

dignity san francisco

Spirit

"Lord Send Out Your SPIRIT!"

Dear Dignity/SF Family,

We have some exciting, "late-breaking" news to share with you. We have just received confirmation of the approval of our application for the use of the top/4th floor "Ceremonial Room" at the new "San Francisco LGBT Community Center" on Market Street for our *Christmas Eve Mass!* For those of you who have seen this space, you will clearly remember it's dramatic, large windows, beautiful deck and the possibilities it holds for such a liturgy!

With this news, we are eagerly diving into our planning and discernment for how our liturgy can best seize this opportunity. We will certainly keep you updated on all details as they evolve, but be sure to make note of this and begin to **extend invitations to friends and others to partake!** In addition to this being a fresh setting for us to share in a very special liturgy, it is also a perfect opportunity to reach our community-at-large via "The Center". In essence, we are going OUT INTO the community itself, to pray, share in fellowship, worship, break-bread, advocate, affirm!

• "Be Yourself, Change the World"

Did we live up to this year's S.F. Pride Parade & Festival theme? Well, we at least "kept the ball rollin'" in a positive direction! Fourteen inspired members and friends made up our walking contingent this year. We created a "maypole", using our large rainbow cross as the center point and multiple flowing, intertwined, rainbow ribbons emanating from the cross and

extending out to each member of the contingent. It created a dramatic, festive, welcoming presence and an expression of cohesion among us. In addition to our large Dignity/SF sign, we carried many signs which spoke to many of our current church crises by offering brief, positive solutions. These points were derived from the Press Releases and signs which accompanied our Public Witness just a few months earlier (see details inside).

Among our walkers, we were especially blessed to have Gino Ramos and his mother, Regina Ramos ("Mom Rening", for short)... she elicited lots of screams of support: "Go Mom!", "Talk to my parents!" and so on. Several of our spanish speaking members were interviewed by "Univision" during the parade, including Raul Salazar, Angelo Wong and Vicky Valencia. We got a rousing, audible response from the onlookers to our signs (some of which included):

- BE YOURSELF, GAY, CATHOLIC & PROUD!
- CHRIST SENDS US AS SHEEP AMONG WOLVES, NOT SCAPEGOATS.
- CHURCH LEADERS, LET THE SUNSHINE IN!
- GAY PRIESTS MAKE GOOD PRIESTS.
- WOMEN MAKE GOOD PRIESTS TOO!
- JUSTICE FOR SEXUAL ABUSE VICTIMS
- MYCHAL JUDGE, GAY PRIEST, FRIEND OF DIGNITY, A HERO

As always, thanks to all those who helped make our walking contingent, and information and beverage booths a success (see details inside).

(continued on next page)

TED MAYLATH

&

PAUL ZILLER,

Co-CHAIRS



CELEBRATING

OUR SEXUALITY

AND LOVE AS

GIFTS FROM GOD

FOR A GOOD LAUGH:

* * * *

A 6-year-old was overheard reciting the Lord's Prayer at a church service:

"And forgive us our trash passes, as we forgive those who passed trash against us."

* * * *

A little girl became restless as the preacher's sermon dragged on and on...

Finally, she leaned over to her mother and whispered,

"Mommy, if we give him the money now, will he let us go?"

SHIRT DESIGN



dignity
san francisco

• Important Upcoming Events •

August 31–September 2: *Holiday Camping Adventure (will be "herstory" by this report)*

September 8: *Second Sunday POTLUCK Supper, 6:30pm, Social Hall*

September 11: Board of Directors Meeting, 7:30pm

September 12: *Defenders' Meeting*

September 13-15: *Defenders' Retreat, go to www.sfdefenders.org for details*

September 21: *Annual "Open House" at Gilbert Gonzalez & Jim Paz's home, 1:00pm–? This will be a POTLUCK, so call Jim at 510.339.3504 to RSVP and let him know what you'll be bringing.*

September 22: *People of Color Support Group Meeting, 4:00pm, Social Hall*

★ **September 29:** *Folsom Street Fair, & Birthday/Anniversary Celebration (Cake!), 6:30pm, Social Hall*

September 30: *Membership Committee Meeting, 7:00pm, at David Turner & Vince Phillip's home, call them at 510.522.4404 for details*

★ **October 6:** *Castro Street Fair*

October 9: Board of Directors Meeting, 7:30pm

October 10: *Defenders' Business Meeting*

October 11: National Coming Out Day

★ **October 12:** *"We Shall Not Be Silent" (Pacific Region) Conference, hosted by Dignity/San Diego. For full details call 619.645.8240.*

October 13: *Second Sunday POTLUCK Supper, 6:30pm, Social Hall, & Solidarity Sunday*

October 20: *People of Color Support Group Meeting, 4:00pm, Social Hall*

October 27: *"Dia de los Muertos" celebration and reception, Birthday/Anniversary Celebration (Cake!), 6:30pm, Social Hall*

October 28: *Membership Committee Meeting, 7:00pm, again, at David & Vince's home.*

Around the corner...

