

DECEMBER 2011



The Independence

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

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DIGNITY RETREAT - SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3

by Dick O'Malley

Dignity/Philadelphia will be having an all-day retreat on Saturday, December 3, at the Church of St. Luke & the Epiphany, 330 S. 13th Street. The theme of the retreat is “**What Does God Mean to You? Finding God in Your Everyday Life.**”

The retreat leader will be Caryl Conroy Johnson who served for 15 years as Pastoral Associate at St. Francis of Assisi Church in Springfield, PA. More recently, she has been co-pastor of St. Mary Magdalene Intentional Catholic Community in Drexel Hill and, since 2007, a Spiritual Director. She has a M.A. in Religious Studies from St. Charles Seminary in 1992 and a M.S. in Spiritual Direction from Neumann University in 2009.

On the day of the retreat (Dec. 3), a continental breakfast will be served from 9:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. The retreat itself will begin at 10:a.m. with a break for lunch at 12 noon. The retreat will resume at 1:00 and conclude at 3:00 p.m. As in past retreats, the maitre'd will be our own Leo Chang.

Since space is limited, everyone is encouraged to register early before the day of the retreat. A registration fee of \$10 will help to cover the expenses of the retreat including the lunch (scholarships are available). For more information, please call Dick O'Malley at 215-878-5182

NEW MISSAL VERSUS VATICAN II,

by Dick O'Malley

The Steering Committee of Dignity/Philadelphia after much thoughtful reflection has decided not to use the new Roman Missal. This new English translation of the mass will officially begin to be used on the first Sunday of Advent (Nov. 27th).

When Pope John XXIII convened the Second Vatican Council in 1962, he wanted the Council, among other things, to take the faith and put it into languages that the faithful could understand. Liturgists often make the distinction between “dynamic equivalence” as opposed to “literal translations.” The Council also wanted to decentralize authority in the Church by giving more power to the bishops and less to the Roman Curia or bureaucracy.

The Roman Curia, which wrote the new missal seems to prefer a more literal interpretation of **Latin** which tends to be more abstract – even though the language spoken at the Last Supper was Aramaic and even though the earliest liturgies were in Greek.

The Steering Committee was particularly impressed by the witness of Fr. Anthony Ruff, O.S.B., a Benedictine priest and a highly regarded international liturgical scholar. It turns out that the American bishops, who “allowed” the Curia to translate the new missal into English, had hoped that Fr. Ruff would help them sell the new translation. In good conscience, however, he said that he could not do so.

In an “Open Letter to the U.S. Catholic Bishops,” published in the Jesuit magazine *America* (Feb. 2011) Fr. Ruff came out against this “top-down” imposition “by a central authority [the Curia] that does not consider itself accountable to the larger church.” When he thought of “how secretive the translation process was, how the Holy See allowed a small group to hijack the translation at the final stage, how unsatisfactory the final text is, how this text was imposed on national conferences of bishops in violation of their legitimate episcopal authority, how much deception and mischief have marked this process – and then when I think of Our Lord’s teachings on service and love and unity....” he sadly concluded, “I weep.”

Illustrations of the changes include: Christ died “for many” rather than “for all” and the replacement of “This is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. **Happy** are those who are called to his supper” with “Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. **Blessed** are those called to the supper of the Lamb.” The original Greek word for “happy” is *makarioi* and can be translated either as “happy” or “blessed” The editors of *America* magazine (10-24-11) half-humorously asked: was a little happiness too much to ask for.”

With Vatican II as its guidepost, Dignity, like Fr. Ruff, will remain in the church and will work for change as more favorable circumstances develop.

THE SEVENTH NATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON CATHOLICISM AND HOMOSEXUALITY “LESBIAN/GAY CATHOLICS & RELATIONSHIPS”

by Jimmy Calnan

New Ways Ministry is sponsoring a major symposium, “From Water to Wine: Lesbian/Gay Catholics and Relationships,” March 15-17, 2012 in Baltimore MD.

