

Jubilee Discussions - Discussion Recording Form - 1

Date 10/19/17

Chapter or Community Dignity Honolulu

SEGMENT ONE: RECALLING OUR ROOTS

Facilitator / Recorder Worksheet

What was the initial need that Dignity USA was organized to meet and that drove our rapid growth from a local community in L.A. to a national network of chapters? What "fueled" our engine"?

- Events in 1969: Stonewall, MCC in LA, Dignity in L.A. (Greater gay movement)
- Drag queens fought back @ Stonewall--prior to that gay rights protesters wore suits and ties (Philadelphia)
- Part of 1960's civil rights movements/protests: Vietnam war, women's rights, lgbt rights

How did the mission of Dignity evolve over time? What drove those changes in how we did our work? Consider dynamics in the organization, in the Church, and in society. In what ways might your chapter/community/caucus have contributed to this evolution?

- Fr. Pat Nidorf started Dignity chapters in Los Angeles & San Diego
- Fr. John McNeil helped with Dignity New York, chapters developing on both coasts (Bicoastal)
- Dignity was a refuge "safe space" for gay Catholics
- Kevin Caligari in 1992 made Dignity USA more public by going to Vatican
- 1990 in Honolulu, Bishop Ferrario barred priests from presiding at Dignity liturgies
 - Chapter began lay led liturgies
 - Chapter began using women as lay presiders

The theme of our 50th Anniversary Conference is "True to the Spirit, True to Ourselves." In what ways has "being true to ourselves and true to the calling of the Spirit" evident in our history? Your local history?

- **There were national Dignity leaders that helped gay and lesbian Catholics to understand their spirituality and calling: Fr. John McNeil, Daniel Helminiak, John Boswell,**
- **There were local religious leaders that supported Dignity Honolulu: Sr. Joan Chatfield, Sr. Marie Rosso, Rev. Phyllis Meghan, Rev. Danette Poole (Kong), Rev. Pam Vessels, Fr. Bernie Cassidy, Fr. Paul Devot, Fr. Tom Splain, Fr. Ed Martin**
- **Current chaplains (Ecumenical Catholic Church): Bishop Jack Isbell, Fr. Nick Eyre, Fr. Ernie Silva, Fr. Michael Francis, Rev. Pat Galileo (deceased)**

Locally, and nationally, how has Dignity changed lives for the better? Changed the Catholic Community? Impacted the LGBTQ social justice movement?

- **D/USA Executive Director, Marianne Duddy-Burke who is well-informed, is always ready to respond to media requests and interviews regarding topics related to LGBTQ Catholics**
- **Dignity may have inspired formation of other Catholic LGBT supporting groups (Equally Blessed partners)--Call to Action, New Ways Ministry,**
- **Although the American bishops opposed LGBT rights and marriage equality, the majority of American Catholics are supportive**
- **Dignity Honolulu has sponsored prayer vigils (Sr. Jeanine Gramick, Matthew Shepherd) or joined other vigils (for victims of shooting in Orlando), featured in newspaper articles and TV news, hosted conferences and speakers.**