



# The Independence

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

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## **BILL QUINN RECEIVES THE THIRD DIGNITY PHILADELPHIA LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**

By Michael J. Rocks, President

The Dignity Philadelphia President's Lifetime Achievement Award began when Joanne Collins was President. Joanne requested and received permission from the Steering Committee to establish a new award for members who have already received both the Chapter Service Award and the Deo Gratias Award, and still continue throughout their lifetime to continue to serve Dignity Philadelphia in an extraordinary way. I was the recipient of the award for the first time in 2013.

On September 18th, the evening of the Clyde Sams Pot Luck Supper and the regular Sunday Mass, I presented the award to a third member of the Chapter, Bill Quinn. Previous recipients were myself and Jimmy Calnan. Bill was not able to be at Mass that night, and later in the week three of the board members visited Bill and his partner Bob in their home, and there we presented Bill with the President's Lifetime Achievement Award.

Bill first came to the Dignity Sunday Mass when we were located at 22nd and Spruce at Trinity Memorial Church over 35 years ago. At that particular time the Chapter was "in-between" sacristans, meaning that we had not had a sacristan for several months. In retrospect I am sure that Bill noticed very quickly that the quality and care of the altar linens was poor, there was not a supply of proper purificators, and in fact, at one point paper napkins were being used to clean the chalices and patens. The vestments were in disarray and there was no beauty in the altar and the surroundings for the Dignity Sunday Mass, which at that time was attended by between 150 and 200 members.

Bill just stepped forward shortly after he started to come to Sunday Mass and took over the duties of sacristan, and beauty returned to the altar and the surroundings of the Sunday Mass. Over these more than 35 years since Bill has been sacristan, the Chapter now has acquired a beautiful collection of vestments and altar covers and decorations. Bill has made new altar linens throughout the years and most of the altar decorations he had made himself and dedicated them to deceased members. Bill cares for the Eucharistic Altar with reverence and devotions and he takes great care and great pride in maintaining a holy atmosphere in which to celebrate the Mass. Bill transformed both the Christmas Vigil Mass and the Easter Vigil, and now the Chapter celebrates these feasts around the most beautiful altars. As a special gift to Our Lord Jesus and to the Dignity community, Bill started to arrange flowers for the altar, and for more than 30 years now he has purchased flowers and arranged them in the most beautiful way for our Eucharistic Altar. Bill also gives bouquets of the flowers following Mass to any special guests or for special occasions so the flowers have a second life in the homes of our members and friends. The Easter and Christmas altars are exquisite.

Over these years I have been impressed with the devotion and reverence that Bill had shown for the celebration of the Eucharist. I often think that God is very pleased with this devotion and reverence which Bill displays always in all that he does to create a fitting and attractive Eucharistic setting every Sunday. God surely smiles down on our congregation for the great gift of beauty that we create in God's Name. And Bill does all this in quiet and humble service to God. I chose Bill to receive the President's Lifetime Achievement Award because I have such great love and respect for the work Bill does for the Chapter and for the glory of God, and for the beloved manner in which he does it. Bill is a faithful servant of God and his devotion to the Holy Eucharist has inspired me throughout these many years that I have worked along with

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Bill in preparing for the Sunday Mass. Just as the Creator called out from the heavens when God's Son Jesus Christ was baptized in the River Jordan, so God cries out to Bill ---"this is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased." We the members of Dignity Philadelphia have often found ourselves in a holy union with God during Mass and we often have Bill Quinn to thank for much of the great beauty and inspiration and worship in the Dignity Sunday Mass. Bill, may God bless you and keep you close now and always. We are so much better people because we know and love you so much.



Pictured above are Rob Baker, Michael Rocks – the first recipient of this lifetime award, the 2017 Awardee and very deserving Bill Quinn, and Jimmy Calnan, who received this award in 2016, given to him by Michael Rocks. (There were no lifetime awards given out in 2014 and 2015.)