November 10: *Second Sunday Supper & Traditional Thanksgiving dinner served by the Board, 6:30pm, Social Hall*

★ **December 8:** *"Our Lady of Guadalupe" celebration and meal, hosted by the People of Color Support Group (NOT a Potluck)!*

December 25: *Christmas Eve Mass at The NEW S.F. LGBT Center! (details to come)*

December 29: *Feast of the Holy Family, includes annual Communal Blessing of Committed Relationships*

• September is Stewardship Month!

Keep your eyes open for our Stewardship mailing this month. This will be your opportunity to offer your personal commitment of "time, talent and treasure" to our community. Because we are a volunteer organization we cannot survive without you. Please discern your ability to make some sort of pledge when you receive the mailing.

• Come to the Fairs!

As you can see in our calendar of upcoming events, the Folsom and Castro Street Fairs are fast approaching! As always, we need your help to staff our booths AND to set-up and dismantle the booths before and after both parades. *These booths enable us to be positioned to reach as many fellow LGBT folks with our ministry and message as possible.* And, the Folsom Street Fair is a perfect time for you to "show your stuff"! Don't miss out. Please contact David Turner at 510.522.4404 or see him after our Sunday Mass if you are interested. SIGN UP NOW!

• A Calling to Ministry

At this time we have a very real need for those inspired to ministry through reading The Word, and serving the Eucharist at our Sunday Masses. If this is you, two of our ministry teams especially need your participation. Ideally, this requires a consistent once-a-month commitment but we would accept your participation even if you were only able to commit to less frequency. Come preach the Gospel with us! Call Paul Ziller @ 415.386.3126 if you are interested.

• **People of Color Support Group** •

Our regular meetings are back on our calendar again (see p.2) and we're gaining new momentum. ALL are welcome! We invite all those who would like to join our group and any volunteers who would like to help cook and assist, especially for our "Guadalupe" meal to please contact Vladimir Maldonado at 415.647.7655.

• **Faith Sharing Group Formats**

Tom Kaun has prepared a format for small faith sharing groups and individuals who wish to be mindful of or dedicate some time to *Solidarity Sunday* (Oct. 6). Look for this on our national website at <<http://www.dignityusa.org/>>. Also, he and Dick Olsen are planning to again prepare a similar format for Advent. However, they need a couple more participants to make this possible! Please contact Tom if you are interested in taking part, at 510.223.0296.

• **Public Witness & Vigil**

On the evening of Saturday, May 25th we stood in witness and held vigil in response to the current crisis within our larger Church. 25 members and friends came together for this cause. Friends who were present included Rev. Leah Brown of MCC San Francisco, Rev. Barry Wichmann of New Life MCC, Berkeley (and his partner, Brian Cross), Kara Speltz of Soulforce, members of the Berkeley Newman Center, and of several parishes, including St. Dominic's, St. Boniface, St. John of God and others. We also received support and blessings from other friends who were unable attend.

Unfortunately mother nature decided to try to freeze us out by blowing bone-chilling breezes on us this May evening but we were determined.

Prior to the event some brief segments were published in two issues of the Bay Area Reporter from an interview with Paul Ziller as well as some points from our accompanying Press Releases which were issued.

As is often the case in life, you may enter an experience with a primary goal or expected outcome in mind and in actuality attain something

greater. Although we did not achieve any press coverage at the actual event, several of us felt a great sense of healing was encountered through our INTERFAITH prayer, song and witnessing. Rev. Leah Brown and Kara Speltz shared some very moving words during our time of reflection.

Tom Kaun adapted the readings and blessings for the event from the "Order of Blessing for a Victim of Crime or Oppression, Book of Blessings". One of them read:

"Throughout history God has manifested love and care for those who have suffered from violence, hatred, and oppression. We commend all the victims of clergy abuse to the healing mercy of God who binds up all our wounds and enfolds in gentle care. And we commend the entire community of the Church to the Spirit of Wisdom who gives her gifts where she may without fear or favor."

A reminder of some of our pleas:

- to be voices of love and healing, for victims of clergy sexual abuse
- to encourage honesty and accountability in the continuing investigations into these abuses
- to urge that all investigations be behavior based, not sexual-orientation based
- to bring back to the table the discussion of ordaining married or partnered Catholics and women
- to be a voice of thanksgiving and support for the service of priests who happen to be gay
- to continue to call for the defense and advocacy of full inclusivity of LGBT Catholics

• **"Assumption" Home Liturgy**

Our frequent presider and friend, Fr. Ralph, welcomed us into his home for a Feast of the Assumption liturgy, on Thursday, August 15th. A good bunch of us were in attendance to share in this special liturgy.

