

DIGNITY

A Monthly Newsletter  
October 5, 1971  
Vol. II, No. 8

Address all mail concerning Newsletter to:  
Bob Fournier, Editor  
2040 Vista del Mar #8, Los Angeles, Ca. 90068  
Address all mail concerning DIGNITY to:  
Joe Gilgamesh  
P.O. Box 6161, Los Angeles, Ca. 90055

\*\*\* \*\*

GAY FREEDOM: AN EDITORIAL

What do we mean by freedom? Basically, it is the state of being free, not being held back from action or thought by law or by persons. Common sense, however, would dictate that there must be some limitation or there can be no freedom. Were every individual free to do anything he pleased, the rights of all would be in jeopardy; freedom would become anarchy; individual freedom would soon be totally destroyed. True freedom must be exercised with a deep respect for the rights of others, exercised with a genuine love for all.

We may think of freedom negatively as freedom from something, or positively as freedom to do something. Gays think of it in both ways. We want to be free from repressive laws, job and housing discrimination, police persecution, society's accusations of "sick" and "Immoral." We want to be free to move within society as homosexuals, respected and accepted. But to do so, we must respect the rights of others, be socially responsible.

Society holds one of the keys to this freedom. The gay community holds the other. Perhaps it is wrong to say "the gay community," for there is no organization (only organizations), no self-regulatory power, no legal functions. No one person can speak for the gay community -- it is too diverse. Still, if the gay community is to achieve freedom, it must begin somewhere. Many gay groups work toward this goal. But more than that is needed. Each individual homosexual must realize he has some responsibility in the matter of procuring the freedom we all desire.

So many gays seem to think they may do anything they please. They are above all law and all custom, outside the demands even of public decency. Some feel that whatever heterosexuals teach about sex is all wrong. Self becomes the only criterion for them. Such an attitude seems immature, to say the least.

We are not a law unto ourselves. We are not free to do anything we please with moral or social impunity. We live in society. If we want others to respect our rights, we must respect theirs. If others are to be aware of our sensitivity, we must be aware of theirs. Every individual within society, both homosexual and heterosexual, must preserve a sense of public decency.

Public restroom sex, language designed to shock, taking advantage of uninformed minors, public display of genitals, insistence on promiscuity as a life-style, orgies -- none of these indicate maturity, responsibility, or respect for others. They project the homosexual image as valueless, libertine, and socially destructive. They militate against true freedom and thwart our attempts to achieve it. Such activities do not speak for all gays. But because they are so glaringly offensive, society is blinded and cannot see the rest of us as we are. That is why each homosexual must exert himself to create a positive image: constructively interested in his community -- its political and social needs; strong in the practice of his faith -- in what he believes, how he prays, and how he translates both into action; desirous of a stable love relationship -- not multiple sex relationships in which case sex becomes the dominating force and prime interest of his life.

In all fairness, it should be said that heterosexual society has its own offensive behavior -- exchange of husbands and wives, prostitution, promiscuity, increasing divorce rate, near nudity on the streets (women), etc. Heterosexual society is guilty of all those things of which they accuse homosexuals. Yet no one condemns the heterosexual way of life. So why should they condemn ours? They cannot correct their own abuses, yet they expect us to correct the same abuses among homosexuals when we do not even have all the means of doing so that they do. But, then, they are the majority. Apparently the minority is expected to do more. It seems unjust. Yet it does remain the Christian thing to do -- to accept moral responsibility on an individual basis, to respect the rights of others, to have a sense of public decency.

The sooner we show ourselves in this light, the sooner will we have the freedom to live gay, to receive responsible positions in society as gays, to be involved in church activity as gays. Freedom involves social and moral responsibility.

\*\*\* \*\*

Love is -- bringing out the best in each other.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

I should like to get immediately to my point about "Hustling." During the good old days which our fellow Catholic Dick Leitsch likes to recall in his Gay column, such an excerpt would not have been possible. But, thanks to such people as Dick Leitsch, GAA, GLF (in certain cities), Gay (unashamedly), and Quarterly (passim) such blatant behavior is actual and advertised.

Now, I have nothing against the liberation of gays and shall maintain to my last breath that morality -- especially the sexual sort -- cannot be legislated. Still, things have a tendency to get out of hand. And then follows the inevitable backlash.

Inasmuch as it is part of God's creation, "gay is good." But do I further confuse the issue when I add that some gays are good and some are bad? And the kind that sparked the letter from the priest in Hollywood are definitely bad, principally because they have no consideration for the other gay guy. Our moral stance being what it is, such people will be blamed for their promiscuity. Their fault, rather, is their lack of consideration of their fellow-men, both straight and gay.

Catholic priest  
Houston, Texas

\*\*\*

With respect to the September 5th Newsletter, particularly, "Police Power: An Editorial." Excellent -- and I want to especially thank you for pointing out that there are "many fine policemen" and that we owe them "respect and gratitude." The trend today seems to lump people into various categories and it makes no difference that the individual is conscientiously trying to do a good job -- if he is a police officer, he is a "pig" -- this despite the constant talk of being an individual and dealing with people as individuals.

I also want to belatedly congratulate you on the masterpiece in the August 5th Newsletter (i.e. the "Modern Parable"). Unfortunately, I have to agree with the Kansas City writer who stated the wrong people are reading it. Showed the "Parable" to my Parish Priest and he was in full agreement.

