



The Independence

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

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EASTER SUNDAY SCHEDULE

Easter Sunday is an important day in the Christian church calendar because it celebrates Jesus Christ's resurrection, according to our Christian belief. Here at Dignity Philadelphia, we started our Lenten season – leading up to Easter Sunday, at Ash Wednesday Mass on February 10, officiated by Rev. Ron Hoskins. The Liturgy Committee has planned various events, culminating at **the Easter Vigil Mass**; the schedule is as follows:



- **Holy Thursday Service, March 24**, will be held at the Dignity Office at 7:30 p.m.
- **Good Friday, March 25**, in conjunction with St. Luke's, we will participate in Prayer Around the Cross, upstairs at 7 p.m., and as mentioned,
- **Easter Vigil Mass, March 26**, will be held downstairs at 10 p.m., to be followed by a Social after service. (Please note that we will not have Sunday Mass on March 27, 2016.)

MOTIONS FROM THE STEERING COMMITTEE

There was one motion made January 3rd, and two motions February 7th at the Steering Committee Meetings. These are as follows:

Motion 16-01-01 made by Jimmy Calnan; seconded by Kevin Davies. Be it moved that the Steering Committee thank Mike Viola for his dedicated, outstanding and long term service to D/P as the Assistant Treasurer. Passed unanimously.

Motion 16-02-01 made by Jimmy Calnan; seconded by Dolores Vera. Be it moved that outstanding check #2109 dated 6-29-14 payable to LGBT Center of NEPA be voided and reissued to WWCC. Passed unanimously.

50/50 for March

Motion 16-02-02 made by Jimmy Calnan; seconded by Kevin Davies. Be it moved that the March 2016 50/50 be designated to the LGBT Elder Initiative. Passed unanimously.

LGBT Elder Initiative: The LGBT Elder Initiative (LGBTEI) is committed to assuring that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender older adults have rights and opportunities to live vibrant, creative and mutually supportive lives. To achieve this vision, the mission of the LGBTEI is to foster and advocate for services and resources that are competent, culturally sensitive, inclusive and responsive to the needs of LGBT elders in the Delaware Valley and beyond.

SPECIAL UPCOMING EVENTS AT DIGNITY PHILADELPHIA

As usual, Dignity members will be participating at Broad Street Ministry **March 2** and **April 6** – first Wednesdays of the month. And the fun continues at Giorgio's Pizza on Pine, following our Volunteer Ministry.

And Birthday Sundays for the next two months will be celebrated **March 20** and **April 17**; even if your birthday doesn't correspond on these months, join us at Social after service to celebrate whomever's birthday! Jimmy Calnan will research celebrities whose birthdays are within that month, and we will join them in celebrating!

Dignity members are also invited to "Dream the Impossible Dream" on Sunday, April 24 at the Broadway Theater of Pitman, N.J. Carpooling for Man of La Mancha will be made available; please contact Jimmy Calnan for more information.



Mark Segal, whom many of us know and respect for his work in the LGBT community will be visiting Dignity Philadelphia to promote his

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memoir, “**And Then I Danced, Traveling The Road to LGBT Equality.**” He is the nation’s most-award-winning commentator in LGBT media, and is the founder and publisher of the Philadelphia Gay News. His memoir was released in October 2015; he has agreed to come to Dignity Philadelphia and speak, and make his book available to us. As soon as the Community Life Coordinator and Mark can arrange for a date, we will let the membership know. So stay tuned...

“[A] swiftly written debut memoir . . . [Segal] vividly describes his firsthand experience as a teenager inside the Stonewall bar during the historic riots, his participation with the Gay Liberation Front, and amusing encounters with Elton John and Patti LaBelle. . . . A jovial yet passionately delivered self-portrait inspiring awareness about LGBT history from one of the movement’s true pioneers.”

—Kirkus Reviews

AND SPEAKING OF BOOKS...

A book review of **The Gods of Tango**, written by Carolina de Robertis, and reviewed by Dolores Vera:

I think I just read my first lesbian novel, but I am not so sure...