## **RESERVE THE DATE – DEC. 19 - CALCUTTA HOUSE CHRISTMAS PARTY**

One of the holiday parties I always look forward to is the Calcutta House Christmas Party. To me this event symbolizes so many things to enjoy. We get a name and an item that a Calcutta guest wants, we get to elaborately wrap this gift and then we get to take it to the party. At this Christmas Party, Father Ron Hoskins is the featured guest! If you have not seen him in action, you have got to go just to see him perform. First of all, he welcomes everyone, asks for volunteer readers, leads us in an abbreviated Mass service and leads the singing with his beautiful voice. He then goes around the room, asks everyone their names (including Dignity members), then with his cuttingly sharp memory will repeat everyone's name in one go-round! We are talking about 20-30 people whose name he remembers – and while we all look forward to him forgetting a name, he always disappoints

us! We then have cake, ice cream and gift distributions. The guests are always appreciative of Dignity gifts and enjoy the party atmosphere. Once they open their gifts, share some story with us and enjoy each other's company, we clean up after ourselves. We leave Calcutta House exhausted, but elated at having made someone happy. The guests appreciate everything we do – no matter how small our gift has been. While some Dignity members go all-out in purchasing (and fabulous gift wrapping) a gift, these gifts are just as cherished as a bag of SEPTA tokens that some clients ask for in their gift requests. What matters to them, I think, is that we think of them and go out of our way to make them happy – and in turn this makes us happy. Mary Byers and I always comment on how this is what Christmas is all about – giving of ourselves and expecting nothing in return.

Please join us **Monday, December 19 at 7 p.m. at Calcutta House, 17th and Spring Garden**, and help us do magic! If you need the name of a guest for gift-giving, please let Jimmy Calnan know and he will give you a name and a gift-request. He will also arrange for rides to Calcutta House for those of us who don't have a car. But, bottom-line, join us at this "most wonderful time of the year"- the participation in this event will warm your heart!

## **MOTIONS FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The Board of Directors met October 2 and November 6, 2016. The following motion was made:

**Motion 16-11-01** made by Jimmy Calnan; seconded by Rob Baker. Be it moved that the December 2016 50/50 be donated to the Incarnation Institute for Sex & Faith with supplement from general funds to give \$200.

### **50/50 for December**

Incarnation Institute for Sex & Faith: This is a group of professionals in the fields of Christianity and sexology who believe in: 1) a pleasure-centered Christian gospel of abundance and grace and 2) the moral framework Jesus modeled; respect and mutuality, inclusivity and diversity, nurturance and affirmation as the basis for both sexual decision-making and righteous relationships. FYI, the Director of this group is Dr. Beverly Dale, who has been a homilist at Dignity Philadelphia several times.



## UPCOMING EVENTS @ DIGNITY PHILADELPHIA

Be on the lookout for 2 classes coming up early 2017. The Liturgy Working Group will be having a **Lectors Workshop** and a **Eucharistic Ministers** workshop. If you are interested in becoming a lector, and proclaiming the word of God on Sundays during Mass, please let Dick O'Malley know of your interest. We are always looking for readers. And if you want to help distribute the blood and body of Jesus Christ during service, also on Sundays, please let Dick know. Both classes will last approximately 2 hours, will be held on a Sunday prior to Mass and more importantly, you will be doing your community a great service. Please let us hear from you!

The Dignity/Philadelphia **Educational Scholarship** criteria and deadline will be announced in January, so if you are a student be on the lookout for this announcement. If you can't get to Mass on Sundays, and are interested in applying, please let Michael Rocks, Jimmy Calnan or Dolores Vera know of your interest. The scholarship is up to \$500 and is rewarded to a current student attending any of the universities in the area.

**Broad Street Ministry** volunteers always meet on the first Wednesday of the month. We will be meeting at 3 p.m. at Broad Street Ministry on December 7 and again on January 4, 2017. We have become a reliable group of volunteers, very efficient (and pleasant). We are finished serving and (light) cleaning up by 5:30 p.m. We then congregate at Giorgio's Pizza to reward our volunteer efforts with food! Please join us; for more info contact Jimmy Calnan. Orientation takes place every time we meet, so show up and help us in this ministry – you are always welcome – by everyone!