Dorchester, Massachusetts

\*\*\* \*\*

QUICKIES: 42 were present at the Sept. meeting of DIGNITY. .... Become involved; join a committee. .... Personal items for the Newsletter should be sent to the editor before first of month. .... We want your reactions to Newsletter, either pro or con. Mail them to Bob Fournier, 2040 Vista del Mar #8, Los Angeles, Ca. 90068. .... Veterans interested in correcting abuses within the military and our society should find the "California Veterans Movement" very worthwhile. Write for information to 715 Parkview #13, Los Angeles, Ca. 90007. (Tel.: 213/382-2685) Offices also in Santa Monica and Van Nuys. .... UCLA series, "Morality: Twilight Zone of the Law," every Tue., 7:00-9:45 p.m., 2160 Dickson Art Center. 10 lectures. 1st one Oct. 5. Oct. 12: "Homosexuality." .... Christian Studies Forum every Thurs., 8:00-9:30 p.m., beginning Oct. 14, Beverly Hills High Auditorium, 241 S. Moreno Dr., Beverly Hills, Ca. \$12.00 season ticket; \$2.00 single admission. 15 lectures. .... Do you live outside the Los Angeles area? Outside California? Why not start a chapter of DIGNITY in your area? Write to Joe Gilgamaish for particulars. .... From a priest member: "I should like to hope for the day when there might be presented to the American Catholic bishops and major religious institutes of men, lists of their subjects who are gay and in good standing." .... Change of address or tel. no.? Please inform us. .... Our prayer intention for this month: Work for the unemployed.

IN THE NEWS: Jack Baker and J. Michael McConnell were married Sept. 3 by Roger Lynn, a Methodist minister. The license was issued Aug. 16 in Mankato, Minn. Since Minnesota authorities cast doubt on the legality of the license, either the State Supreme Court or the U.S. Supreme Court will have to pass on the issue of the legality of gay marriages. .... Washington, D.C. Judge John H. Pratt stated that a homosexual is not a security risk unless he is unstable or vulnerable to blackmail because of his homosexuality. The Judge ordered the Defense Dept. to restore the clearances of two men whose security clearances with civilian defense contractors were revoked after they refused to answer questions about their homosexual acts.

HANS KUNG: On Wed., Nov. 3, at 8:00 p.m. Hans Kung will speak in the Hollywood High School Auditorium, 1521 N. Highland Ave., Hollywood. Advance sales \$2.50; at the door \$3.00. The controversy in the secular and religious press over his recent book, "Infallible - An Inquiry," makes his appearance in Los Angeles very timely and will provide an opportunity for us to engage in dialogue one of the most important theological thinkers of our times.

FRIESTS: Priests sympathetic to the cause of the homophile movement could provide more effective leadership if they were in touch with one another. Priests (members or non-members of DIGNITY) may submit their names to us for placement on a list to be circulated only among those whose names appear on the list. Such priests could perhaps form their own group, draw up ways and means to promote our cause and provide the movement with the necessary inspiration and leadership. If you know of non-member priests interested in our cause, present this idea to them.

CANDIDATE: Candidates for State Assembly from the 48th District have spoken at MCC. The Gay Community Alliance has studied the qualifications of each as well as their attitude toward gays and has determined that Richard Alatorre (Dem.) would best serve the needs of the gay community. Besides his willingness to push legislation favorable to our cause, he proposes to fight unfair taxes, end pollution, aid senior citizens, upgrade the quality of education. His qualifications: Administrative Assistant to Assembly Majority Leader Walter Karabian; Campaign aide for the late Senator Robert F. Kennedy; spearheaded the successful state senatorial campaign for Senator David Roberti in the July special election; Ford Foundation legislative intern (1968-69); Consultant to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights; former professor at the University of California, Irvine and California State College, Long Beach. VOTE Tue., Oct. 19.

\*\*\* \*\*

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- October 13 .... Board meeting, 7:30 p.m., Bob Fournier's apt.
- 16 .... Gay Day, Griffith Park, merry-go-round area, noon to dusk. Rock group for dancing. Improvisational theatre performance by Hollywood's "Synergy Trust." Bring lunch.
- 16 .... General meeting of DIGNITY at ONE, Inc. (2256 Venice Bl., 2nd floor). Guests welcome. Program: discussion groups.
- 17 .... Mission Tour. Mass at Santa Barbara, then to San Buenaventura. This is an early starter. Details at meeting.
- 23 .... Gustav Mahler night. Classical music and discussion at Gerry and John's, 7:30-10:00 p.m.
- 30 .... Gay Day. (See Oct. 16.)
- 30 .... International Dinner and Costume Ball. (Details below.)
- 31 .... Prayer devotions at place to be announced at meeting. To be held last Sun. of each month. 1st one was Sept. 26.
- November 7 .... Spiritual Development Committee meeting, 7:30 p.m.
- 10 .... Board meeting open to all members, Loyola University, the building to be announced at October 16 general meeting.
- December 4 .... Day of Recollection. (Tentative)

\*\*\* \*\*

INTERNATIONAL DINNER & COSTUME BALL: A fund-raising event. \$5.00 without costume, \$2.50 with costume -- includes dancing, dinner, drinks. 7:30 until after 1:00 (dinner about 9:30). Games and shows throughout evening. \$15.00 cash prize for the most creative and original costume. Door prize (electric knife) -- chances 25¢ each, 5 for \$1.00. RESERVATIONS MUST BE IN BY OCTOBER 16, the night of the October general meeting. Make reservations at meeting or by mail (DIGNITY, P.O. Box 6161, Los Angeles, Ca. 90055). This is our first big social event. Let's try to make it a big success. It's for members and guests, so bring all the friends you wish. Just be sure to make reservations no later than October 16.

BISEXUAL BILL: California's AB347, sponsored by Willie Brown, will be brought to the floor soon for a vote. Letters to your Assemblyman would be a big boost.

\*\*\* \*\*