I heard about the book from the New York Book Review and I had trouble getting it from the library since it was fairly new. I wanted to read it since it was written by a Latina woman, Carolina de Robertis, and I did want to know about the tango. The book is a novel, with history about the tango; I did not know the origin of the dance was from Africa, and the music was played by African-Latinos in Argentina. It was only played in brothels and cabarets; the women who danced the tango were prostitutes. It was ignored, and to some degree, snubbed by other musicians. In fact, the person who forms his tango group is known as “Negro” and he plays the bandoneons – “a square concertina, used especially in Argentina.” But the band leader, Santiago, is not the subject of the book.

The book is about a young Italian woman, Leda, who marries by proxy, her boyfriend who is already in Buenos Aires, while she is in Italy ready to embark in her life in “America.” Upon getting to Buenos Aires, she discovers the husband has been killed, and she is now on her own on the “brink of destitution” and since this is 1913, there are no roles/jobs for single women. But she does have and knows how to play the violin – her one possession that was intended for the potential husband. And since she cannot play in public – because that is not what respectable women did – she takes on a male identity. She binds her breasts, cuts her hair, takes on the dead husband’s clothing, and name, and joins a troupe of musicians – headed by Santiago. As a young man, Leda becomes Dante, and she

lives her life as a male, learning how to walk, smoke and act as a male. The life she leads is kind of blurry between her feelings as a woman, and her life as a male. She keeps this disguise for the rest of her life. And as a young male in the troupe of musicians, she takes on the male behaviors, including sex with several women from the brothels and high society. She manages to survive, gain the respect of her “brothers” in the troupe, and live a respectable life.

The sexual acts are described as Leda/Dante insisting on keeping her clothes on and performing oral sex on her female partners. She has several long-term affairs in the book. She is finally discovered and is forced to reveal herself to the troupe. This discovery brings about a death of one of the musicians who tries to protect her, and her days of violin playing are over! As a male fugitive, she marries her female partner, and continues to live as a male in Uruguay. The last part of the book summarizes her life as a happy married male, with a wife who loves her and continues to hide Leda’s identity. Needless to say, the oral sex is described quite graphically, which I thought was part of Leda’s new life. It dawns on me that the relationships she has with other women are heterosexual, since she is always playing the male part. Not until she reveals herself to her future wife, does the relationship appear homosexual, since both are female. I still wasn’t sure if it was a gay novel. And after I read the acknowledgements, the author, a woman, thanks her wife for her support. So I concluded, as a high school graduate, that it was a lesbian novel, written by a lesbian writer. I could be wrong, but the book is so well written, so full of adjectives describing the music and the tango – from it being just music to adding songs to this dance. The troupe manages to bring the tango to salons of high society, and you actually read and can visualize this transformation. It was also interesting to see the treatment of women from 1913 to the 1930s, and how they were viewed by Latinos of that era. Even if the women were rich and widowed, they were still not seen as respectable members of society – they still functioned as a male’s sister, or someone’s ex-wife or widow. The novel finally concludes around the time of Martin Luther King, Jr’s death, and provides a piece of history about women in South America – and in Italy to some degree.

I would like someone to read this novel and tell me if, in fact, I have just read my first lesbian novel!

OTHER UPCOMING EVENTS – MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

March 13 – Dignity will have a guest homilist, Rev. Beverly Dale, who will speak on the readings and relate them to

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Women's History Month (March). She has visited us before and Dignity members remember her as singing her homily – so do attend this Mass and see what surprise she has in store for us!

May 15 – Dignity 43rd Anniversary Potluck at 4:30 p.m. Michael Rocks will be presenting the Lifetime Achievement Award to a worthy Dignity member. Following this potluck, Mass will be celebrated by Rev. Ron Hoskins. This Mass will be very special to him, since it is also his 40th anniversary of being ordained as a priest. A special invite will be extended to other Presiders; everyone is encouraged to attend.

SPECIAL PAST EVENTS AT DIGNITY PHILADELPHIA

A very special “thank you” to members of Dignity Philadelphia, for participating in the Calcutta House Christmas Party, December 21, 2015.

Everyone had a great time and the gifts were plentiful.

