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Title: *Dignity, Central PA Keystone*

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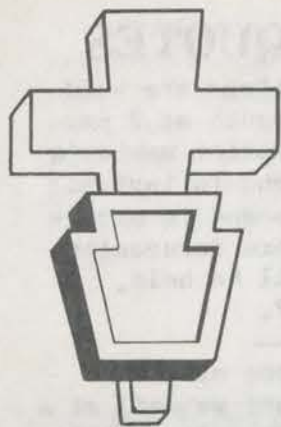
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Keystone

"The Stone Rejected by the Builders Has Become the KEYSTONE." (Acts 4:11)

The newsletter of DIGNITY/Central Pennsylvania

FROM THE PRESIDENT

DIGNITY/Central Pennsylvania, you have been in existence for two years and two months. What does this mean and where do you go from here? Do you rest on your past and say, "Look what's been accomplished so far." Or do you complain that more should be done as long as others are responsible for doing it? Are you satisfied to sit back, complaining, criticizing, disparaging to the point that you are the problem that prevents growth or change?

DIGNITY/Central Pennsylvania, you cannot sit back, content to rest on your laurels. All, my dear friends, is not well. There is much to be done. Certainly much has been done, but does this mean you stop here? I hope not. The past should be only the challenge for you to do more. Much remains to be done to better the lives of gay people in society in general and in the church in particular.

What impact, DIGNITY/Central Pennsylvania, have you made on the lives of your members, on the gay community, on the Church, and on society? Have you reached out to each woman and man involved in DIGNITY to welcome them as sisters and brothers in the Faith? Or have you chosen to isolate yourself and say, "Well, I have nothing in common with her or him." Or have you developed the bar mentality that produces only cliques...the 'in' crowd, that special few?

And what, DIGNITY/Central Pennsylvania, have you done for the gay community? Do they even know you exist, and if not, why not? Have you become involved with other gay groups to better the lives of all or have you preferred to remain isolated? Sure it's nice to have joint pot-luck suppers, but does that really confront or challenge the common bonds or goals we all share?

Let us not forget "Holy Mother Church." Have you presented yourself as a viable part of that church--ready to be open to others in a church that they might be open to you as a ministry to gay people? After all, you do not want to be another Church but a part of that existing church which became your birth-right when you were received into the

Body of Christ.

What about the community-at-large or society in general? What have you done, DIGNITY/Central Pennsylvania, to present yourself to those around you--family, friends, employers? I'll not force this issue at this time for I fully realize that the closet door is very much closed now. But it still needs to be mentioned.

Well, DIGNITY/Central Pennsylvania, I've come down on you awfully strong, but once in a while, I believe it needs to be done. You have become complacent even in your youth. Much of this is meant to be a challenge, yet it is not so great a challenge that you can't fulfill it. DIGNITY/Central Pennsylvania, will you accept the challenge to look at yourself and then forge ahead.

In Dignity,
Jerry B.

ROME SILENCES McNEILL

Fr. John McNeill, S.J., noted Roman Catholic moral theologian and author of The Church and the Homosexual, has once again been ordered to silence by Church authorities in Rome.

Fr. McNeill received the order through his superior, the Rev. Eamon Taylor, S.J., New York Provincial of the Society of Jesus. The order to silence, paralleling a similar 1973 command which had delayed publication of McNeill's book for two years, came Franjo Cardinal Seper, head of the Church's Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in Rome, through the Jesuit Superior General, the Rev. Pedro Arrupe, S.J.

McNeill was told that he is not to speak publicly on homosexuality or sexual ethics and that the "Imprimi Potest" (a designation from the Church that a book can be printed, which McNeill had worked for two years to obtain) is to be removed from all future editions of the book. The Church and the Homosexual, now in its third printing, has already been acclaimed as an important, scholarly statement of alternatives to the traditional Church teaching on homosexuality and the underlying Scriptural interpretations. Fr. McNeill has been lecturing extensively around the country to DIGNITY Chapters, to Church and university groups,

and to priests and religious who seek contemporary approaches to human sexuality. Apparently the popularity of his views and their widespread dissemination provoked the order to silence and the removal of the "Imprimi Potest."

The Sacred Congregation asserted that: 1) Fr. McNeill does present a position that contradicts traditional church teaching on homosexuality. 2) He is guilty of "advocacy" theology, that is, arguing in favor of an alternative teaching, rather than simply presenting an alternative along with the official position. 3) He has become involved in a massive promotion of his position, rather than simply presenting it to the theological community for scholarly discussion, as the "Imprimi Potest" was meant to allow. This has led him to raise false hopes in the homosexual community that the Church would ever change its teaching on homosexuality.

