

# - Dignity Spirit -

Dignity, San Francisco

September/October, 2000

## Co-Chairs' Report

Peace and joy to you! We hope you have had a chance to have some fun this summer in spite of the Vatican's latest exclusionary statements. Too tired to get angry, the Pope's statement against the WorldPride 2000 celebration in Rome showed how important it is that we be church and be community and be the Christ to each other when the institutional church fails to be so.

After Pride Day this year, we held events that gave us a chance to enjoy the summer and each other's company. The Board held its retreat in July at David Turner's home. 14 of us went camping at Guerneville in August and John Chavez was kind enough to host a barbecue for the People of Color Support Group that same month. In September, the Couples' Support Group will gather at Mark and Toshi's. In October, some members will be watching the premiere of the opera "Dead Man Walking". On October 28, my partner, Jim Paz, and I will host an open house/barbecue on Saturday, October 28, at our home. It begins at 12 noon, directions are enclosed. This event is being held as a way of thanking everyone who have contributed to our community this year so far. You can also use it as a chance for others to get to know Dignity/San Francisco. If you know someone

who may be interested in Dignity, please invite them so they can get to know us and our work.

Street Fairs are coming up: East Bay Mardi Gras on September 3 in downtown Oakland, Folsom Street Fair on September 24 and Castro Street Fair on October 1. Please help our outreach efforts by signing up to staff the booth for an hour or two during these events.

Also in October is Solidarity Sunday. This year, Gino spearheads the efforts of our own chapter and of the Pacific Region to campaign against all forms violence. We hope we will be able to count on your support of this event.

Just a reminder, the next quarterly meeting is on September 10. I strongly recommend you come to this meeting if you are not able to come regularly if only to find out what is the latest goings-on in our community. This is also Second Sunday Supper so please bring your favorite dish to share with everybody else.

Until November rolls around, I hope God keeps you safe in the palm of Her hand!

Hugs, Gilbert Gonzalez

Greetings and Blessings to one and all! I can't believe how time has flown so quickly! Fall is upon us and with the changing season comes another opportunity to utilize our God-given gifts wisely and for the good of all!

First and foremost, I'd like to express my heartfelt gratitude to all of you who have kept me and my family in your prayers as we cared for my dad during his terminal illness and death last June. Time spent in the Philippines with my family was a blessed and spiritual experience I'll always cherish!

Our Dignity/SF family has also been grieving the loss of yet another longtime member, **Lovell Mac McGrath** in July. Moreover, another longtime dignitarian during our St. John of God days, **Frank Graham** also passed away. Please keep them and their bereaved in your prayers.

Our September/October calendar is filled with activities and projects for our faith community to participate in. We have 3 Street Fairs coming up where we have our traditional information and "Proud to be a Dignitarian" booth available for the public to witness how we value both our sexuality and spirituality as gifts of God. It is not too late to sign up and YOUR PRESENCE makes ALL the DIFFERENCE!

National Coming Out Day come October 11 is also fast approaching. Dignity/USA has been leading the way in a very important project to end HOMOPHOBIA and VIOLENCE against our gay, lesbian bisexual and transgender (GLBT) community through its annual Solidarity Sunday Campaign! This event happens on the Sunday before Coming Out Day wherein we encourage people of faith from various communities and the general society to

pledge their solidarity with the GLBT community in breaking the cycle of homophobia-based violence. This year, Dignity /SF will create the solidarity cards and ribbons from scratch as a community building effort as well. We will gather every Sunday starting on Sunday September 10 at 3 pm, in the fellowship hall of Seventh Avenue Presbyterian Church. Our goal is to make and distribute at least 10,000 pledge cards this year by including our own immediate families, their friends, our friends and their families as well as our co-workers and other congregations of faith. We also plan to distribute the pledge cards at the upcoming Street Fairs. For the sake of the generations yet to come and in memory of those, who because of their sexuality, either real or perceived, lost their lives, let us ensure the success of this project by our ACTIVE participation this year and the years to come.

The Call to Leadership of Love is also knocking on our door. We NEED a Chapter Secretary to serve our community till March 15, 2002. It is also a requirement to maintain our status as a non-profit organization. This position remained unfilled at and since our last general election. We also need a part time Administrative Assistant to keep our office in tip-top shape. The post of Co-Chairs and 3 Directors at Large will be available soon and very soon. PLEASE pray to the Spirit for guidance in these and other matters pertaining to our own chapter and to our blessed lives as well!

May the Fire of Christ's Love burn in our hearts and give us the Wisdom, Grace and Willingness to be of Service to each other!

Hugs, Gino Ramos