To respect the residents' privacy, we could not use some of the pictures taken of the appreciative residents. But

this picture is just a minute glance of the many gifts Dignity delivered. And as you can see, there was holiday cake which was distributed to the residents, in addition to ice cream and soft drinks. Again, thank you to Jimmy Calnan, who coordinated this event – as he does every year!



Bi-monthly Munchie

“I appeal to everyone who believes in King's dream to make room at the table of brother and sisterhood for lesbian and gay people.”

-Coretta Scott King

HAPPY BLACK AND WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTHS

A VISIT TO THE MIRACULOUS MEDAL SHRINE

Several members and a guest visited the Miraculous Medal Shrine in Germantown on February 6, 2016. Part of the Dignity Rosary Group had been planning this outing for a



while, and thanks to the planning expertise of Michael Rocks, we were able to visit and get a tour of this Shrine. In keeping with our mission, we were able to say the rosary in one of their chapels and later attend Mass with other worshippers at noon time. In addition to Michael, Dolores, Alice, Michael Flynn and an honorary Dignity Member, Kathy, attended this outing. Three more visits are planned by the Rosary Group to other shrines in the Philadelphia area. All members are invited to join in the next field trip; as well as to the monthly praying of the Rosary – every third Sunday of the month. Here is a selfie taken at the site of the attractive Dignity visitors.

CELEBRATING CHINESE NEW YEAR

Another successful outing, with more people and lots of food, was hosted by Henry Chau and Rob Baker on Saturday, February 13, 2016. There were 17 Dignettes who enjoyed Dim Sum at the Imperial Inn in Chinatown. Chinese New Year is a celebration of the lunar New Year – this year is the Year of the Monkey. As many of you know, Dim Sum is a brunch-type meal where tea is served and small plates of dumplings and other dishes are eaten in a family atmosphere. Other dishes enjoyed included wide rice noodles and a special New Year's Cake. Our hosts ordered the food from the tea carts which came by the tables and everyone received a little red envelope (Lai Shi) with lucky money for good fortune and wealth in the New Year (courtesy of Henry). A good time was had by all! Thanks to all who braved the 20 degree weather; and a special thanks to Henry and Rob for co-sponsoring this successful event.



Everyone was so eager to participate in Dim Sum that no one took a picture on site! However, these 9, out of the 17 attendees, were more than happy to pose for this picture, as a remembrance.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS - NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER

March is Women's History Month

- Wednesday, Mar. 2 Broad Street Ministry, 3- 5:30 p.m.
- Friday, Mar. 4 Prayer Around the Cross
St. Luke's, 7 p.m., upstairs
- Sunday, Mar. 6 Mass at 7 p.m.
Steering Committee Meeting, 4:30 p.m.
- Tuesday, Mar. 8 International Women's Day
- Sunday, Mar. 13 Mass at 7 p.m.
Guest Homilist, Rev. Beverly Dale
- Thursday, Mar. 17 St. Patrick's Day
- Saturday, Mar. 19 St. Joseph's Day
- Sunday, Mar. 20 Mass at 7 p.m., Palm Sunday
Liturgy Committee, 4:30 p.m.
Rosary Group meets at 6 p.m.
Birthday Cake Sunday

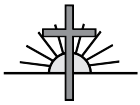
Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Vigil – see newsletter article for times and locations

- Sunday, Mar. 27 Easter Sunday
However there is no Sunday Mass at Dignity

April is National Volunteer Month

- Friday, Apr. 1 Prayer Around the Cross
St. Luke's, 7 p.m., upstairs
- Sunday, Apr. 3 Mass at 7 p.m.
Steering Committee Meeting at 4:30 p.m.
- Wed., Apr. 6 Broad Street Ministry, 3 - 5:30 p.m.
- Sunday, Apr. 10 Mass at 7 p.m.
Liturgy Committee Meeting at 4:30 p.m.
- Sunday, Apr. 17 Mass at 7 p.m.
Rosary Group meets at 6 p.m.
Birthday Cake Sunday
- Sunday, Apr. 24 Mass at 7 p.m.
"Man of La Mancha" at Pittman, N. J.
See newsletter for Specifics.

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 11, 2016.

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 Rocks – Interim President
- Jimmy Calnan – Interim Vice President
- Kevin Davies – Interim Secretary
- Erin McMenamin – 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**