**Christmas and New Year's Mass Schedules:** For your planning purposes, Dignity Philadelphia will be having their Christmas Eve Mass on Saturday, December 24 at 10 p.m. We will not have Sunday service on Sunday, December 25 due to the birth of the baby Jesus; so don't show up at 7 p.m. and get all bent-out-of-shape and curse Jimmy Clay! HOWEVER, Dignity Philadelphia will be having Sunday service on New Year's Day – yes! January 1, 2017 we (or some of us) will be at Mass at 7 p.m. to help ring in the New Year (as if we didn't do this already on Saturday). So get your fill on Mummies, eat, drink (non-alcoholic, of course) during the day, and come worship with your Dignity temperance group members afterwards. Nodding off will not be tolerated during Mass!

**Birthday Sundays** – Let us celebrate your birthday! On December 18, we will have chocolate and vanilla cake for all those members born in December and get overlooked when it comes to a birthday gift due to the Christmas holiday. While we will not have a gift for you, we will sing you “Happy Birthday” and feed you cake. We are so opposed to ageism, that we will not even ask how old you really are! And speaking of birthdays, here are some fab pictures:



Louis, is this really a birthday cake knife, or does it belong to Freddy Krueger?



A beautiful October Autumn motif cake for two very handsome members!



And speaking of handsome members, Henry and Robert certainly fit the bill!



November members, Dick, Bill Q. and in absence, Michelle.



Mike, Al, Joe C., Dolores, Joe O. and Rob – a gorgeous group of September “babies”

## DIGNITY 2016 BRUNCH: A FUN-FILLED SUCCESS

By Dick O'Malley

Dignity's Annual Brunch held on Saturday, October 22, at Knock, 12th and Locust, from noon to 2 p.m., was one of its most successful events we have ever held. Thank you all who made this possible!

The 46 six people in attendance had a wide range of entrees to savor, from Eggs Benedict to Belgian Waffles, during the two hour sit-down meal. In addition to being a social and gastronomical success, the Brunch raised more money than our previous brunches to help Dignity meet the expenses of its weekly liturgies. We can always count on Dignity members and their guests to make this event a huge and fun-filled Saturday get-to-gather.

Dignity and Knock are already working on streamlining next year's fundraiser; while it took some time for everyone to get their dishes served, please note that 100% of the price paid went directly to Dignity Philadelphia. Please accept our apologies for the wait period in getting your entrée, however this waiting period will be non-existent next year. If anyone has suggestions on how to make this event go smoother, please let me know. The Liturgy Working Group is always open to suggestions that will accommodate our members.

The Dignity Community wants to express its gratitude to the management and staff of Knock for their generosity and thoughtful service.

## BRUNCH AT KNOCK – SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2016

Another successful event due to these beautiful people:



Alice, Emily and Barbara M.



The semi-religious table: Father Joe M., Chaplin Barbara, Pat and Father Paul.



Erin and her mother-in-law Sandy



Ed, Wayne, Tom and Brandon



The Event Planner Dick O. and Larry S.



Richard M. and Father Ron H.



Mike V. and Joe C.



Michael L.



Robert B. and Kevin D.



Dignity's Aunt Eleanor and her driver Linda.

## Triple Munchies

“A lovely thing about Christmas is that it’s compulsory, like a thunderstorm, and we all go through it together.”

– Garrison Keillor

### Merry Christmas

“An optimist stays up until midnight to see the new year in. A pessimist stays up to make sure the old year leaves.”

– Bill Vaughan

### Happy New Year!

“Life’s most persistent and urgent question is, ‘What are you doing for others?’”

– Martin Luther King, Jr.

**Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday and  
Day of Service, Monday, January 16, 2017**

## ANOTHER BROADWAY EXTRAVAGANZA - JANUARY 29, 2017

Trip to see “La Cage aux Folles”: The Broadway Theatre in Pitman, NJ where we have attended so many wonderful musicals at a professional level of production, is going to offer “La Cage aux Folles” in the winter season. The performances are always of Broadway quality.

We plan to attend the matinee, 2:00 p.m., production on Sunday, January 29, with a lunch about noon nearby. We will be back in time for Sunday Mass.

