2015 be designated to Mercy Hospice; and the 50/50 for April 2015 be designated to the Mazzone Center Trans-Health Conference. Passed unanimously.

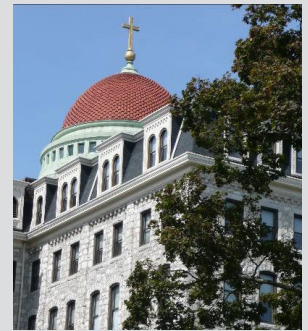
Motion 15-02-02 made by Mike Bradley, seconded by Alice Foley. Be it moved that the Ad Hoc Audit Committee for FY 2013-14 consist of Rob Baker and Mike Viola. Passed unanimously.

Reminder from the Education Chair

ATTENTION WOMEN OF DIGNITY (all 8 of us):

New Ways Ministry will hold a retreat for lesbians June 5-7 at the Franciscan Spiritual Center in Aston, PA. The theme is "Fear & Faith, Risk & Trust."

Sister Jeannine Gramick, one of Dignity Philadelphia's founders, will be one of the presenters. The registration fee is \$175. For more info, write to New Ways Ministry, 4012 29th Street, Mt. Rainier, MD., 20712 or email info@NewWaysMinistry.org



Bi-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, 2004

HAPPY NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

CALENDAR OF EVENTS - MARCH AND APRIL

(items in *italics* are mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter – with more detail)

Sunday, February 22 Eucharistic Liturgy, 7 p.m.
First Sunday of Lent
Day of Fast and Prayer for AIDS

March is National Women's History Month

Sunday, March 1 Eucharistic Liturgy, 7 p.m.
Steering Committee Meeting at 4:30 p.m.

Wednesday, March 4 Broad Street Ministry from 3-6 p.m.

Friday, March 6 Prayer Around the Cross at 7 p.m.

Sunday, March 8 Eucharistic Liturgy, 7 p.m.
Liturgy Committee Meeting at 4:30 p.m.

Sunday, March 15 Eucharistic Liturgy, 7 p.m.

Tuesday, March 17 St. Patrick's Day

Wednesday, March 18 St. Joseph's Day

Sunday, March 22 Eucharistic Liturgy, 7 p.m.
Semiannual Business Meeting

Sunday, March 29 Palm/Passion Sunday

April is Alcohol Awareness Month

Wednesday, April 1 Broad Street Ministry from 3-6 p.m.

Thursday, April 2 Holy Thursday, 7:30 p.m. in the Dignity Office

Friday, April 3 Good Friday, Prayer Around the Cross, upstairs, 7 p.m.

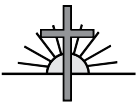
Saturday, April 4 Easter Vigil, 10 p.m. downstairs

Sunday, April 5 Easter Sunday – no service at Dignity; do not show up, get huffy, and wonder where everyone else is at 7 p.m.

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

Sunday, April 19 Eucharistic Liturgy, 7 p.m.
Liturgy Committee Meeting at 4:30 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 April/May newsletter is April 12, 2015.

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/Dick O'Malley – Liturgy Committee Co-coordinators
- Henry Chau – Community Life Committee Coordinator
- Michelle Perrone/Dolores Vera – Communications Co-coordinators
- Alice Foley – Education Committee Co-coordinator
- Chaplains: Barbara Gindhart and Father Ron Hoskins



Electronic payment at razoo.com/story/Dignity-Philadelphia

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**