Fr. McNeill expressed disappointment with the order, but also emphasized that it was not a condemnation of his book nor a demand that he change his position. "Maybe it is providential," he said, "since others will now be challenged to take up my ideas and call for reexamination of the Church's teachings on human sexuality. I rejoice that the book is already in the public forum and will stand on its own merits." He said he will obey the order and hopes that his silence will symbolize the silence and oppression that gay people have had to endure throughout history.

DIGNITY will continue to applaud the work of Fr. McNeill as a visionary statement of the direction for theological scholarship and pastoral care of the gay Catholic community. They guarantee that his book and thought will continue to be distributed widely. Because of Rome's order to silence, Fr. McNeill was not able to address DIGNITY's Third International Convention in Chicago. But his faith and courage permeated and inspired the convention delegates.

We ask you to write letters to the following church leaders protesting the silencing of Fr. McNeill.

Most Rev. Jean Jadot, D.D.
Apostolic Delegate
3339 Massachusetts Ave. N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20008

His Eminence Franjo Cardinal Seper
Sacred Congregation for the
Doctrine of the Faith
11 Piazza del S. Uffizio
Rome, Italy

**The
Church
and the
Homosexual**

John J. McNeill, S.J.

NOTES AND QUOTES

Executive Board meetings are held the last Tuesday of the month at 7 pm. We usually meet at a different member's house each month. Everyone is invited to come to these meetings and to participate in them. If you are interested in knowing where they will be held, call Jerry B. at 232-2027.

From time to time some of you change your address. Since we mail at a non-profit postal rate, it costs us 25¢ every time someone moves and does not notify us of the new address. We would appreciate a note, a change of address card, or a phone call telling us your new address.

Attendance at DIGNITY functions, except for the summer events, has been falling off. We realize everyone has busy schedules, but we believe any commitment requires the setting of priorities. Won't you please reorder your priorities to include attendance at DIGNITY.

The annual General Membership meeting will be held on Sunday, October 23, 1977, at 7 pm. The meeting will be chaired by the vice-president. If you have agenda items for discussion, please bring them to her attention.

Elections of new officers and Board members will be the main agenda item for the General Membership meeting on October 23, 1977. Nominations are still open, and if you desire to nominate someone, drop a note to the attention of the Nominating Committee at our post office box. Every current member will receive a ballot. Absentee ballots will be available to you. If you choose to use an absentee ballot, you must mail them in by October 20, 1977 so they can be in the post office box by October 22, 1977.

On October 22, 1977, at 1 p.m. the Mid-Atlantic Regional Board of Consultants of Dignity, Inc., will meet in Harrisburg at Jerry B.'s house. Our representatives to this Board are the President, Jerry B., and the Vice-President, Barb.

IRS Tax Exemption Granted

Good news from the Internal Revenue Service! On April 22, 1977, we submitted our application to the IRS for Recognition of Exemption under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. On July 28, 1977, we were notified by them that we have been granted exempt status and that donors may deduct their contributions to us on individual income taxes. What does this all mean? First, we do not have to pay income taxes on contributions or monies received. Second, any person who contributes money to us may deduct it on their income taxes.

Now for a not-so-subtle pitch. Frankly, we need additional money to continue to operate and grow. Now is a good time to contribute to us. Persons desiring a receipt for their contributions or having any questions about this, please feel free to contact me. Remember, we are now TAX EXEMPT!

John B.
Treasurer

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

October 8 (Saturday)

Annual fall retreat from 1 to 5 at Friends' Meeting House, 6th and Herr Streets, Harrisburg. Pot luck supper at 5:30. Mass at 7 pm.

October 23 (Sunday)

Mass/Social. Friends' Meeting House, 6th and Herr Streets, Harrisburg.

General Membership Meeting, 7 PM.

October 25 (Tuesday)

Executive Board meeting at 7 pm. Call Jerry B. at 232-2027 for location.

**MCC meets every Sunday at 8 pm for worship at 1001 North Spring Street, Apt. I-2, Middletown, PA and on Wednesdays for prayer and a CR group.

QUESTION/ANSWER

The following is the second in a series of articles from Homosexual Catholics: A Primer for Discussion by Sr. Jeannine Gramick, Fr. Robert Nugent, and Fr. Thomas Oddo.

2. Are there new approaches to homosexuality in the Catholic community?

The general renewal of Catholic moral theology and, especially, the more personalist approach in questions of sexual morality coupled with a renewed vision of the Christian life as one of justice coupled with love has contributed to the new approaches both in writing and speaking on the morality of homosexual behavior and relationships.