Tickets are \$28. Jimmy Calnan will be ordering them soon and would like a response of interest. Please use [dignityphila@aol.com](mailto:dignityphila@aol.com) to contact him. This will be a nice treat midwinter.

## DAY OF THE DEAD CELEBRATION

Day of the Dead (known as All Souls’ Day) is a holy day observed throughout Mexico and around the world in other cultures. The holy day, Nov. 2, focuses on gatherings of family and friends to pray for and remember friends and family members who have died. A common symbol of the day is a skull or a skeleton.

For the third year in a row, Dignity honored the holy day on Sunday, November 6 by building an altar and asking members to contribute to this religious structure. The Liturgy members decorated the altar with festive papers and various Day of the Dead figurines – the majority from Dolores’ home altar. The altar included candles (lit to welcome the spirits back), salt (represents the continuance of life), photos of our members

and friends who are deceased, fresh water, images of saints, and items that once belonged to the deceased (a tambourine for Father Ralph), a Pittsburgh Steelers cap (Mark R.), and new pictures this year. The Virgin of Guadalupe was MIA this year – that is so Mexican – but we improvised. Thank you to members who contributed items of their loved ones and for sharing a story during the allotted time. And a heart-felt thank you to members who shared a photo but were unable to share verbally because of the pain that this causes; we were just happy that you were able to bring a picture that helped us celebrate the lives of people whom we have loved and lost. Remember that “it’s the thought that counts.” This is what the finished altar looked like:



Included here are 2 pictures of Mark R. and 2 pictures of Father Ralph. Dignity members who are longer with us are also remembered in the Book of Remembrance.



New additions (unfortunately) were contributions from Emily, Al C., Michael R., Bill Q. and Linda B.

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS - DECEMBER 2016

And a tiny bit of January 2017

## December is Christmas, Kwanzaa and Hanukkah, happiness all in one month!

- Thursday, Dec. 1 World AIDS Day
- Friday, Dec. 2 Prayer Around the Cross, 7pm (upstairs with St. Luke's community)
- Sunday, Dec. 4 Mass at 7pm  
Board of Directors Meeting, 4:30pm
- Wed. Dec. 7 Immaculate Conception\* Eve, Mass at 7:30pm  
Broad Street Ministry, 3 – 5:30pm
- Sunday, Dec. 11 Mass at 7pm  
Liturgy Service Group Meeting, 4:30pm
- Monday, Dec. 12 Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe
- Sunday, Dec. 18 Mass at 7pm  
Rosary Group Meeting, 6pm
- Monday, Dec. 19 Calcutta House Party – see article in newsletter
- Saturday, Dec. 24 Christmas Eve Vigil, Mass at 10pm

Sunday, Dec. 25 No Mass Service at Dignity Philadelphia  
\* In Catholic school, we always referred to this the Day of Spontaneous Combustion

## January is National Mentoring Month

- Sunday, Jan. 1 Mass at 7pm
- Wed., Jan. 4 Broad Street Ministry, 3 – 5:30pm
- Friday, Jan. 6 Prayer Around the Cross, 7pm (upstairs with St. Luke's community)
- Sunday, Jan. 8 Mass at 7pm  
Board of Directors Meeting, 4:30pm
- Sunday, Jan. 15 Commemoration Mass for MLK, Jr., 7pm  
Liturgy Service Group Meeting, 4:30pm  
Rosary Group Meeting, 6pm
- Monday, Jan. 16 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service
- Sunday, Jan. 22 Mass for Christian Unity, 7pm
- Sunday, Jan. 29 Mass and Blessing of Throats, 7pm (This is in honor of St. Blaise, celebrated February 3, 2017.)

## 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 February/March 2017 newsletter is January 23, 2017.**

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### Board of Directors

- Michael Rocks – Director (President)
- Rob Baker – Director (Membership)
- Kevin Davies – Director (Record Keeping)
- Erin McMenamin – Director (Finances)
- Jimmy Calnan – Director (At Large)
- Jim Clay/Dick O'Malley – Liturgy Service Group Co-ordinators
- Michelle Perrone/Dolores Vera – Communications Service Group
- Barbara Gindhart – Chaplain



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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**