Among the Plenary Session Speakers are: Bishop Geoffrey Robinson, retired Auxiliary Bishop of Sydney and Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, former Lieutenant Governor of Maryland and daughter of the late Robert F. Kennedy. Marianne Duddy-Burke, Executive Director of DignityUSA is a speaker at one of eight focus sessions.

Thursday, March 15, is to be a retreat day facilitated by Bishop Robinson and titled “Fired by Love’s Urgent Longings.”

Registration information and forms are available through New Ways Ministry at www.newwaysministry.org/regsymp.html or by calling 301-277-5674.

This is a wonderful opportunity to attend a one day retreat and two day symposium on something so important to us, our relationships.

DIGNITY CHRISTMAS AT CALCUTTA HOUSE

by Jimmy Calnan

This year Dignity/Philadelphia will celebrate our 18th annual gift giving to the residents at Calcutta House. Last year at the Holiday Party we presented the 1000th gift to a resident.

Prior to the each annual party, a group of Dignettes, who visited Calcutta House this year on November 28, asked residents for their wish lists. Each of the residents was asked what she or he would like to receive as a special holiday gift. This list is then shared with members of Dignity at liturgy who agree to purchase and wrap one or two of the items.

As in past years, the Holiday Party arranged for Monday, December 19, begins at about 7:00pm with a short prayer service led by Father Ron Hoskins, one of our chaplains. This is followed by gift giving along with cake, ice cream and soda. Father Ron usually gets a carol or two going during this joyful time. Everyone who has ever attended, residents and chapter members alike, look forward to this party as a way of highlighting the Christmas season. The residents have already been talking about seeing us again.

All of this is made possible by the generosity of you, Dignity members, in this most wonderful season of giving and getting in return.

FROM PHOTO TO WEB – SAFE AND SECURE

by Kevin Davies

Our own Tony L. will be instructing/discussing on Sunday, January 22, 2012 beginning at 4pm how to edit and prepare photos for display on the web for family and friends using PhotoShop, Picassa (free) and Google Photo (also free). If time allows, we may delve into other mysteries of computing and the internet.

Class will be held at St. Luke’s with refreshments being served. Also, there will be time after class to go for pizza and have a study group on everything we have learned.

If interested, please register by calling 215-546-2093, email dignityphila@aol.com or let me know at mass.

FINANCIAL DONATIONS TO DIGNITY/PHILADELPHIA: TODAY AND IN THE FUTURE

There are many ways to financially support Dignity/Philadelphia (a 501c3 non-profit organization). Be a member of the chapter; make weekly offerings at mass; join the Stewardship Program; request a matching gift form from your employer; make bequests, planned gifts, or stock donations; and don’t forget to remember Dignity/Philadelphia in your will. When you do your estate planning, no amount is too small to remember Dignity/Philadelphia. Everything you do is appreciated.

DIGNITY THROUGH THE YEARS

by Jimmy Calnan

When Dignity USA was preparing to celebrate its 25th Anniversary at a bi-annual convention, chapters were invited to prepare a book of their history for display. From this came the history books that we keep on file in the office. As a lead in to the chapter’s 40th Anniversary in 2013, we are going to reprint in each monthly newsletter one year’s fact sheet.

1980

Joe D’Amato, the new president, announced his plans to establish more grass-roots involvement within the chapter. The face of the Steering Committee changes through a restructuring. Town meetings are held. Job descriptions are formalized. A memo is presented to the

MONTHLY MUNCHIE

Every perfect gift is from above.

– James 1:17

MERRY CHRISTMAS

Steering Committee requesting funds and some chapter involvement for the International Convention.