We sang hymns, shared how Mary has impacted or been a part of our own faith journeys, and afterwards were treated to *an absolute feast*, thanks to Ralph! No kidding, *a feast!*

Ralph spoke of and encouraged us to accept >

*"Never doubt
that a small group
of thoughtful,
committed citizens
can change the world,
indeed it is the only thing
that ever has."*

— Margaret Mead

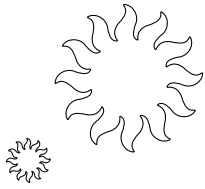
*"Speak out for those who
cannot speak,
for the rights of all the
destitute."*

— Proverbs 31:8

2003 NATIONAL CONVENTION LOGO:
"A VOICE IN THE DESERT"



DESIGNED BY PAUL ZILLER



BOARD OF DIRECTORS +

Co-Chairs, Ted & Paul

Secretary, **VACANT**,
seeking a volunteer!

Treasurer, Jim Remer

At-Large Members,

- John Brown
- Joseph Curtin
- Clarence Luvisi
- Vladimir Maldonado
- David Turner

Women's Group Coordinator,
Trudy Guella



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God's call as Mary did. He said it is also an opportunity for us to evaluate how we treat one another or respect one another. As a Christian, do we welcome others with no hidden agenda, with love and trust? The Assumption is a part of the yearly liturgical journey that keeps us steady in believing that "we are destined for something greater than this".

We were blessed to have, again, Gino's *mom* Regina, Gilbert and Jim's friend Myra, a *mother-to-be*, and our new member Marian Hernandez present! What a beautiful symbol their presence provided... "a *trinity* of femininity"!

• In Thanksgiving for Members' Return

Several members of our community have recently been called or kept away temporarily from our community for health, family or work reasons... we are very thankful to have them back! Here's a special "Welcome Back" George Hawxhurst, Marian Hernandez, Vladimir Maldonado, Lee Syracuse, and Bob Yeargin. You were missed.

• Co-Chair Awards •

Ted and I were very excited to take the opportunity (for our first time!) to acknowledge in a more special and prominent way the exceptional work of 5 members, over the past year or two. Their commitments provided us with a wonderful range of diverse gifts, helping make a lot of our community and Co-Chair endeavors much richer! Although several months have passed since we gave these awards, we wanted to be sure to share the good news in this more formal way. This year's honorees are Dignity/SF Members John Chavez, Trudy Guella, Brother Dick Olsen, Vladimir Maldonado and Jim Remer. *Congratulations!*

• Dignity/USA News Service

The Dignity/USA website provides you with two very important online list services of which we encourage you to take advantage. The first is the Dignity News Service. This service will provide you directly, in email form, with the latest Press Releases issued by Dignity/USA and any other

relevant national LGBT news.

- To subscribe to the dignity list send mail to **dignity-1-subscribe@yahoogroups.com**.
- To subscribe to the dig-cwc and dig-trans lists, send mail to **majordomo@dignityusa.org**. In the body of the message put:
 - "subscribe <listname >"
 - i.e.: "subscribe dig-cwc"

Also available are three discussion group lists. There is a main Dignity/USA LGBT list, a women's concerns list, and a transgender list:

<dignity-1@yahoogroups.com>

This list is for members and friends of Dignity. Discussions should focus on subjects of interest to members of Dignity.

<dig-cwc@dignityusa.org>

This list is sponsored by the Committee for Women's Concerns (CWC) for the discussion of women's issues.

<dig-trans@dignityusa.org>

The purpose of this list is to provide an opportunity for transgender individuals (and others) within Dignity to explore questions about issues of spirituality and acceptance both within Dignity and the society as a whole.

(Please see the following page on the main website for details before posting on a list:

<<http://www.dignityusa.org/listserv.html>>)

• "A Voice In The Desert"

This is the theme for our 2003 Dignity/USA National Convention. It will be held in Las Vegas, Nevada at the Alexis Park Resort Hotel. Plans are well under way for this, our next Dignity/USA "family reunion" of sorts.

For information on the convention please visit: **<<http://www.dignityusa.org/convention03/index.html>>**

Plan now to attend. It is never too soon to make your reservation.

Hold the dates: AUGUST 7 – 10, 2003!

