

# - Dignity Spirit -

Dignity/San Francisco

September/October 1999

---

**Co-Chairs' Report**  
Gilbert Gonzalez and Gino Ramos

## **120 Days Left In This Millennium**

Peace and Joy of Christ to you!

Gino spoke of how much he enjoyed himself at the Dignity convention two years ago in our last newsletter. Gino was not able to attend this year's convention in Denver because of a family emergency. The convention in Denver was as uplifting as he promised. The convention opened with greetings in person from officers of Dignity/USA and local politicians from Denver. A letter addressed to Dignity from President Bill Clinton was also read.

The sessions were very stimulating and informative. The session with the biggest attendance was the one given by Bishop Gumbleton. Bishop Gumbleton started out by apologizing for the Church's treatment of its lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender members. Bishop Gumbleton spoke of his own insensitivity prior to his brother's coming out as a gay man. He went on to describe his journey of increasing understanding of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. Bishop Gumbleton read a letter that a mother of a lesbian wrote to him. The letter spoke of the lesbian daughter's suffering as the daughter kept her sexuality a secret from her husband and her children. The daughter's pain reminded many of us in the audience of our own, most were moved to tears.

Bishop Gumbleton promised the local Archbishop of Denver that he was coming to speak to Dignity to explain the statement the National Conference of Catholic Bishops issued in September of 1997, "Always Our Children", so he did. At the end of his talk, Bishop Gumbleton asked the Church that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender members of the Roman Catholic Church be given the same latitude to follow their own conscience as other members of the Catholic Church are allowed to do.

The liturgies were inspiring. The whole congregation of some 300 people, led by the choir and its director, sang as one. The Western Dance held on Saturday night was a lot of fun. There were some stunning clothes worn that night – Jimmy Bussen of Chicago in a cow patterned outfit, Lenny Glatt of Denver in a blue sequin vest and our very own Jim Remer in a formal dress that rolled up to become another dress better suited for dancing the night away! The DJ was impressed by Dignity members' ability to dance all kinds of dances. At one point we even danced in formation!

At the end of the convention, we left with a lot of joy in our hearts that some of us feel even today! Watch for more information about the convention in future issues of the Journal and of Update.

What is happening in the months of September and October? Here is a list of the most prominent activities:

1. September 4 and 5 - East Bay Pride in downtown Oakland. Come and see what's happening in the other side of the bay.
2. September 12 - 2nd Quarterly General Meeting and 2nd Sunday Supper Potluck. Please make sure to join us as we give a report on the state of the chapter and plan for the next quarter. Bring your favorite dish for everyone to enjoy!
3. September 25 - One day workshop held by Dignity/San Jose at the Billy DeFrank Lesbian and Gay Community Center. This promises to be an excellent seminar. Your \$20 entrance fee includes lunch and an afternoon snack.
4. September 26 - Folsom Street Fair. As in years past, we need everyone's help staffing the information and beverage booths. We will be working closely with the Defenders.
5. October 3 - Castro Street Fair. Another chance to do mission work!
6. October 10 - Solidarity Sunday. Please find in this packet a few ribbons that you can ask your friends and families to wear on this day to show their solidarity with us and to show their position against acts of violence towards lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. If you are willing to help distribute more of these ribbons to parishes or other l/g/b/t organizations, please call the office so we can supply you with ribbons and contacts to give them to.

There is no shortage of things to do. In November, expect to receive more information on a Future Search Conference for Dignity/San Francisco and a nationwide day of protest against the silencing of Jeannine Grammick and Bob Nugent sponsored by Dignity/USA.

These 120 days before the millennium ends will pass before we know it. Fortunately, at every moment of every one of these 120 days, God remains faithful to us!

Until the next ish...

GILBERT GONZALEZ