A Mid-Atlantic celebration takes shape. Contact is made with Old St. Joseph's Church. For the first time in four years formal contact is made with an established church in the Archdiocese. Joe D. and Helmuth B. meet with the Rector, Fr. Joseph Curry, S.J. The question is raised about any feelings the Chancery might have towards Dignity. Fr. Curry can only speculate that there is probably fear with regard to us. Why? The Chancery would be apprehensive of any group which would not be under the direct jurisdiction of the Archdiocese. The Mid-Atlantic celebration is held at the Friends Meeting House. Workshops include topics of health concerns, gay activism, gay/lesbian intimacy and the liturgical community. Leonard Matlovich is guest speaker at the general session. Liturgy is celebrated at Old St. Joe's. Dignity/Philadelphia receives high marks from all who attend.

50/50 FOR DECEMBER – ST. JOHN'S HOSPICE

**The History of Saint John's Hospice with
The Little Brothers Of the Good Shepherd**
by Joe Orlando, Volunteer (This is an edited
version taken from their website)



In the early 1960s, Joseph O'Neill visited his brother, Father (later Monsignor) Anthony J. O'Neill, pastor of Saint John the Evangelist parish on 13th Street below Market Street in Philadelphia. The city's "skid row" was within the parish boundaries and Joseph was saddened by the many "street people" he saw. These were hungry men who needed assistance. He asked his brother if the church could do something to help these poor people. Father O'Neill said that many did come to the church for food but perhaps a more concerted effort could be made. Very soon, however, making sandwiches became a full time endeavor for the staff and they were overwhelmed by the sheer numbers of people seeking assistance. Father O'Neill decided that better service must be offered to the transient and resident men of "skid row" if progress in providing humane assistance was to be made. A building accessible to the poor and homeless and people to run the operation were initial requirements.

On September 17, 1962, Monsignor O'Neill was granted permission to purchase the building at 1221 Race Street. Very Reverend Brother Mathias Barrett, Founder of the Little Brothers of the Good Shepherd, was asked to assign Brothers to operate a shelter.

On Saturday, September 7, 1963, Saint John's Hospice started operations. Brother Mathias appointed Brother John Hurley as the first Program Director, with Brother Ernest and Brother Coleman assisting. An interesting sidelight of Brother John being the first director is that the Hospice became known to "street people" as "Father John's".

In the early years, the clientele of the Hospice was composed of elderly men. Many were alcoholics, others simply down on their luck. These men came to Saint John's for a hot meal, clothing and shelter which were given with dignity and compassion. Because of this, Saint John's became, and still is, the melting pot of center city's homeless population and the place where "Charity Unlimited", the Little Brothers' motto, was practiced 24 hours a day.

In 1986, Saint John's became a part of Catholic Social Services of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. This included the addition of several paid lay staff and many were former residents.

In 1994, the Brothers found new living quarters in a recently vacated convent. This made the former residence available for a longtime dream to be realized and in December 1995 the Good Shepherd Program for medically needy homeless men, including those with HIV/AIDS, opened its doors.

Saint John's Hospice continues to operate in line with the high standards and good works of the Little Brothers of the Good Shepherd. It is their pledge to continue to maintain these high standards and to seek new ways to assist those they serve to return to the mainstream of society as productive citizens. The Little Brothers of the Good Shepherd have left Philadelphia but their legacy lives on as we emulate their compassion and dedication.

BRUNCH AT TOC FUNDRAISER,

by Jim Clay

The Liturgy Committee's 3rd Annual "Brunch at TOC" fundraiser held on October 23 was enjoyed by 27 attendees. They had a great time which featured an abundance of delicious food and a wonderful atmosphere. The net profit which helps offset the expenses of our liturgies amounted to \$331.00. Yours truly was the lucky winner of the raffle prize, a red hoodie celebrating the 25th Anniversary of this year's AIDS Walk.

A warm thanks to all who made our festive fundraiser a success, especially Steve and Dennis, life partners and owners of Tavern on Camac. Please support those who support us by patronizing their business – mention their contribution to Dignity and personally thank them. Thanks again to all who attended. See you next year.

