

dignity san francisco

# Spirit

*"Lord Send Out Your SPIRIT!"*

***"Do Not Let Your Hearts Be Troubled"***

Blessings, my faith family of Dignity/ San Francisco! It has been a roller-coaster ride of emotions for all of us as Catholics these past few weeks with the death of Pope John Paul II and the selection and installation of Pope Benedict XVI. With these events come the reality and pain of our relationship with the patriarchal church as lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people of God.

Wounds both shallow and deep gushed open once again, especially with the selection of Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, the man who characterized our homosexual lives and loves as objectively disordered and intrinsically evil, as the new pontiff. **What can we, as LGBT Catholics, do, and who can we turn to now that it seems our struggle for justice and equality within our own Catholic church seems to be going uphill yet once again?**

John 14: 1-14 has the definite answer and promise for us IF we truly believe and act on our Christian faith. I would like to **challenge** us dignitarians with these scripture passages.

It begins with *"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in Me"*

and ends with *"Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do, and in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to God. I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that my Abba may be glorified in the Son. If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it."*

The sacred fire of the Holy Spirit is currently ablaze with an opportunity for us LGBT Catholics to seize and act upon: to finally be heard and acknowledged and, we hope, to create change, both for ourselves and for future generations. Our current challenge with our new pontiff, whether anticipated or real, is juxtaposed with a possible solution, the success of which depends on you and me.

Dignity/San Francisco, your faith community, the organization that you belong to, is in the forefront once again in the struggle for equality and unconditional acceptance of LGBT people within the Catholic Church.

We at Dignity have been in the news lately because of these recent Vatican events. The name Dignity/San Francisco has been mentioned several times in USA Today, Bay Area Reporter, The San Francisco Chronicle, Quake Radio (the local Air America affiliate), Channel 7

GINO RAMOS,

CHAIR

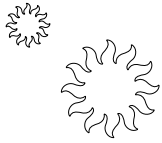


CELEBRATING

OUR SEXUALITY

AND LOVE AS

GIFTS FROM GOD



Your board of directors needs  
your wisdom and  
loving presence to give us  
boosts of renewed energy  
and inspiration.

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*Office Assistant,*

Angelo Wong



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News and others. I would like to thank our brothers Angelo Wong and Jack Fahy for representing us with PFLAG in their recent meeting. I would also like to thank our brothers Richard Cardarelli, Joe Curtin, Roy Cairo, John Brown and our sister Veronica Abrickis for sharing their lived experience as God's LGBT people with Channel 7 News and or the USA Today.

**Dignity definitely NEEDS YOU to recommit your spirit** in acclaiming our sacred LGBT lives and to openly celebrate "our sexuality and love as gifts of God." Dignity/SF needs your renewed commitment and **stewardship of Time, Talent and Treasure** in order to continue to thrive and grow in this harsh environment of ultra-conservatism, fundamentalism, sexism, homophobia and apathy. Dignity/SF needs your voice, your hands and your feet to do the work of Christ in Christ's Name in this current world that we live in.

I do understand that some of you belong to other parishes and faith communities which you now consider your personal spiritual home. There is nothing wrong with that, but I also encourage you to be an ACTIVE voice within your church/congregation to effect positive change in those settings. Also, **DO** come and assist us, your Dignity family, in ministering to those in this journey who are yet too uncomfortable to be within the walls of the main-stream Catholic church for whatever reasons they may have in their hearts and minds.

I encourage and lift each and every one of you with love and faith as we share our individual and collective gifts and talents. We are God's beloved in whom God is very well pleased. We are empowered by our baptismal Spirit to go out and spread the good news...of our lived experiences as God's LGBT people.

Let us pray for our new pontiff, Pope Gregory XVI and for our Catholic Church leaders. Let us ask the Holy Spirit to guide them and to open their hearts and minds to prioritize the needs of the suffering church of which we are an integral part.

In the meantime, let us continue to work for justice and equality. I look forward to seeing your warm presence in our upcoming Dignity events. Our chapter is strong and effective only with the support and assistance of its members.

*The Spirit moves and creates change effectively and efficiently through the concerted efforts of the various parts of the One Body. TOGETHER as ONE, we can win this struggle; someday soon, in God's time, we shall overcome our adversity with the help of and in the Name of our Friend and Lover, Jesus Christ, who now lives in us, with us and through us.*

*Hugs and love,*

**Gino Ramos**

**• Opportunities for Service**

On a weekly basis, we strive to nurture our faith family with the liturgy of the Word and Eucharist. We need you to help us minister as a liturgical team member, hospitality team member or administrative/behind the scenes preparing for a spirit-filled activity for all.

Your membership, finance and liturgy committees need your dedicated service to those reaching to us from the margins of the church and society.



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*"Faith is the word that describes the direction our feet start moving when we find we are loved. Faith is stepping out into the unknown with nothing to guide us but a hand just beyond our grasp."*

— Frederick Buechner

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Your board of directors needs your wisdom and loving presence to give us boosts of renewed energy and inspiration.

LGBT Pride and Freedom month (June) is almost upon us, and with that comes our opportunity to minister and give witness to our faith as LGBT people. **We will have our special LGBT Pride Liturgy on Saturday, June 25, 2005** at our home at Seventh Avenue Church, followed by a potluck reception. **We may have our PRIDE beverage booth all day on that same Saturday, but are still in the process of confirming that date (confirmation forthcoming!). On Sunday, June 26, 2005, we will be participating in a marching contingent and information booth.**

✧ **To volunteer for these PRIDE events, please contact Gino at [armandoginoramos@aol.com](mailto:armandoginoramos@aol.com) or on his cell (925) 200-6236 to volunteer and he will forward your interest to the right person in the various committees.**

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• **Your Dignity at Work**

At our annual election in March, we at Dignity elected our newest board members, John Brown, Cleo Fast and Jim Remer. Continuing on the board from last year were John Chavez, Jack Fahy, Marian Hernandez and Gino Ramos. At the March board meeting, Cleo Fast and Gino Ramos were appointed co-chairs, while Marian Hernandez was re-appointed Secretary with Jack Fahy continuing as Treasurer. Subsequently, John Chavez and Cleo Fast resigned from the board for personal reasons. At the April board meeting, the board appointed Veronica Abrickis and Jim Criss to join the board for a one year term. **The board is still in discernment concerning the appointment of the second Co-Chair.**

**Saturday, April 2, 2005 we celebrated our 22nd annual Pax et Bonum awards banquet** at the Pan Pacific Hotel, honoring the lives and accomplishments of Phyllis Lyon and Del Martin; Mayor Gavin Newsom; and Dignity members Veronica Abrickis and Jack Fahy.

Also in April, we offered a fond farewell and ceremonial "roast" to our longtime presider and friend, Fr. Ralph, who has returned to his community on the East Coast.

During our recent board visioning retreat, we have decided favorably on a fundraising idea by offering, once again, an opportunity for you to keep a little Dignity in your individual dwelling places. **We are offering copies of our Jonathan and David posters for an affordable donation of \$10 or \$15 for the small/large posters respectively.** As you may recall, this art work was the first icon made, specifically for Dignity/SF, by the now famous iconographer Robert Lentz. If you are interested, please contact the office at [dignitsf@pacbell.net](mailto:dignitsf@pacbell.net) or leave a message at (415) 681-2491. We only have limited quantities left, so please act soon.

*Thanks once again for your continued trust and support of your chapter, Dignity/San Francisco. May we continue to be the voice of hope and the prophets to the world for many of our disenfranchised sisters and brothers in the Catholic faith.*