Blessings to you all! Paul Ziller & Ted Maylath,
Co-Chairs, Dignity/San Francisco

Help me, O Lord,

*to let my old self die, to let die the thousand big and small ways in which
I am still building up my false self and trying to cling to my false desires.*

*Let me be reborn in you and see through you the world in the right way,
so that all my actions, words, and thoughts can become a hymn of praise to you.*



*I need your loving grace to travel on this hard road that leads to the death of my old self
and to a new life in and for you. I know and trust that this is the road to freedom.*

Lord, dispel my mistrust and help me become a trusting friend. Amen

— Henry J.M. Nouwen

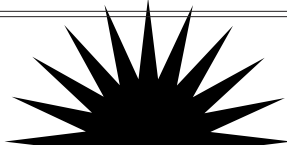
an excerpt from "A Cry for Mercy"

Our S.F. Pride Parade Walking Contingent



left to right:

Ted Maylath, Jim Paz, Angelo Wong, Victoria Valencia, Regina Ramos, Romeo L'Heureux, Gino Ramos, Paul Ziller, Thad Trela, Lisa Rodke, Jack Fahy, Gilbert Gonzalez, Raul Salazar



Special Thanks!

Just a few reasons for us to be thankful (among so many others)...



Pride Parade & Festival:

- *for all those who bore public witness to our cause by joining our **walking contingency**:*

Christopher B., Neil Christensen, Jack Fahy, Gilbert Gonzalez*, Romeo L'Heureux, Ted Maylath*, Jim Paz*, Gino Ramos, Regina Ramos, Lisa Rodke, Raul Salazar, Thad Trela, Victoria Valencia, Angelo Wong, Paul Ziller*

- *for all those who staffed the **information booth**, sharing their faith and listening...*

Henry Chau, Kevin Donovan, Manny Fernandez, Marian Hernandez, Tom Kaun, Paul Riofski, Thad Trela, Paul Ziller*

- *for all those **Dignity/SF & Defenders/SF** Members who staffed the **beverage booth**, making big bucks with big smiles...*

Bill Baird, Janet Cerni, Neil Christensen, Richard Clinton, Jack Fahy, David Forbes, Gilbert Gonzalez, Rick Jansen-Olliges, Patrick Lane, Chuck Lawson, Wayne Loyden, Ted Maylath*, Patrick Miller, Jim Paz, Vince Phillips*, Jim Remer*, Richard Selden, Ralph Sova, Richard Stadtmiller, David Turner*, Toby Wiggin, Angelo Wong
(AND for those members of the *San Francisco Sailing Team* who helped staff the booth)

** organizer/planner!*



Special Notice of Service:

Fr. Ralph, *for hosting our Feast of the Assumption home liturgy and "feast"!*

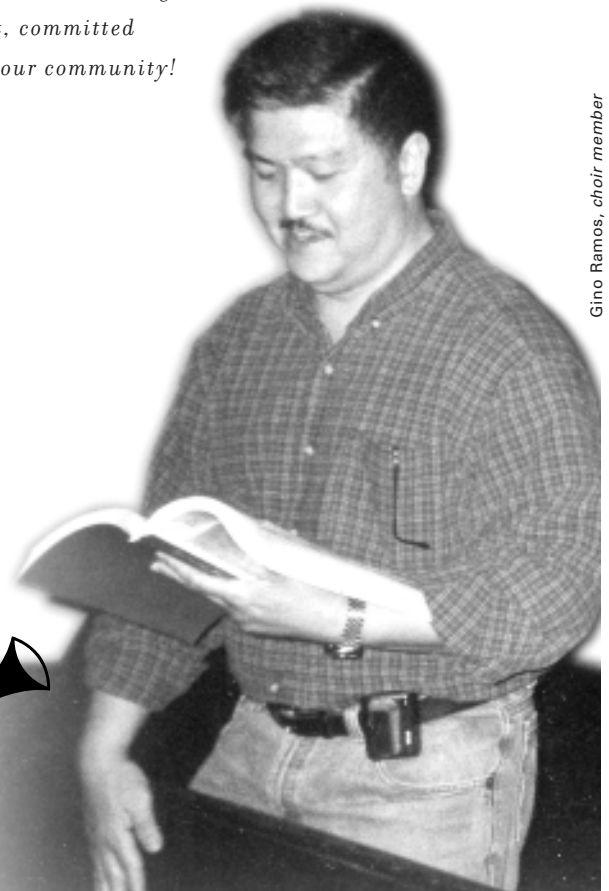
John Chavez, *for updating the framed photo collages for our information booth at Pride*

Gilbert Gonzalez, *for taking charge of planning our (mostly) annual camping adventure*

Tom Kaun, *for preparing the online faith sharing group format for Solidarity Sunday*

David Turner & Vince Phillips, *for hosting our monthly Membership Committee meetings*

...and for all those who give consistent, committed service to our community!



Marian Hernandez, new member!

Gino Ramos, choir member