DIGNITY/PHILADELPHIA REVISED MEMBERSHIP FORM BEGAN JANUARY 1, 2011 DECEMBER RENEWALS – PLEASE CONSIDER DIGNITY/USA MEMBERSHIP

The Steering Committee has made a commitment to have a closer relationship with DignityUSA and they need your help. Please, when renewing your Dignity/Philadelphia membership also join DignityUSA. Please visit the DignityUSA website (<http://www.dignityusa.org/>) to see all the work DignityUSA does for us.

Over the years Dignity/Philadelphia has been one of the largest chapters in DignityUSA and we need to reclaim that position.

What does it mean to be a member of DignityUSA? By being a member of DignityUSA, you make a commitment to a national, if not international, organization and become a voice for GLBT Catholics and our friends. The media works with, and knows, DignityUSA and reaches out to the national office when a counterbalance viewpoint is sought.

Please speak with a member of the Steering Committee if you would like more information.

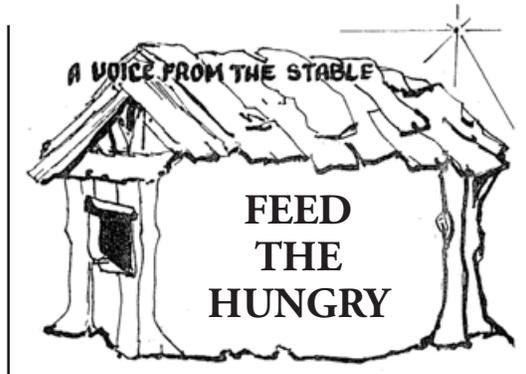
TOGETHER, our Voices are heard – locally, nationally and internationally! Let yours be heard – join both Dignity/Philadelphia and DignityUSA.

MOTIONS FROM THE NOVEMBER STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

Motion 11-11-01: Be it moved that the December 2011 50/50 be designated for St. John's Hospice. Passed unanimously

Motion 11-11-02: Be it moved that the Ad Hoc Audit Committee for 2010-2011 consist of Rob Baker and Mike Viola. Passed unanimously.

Motion 11-11-03: Be it moved that the Steering Committee upon recommendation from the Liturgy Committee agrees not to use the new Roman Missal. Passed unanimously.



THANKSGIVING DAY POTLUCK DINNER, SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2011



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

Thursday, Dec 1	World AIDS Day	Sunday, January 1	New Year's Day Eucharistic Liturgy at 7pm
Friday, Dec 2	Prayer Around The Cross at 7pm	Friday, Jan 6	Prayer Around The Cross at 7pm
Saturday, Dec 3	Day of Retreat at 9:30am	Sunday, Jan 8	Steering Committee Meeting at 4:30pm Eucharistic Liturgy at 7pm
Sunday, Dec 4	Steering Committee Meeting at 4:30pm Eucharistic Liturgy at 7pm	Sunday, Jan 15	Liturgy Committee Meeting at 4:30pm Commemoration Mass for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day at 7pm
Wed, Dec 7	Immaculate Conception Vigil Mass at 7:30pm	Monday, Jan 16	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
Sunday, Dec 11	Liturgy Committee Meeting at 4:30pm Eucharistic Liturgy at 7pm	Sunday, Jan 22	Christian Unity Liturgy at 7pm
Monday, Dec 12	Feast of Guadalupe	Sunday, Jan 29	Eucharistic Liturgy at 7pm
Sunday, Dec 18	Eucharistic Liturgy at 7pm		
Monday, Dec 19	Calcutta House Christmas Party at 7pm		
Saturday, Dec 24	Christmas Eve Mass at 10:30pm		
Sunday, Dec 25	Christmas Day – NO MASS		



PRAYER INTENTIONS

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

The deadline for submission of articles for the January newsletter is December TBD.

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
Vacant – Communications Co-coordinator
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).

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