The Catholic moral theologian, Dr. Daniel Maguire, says "we may have to leave our principles when we discover they have spurious origins...many people in evaluating the eroticism of persons who are homosexuals, operate out of the principle that bans all homosexual love-making. The roots of this principle are as many as they are suspect. There was the deeply ingrained, self-preservative reverence for fertility that developed in a species that was precariously surviving. There was the bad biology that thought of sperm as a collection of...little persons who needed only a womb to grow in. There were the long held depersonalized views of sexuality in biologicistic, people-breeding terms. There was the bad exegesis of the Judaeo-

Christian scriptures. There is the instinctive threat posed by otherness in deeply felt matters. And there is the special threat and hostility of those whose own heterosexual identity is unsure. The issue of homosexual love-making cannot be handled by reasonings which simply resonate such tainted origins." ("Death and Resurrection of Moral Theology," Commonweal, November 15, 1974.)

The experiences and personal testimony of a growing number of Catholic homosexuals who testify to the fact that they have managed in their own personal lives to integrate a responsible sexual lifestyle with a vibrant faith and an active participation in the Church's communal life, including the sacramental dimension, is also another reason for the change. Another important factor is a more scholarly and critical interpretation of those Scriptural citations relating to homosexuality which have long been mistakenly employed to support harsh and un-Christian sanctions and attitudes against all homosexual behavior and individual homosexuals as persons.

Let us all move together in freedom, striving to be loving children of the Father. How? By putting aside bias, indifference, undue concern for possessions and anything that prevents us from loving one another as sisters and brothers.

Ways to Kill an Organization

1. Don't attend the meetings, but if you do, arrive late.
2. Be sure to leave before the meeting is closed.
3. Never have anything to say at the meeting; wait until you get outside.
4. When at the meeting, vote to do everything; then go home and do nothing.
5. The next day, find fault with the officers and the other members.
6. Take no part in the organization's affairs.
7. Be sure to sit in the back, so you can talk freely to another member.
8. Get all the organization will give you, but don't give the organization anything.
9. Once out of office, lose interest in the organization.
10. Never ask anyone to join the organization.
11. At every opportunity, threaten to

resign, and try to get others to do so.

12. Talk cooperation, but don't cooperate.
13. If asked to help, say you haven't the time.
14. If appointed to a committee, never give any time or service to it.
15. Never accept an office; it is easier to criticize than to do things.
16. If you receive a bill for dues, ignore it.
17. Don't do any more than you have to, and when others willingly and unselfishly use their ability to help the good cause along, then howl that the organization is run by a clique.
18. Be a constant griper.
19. NEVER get new members.
20. If you get new members, be sure they are gripers...just like yourself.

"There are an estimated 15 million homosexuals in the U.S. alone. (Is) God so fallible that all these gay Americans are just grotesque slips of his hand?"

Carl Rowan, June 16, 1977

CALENDAR OF EVENTS (continued)

November 12 (Saturday)

Workshop on Sensitivity by Dale Lehmer from 1 PM to 5 PM at the Friend's Meeting House. Pot-Luck Supper at 5PM and Mass at 7 PM.

November 27 (Sunday)

Mass/Social. Friend's Meeting House at 7 PM.

The KEYSTONE is an educational and communication feature of DIGNITY/Central Pennsylvania, Inc. All opinions expressed are those of the individual author and not necessarily those of DIGNITY. Your letters, remarks, and suggestions are welcomed. The KEYSTONE is available free to members and friends of DIGNITY, and to others at a nominal charge of \$3.00 per year. Write: DIGNITY/Central Pennsylvania, P.O. Box 297, Harrisburg, PA 17108.

Membership in DIGNITY/Central Pennsylvania is open to everyone who wishes to see Christ's love extended to all women and men regardless of their sexual preference. Our members are women and men, gay and straight, Catholic, Protestants, and others. If you feel you would like to associate and contribute to this organization and its goals or if you wish to be kept informed of the gay movement in the Church, please let us know.

DIGNITY/Central Pennsylvania meets twice monthly at stated times for Mass, socials, discussion groups, or other programs. All programs are open to interested persons.

Membership entitles you to receive our monthly newsletter, our International publication, DIGNITY, and associates you with a vital movement designed to bring all of us closer to each other and to God.

If you are interested in joining DIGNITY, please fill out the membership application and mail it to DIGNITY/Central Pennsylvania
P.O. Box 297
Harrisburg, PA 17108

DIGNITY/Central Pennsylvania Inc. is a non-profit, tax exempt organization. All contributions are tax-deductible!

I wish to become a member of DIGNITY/Central Pennsylvania.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Dues are as follows: \$15.00 Single Membership
\$25.00 Couple Membership
\$25.00 or more Generous Person

BLUE JEANS DAY: Remember, Friday, October 14 is national "Blue Jeans Day," when gay women and men should make a special point of wearing their denims and uptight "strights" will get scared back into their suits and dresses. The point is consciousness-raising: on the one hand to suggest how many of us there are and on the other hand to let non-gays "caught" in jeans feel for a moment what our oppression is like. But it can only work if we do it!