

QUESTION ONE

1. It seemed like there was no dialogue achievable with church hierarchy, in the absence of a group structure to organize around and that would formalize a strategy.
2. There were some local clergy that were supportive of LGBT concerns, but they seemed unwilling to speak up.
3. DIGNITY was formed to combat negative profiling by some clergy members who described LGBT organizations as "meat markets" or a near occasion of sin.

QUESTION TWO

1. The 1978 Briggs Initiative, which sought to ban LGBTs from the teaching profession, was a key incentive that moved people to activist and/or protest activities. There was a political action group formed in the local chapter called Catholics For Human Dignity that became a vibrant movement.
2. With the deaths of many community members during the worst years of the AIDS epidemic, we learned how to develop and implement ministries around tending to the long-term ill, conducting burial services, and developing bereavement support groups.
3. A challenge emerged when the local bishop launched an AIDS Ministry and a parish-based LGBT support network, giving the impression that no Catholic outreach had been done before his action.
4. The challenge to DIGNITY evolved further in that we were asked to consider joining an archdiocesan-recognized group, or continuing on our own, separate from the parishes. We had to ask ourselves is our place meant to be inside/within the parishes, or remain an outside entity.
5. Outreach to the community at large was severely impacted by the clergy sexual abuse scandal. The Catholic brand itself became stigmatized by the public outrage over gay priests who remain closeted and serially molest young people.

QUESTION THREE

1. Being true to ourselves has meant being open to finding and developing our own identity. We've come to realize that we are a Eucharist-centered community, and that the weekly celebration of the liturgy of the Mass is vital to us. The feeling of the Spirit calling us together for liturgy has been more binding and enriching than any other aspects, including social activities.
2. We're being true to ourselves in accepting people as they are, and in the emotional/spiritual place they find themselves. Many members only attend Mass, and choose to not participate in social gatherings. Other members have found us when they themselves were in a very needy state, and then choose to move on after having some needs met.
3. Being true to a calling has meant building a community that endorses gender parity and does not include misogyny, and also offers a welcoming place for members of the transgender community. One transgender woman has served as local chapter president for two years, and remains an active member.
4. Being true to ourselves has meant assisting sub-groups to flourish within the local chapter that meet other needs of members. Over the years we've seen interest groups develop to

minister to those of the Latino community (Familia Guadalupana) and also as a home base to those interested in the leather community (Defenders).

5. Being true to ourselves means repeating the question: what can we do to cause change in the institutional Church?

6. Being called by the Spirit means understanding that DIGNITY represents a challenge to the Church's need/desire to be in control. Collectively thru DIGNITY, Catholic LGBTs have a voice that isn't controlled by the Church. Being challenged is what will move both groups forward.

QUESTION FOUR

1. A number of parents-led support groups have emerged, such as PFLAG. DIGNITY has attended their meetings from time to time and has offered support and promoted their literature. PFLAG members have attended DIGNITY and have made presentations on their activities. We've been mutually supportive over the years. Some of the parish-based LGBT support groups have been led by parents.

2. Being in a non-church-aligned group like DIGNITY means not having to feel bound by a strict adherence to Church guidelines.

3. A worshipping environment can celebrate the "Supper of the Lord" and be vibrant and relevant.

4. DIGNITY provides community, love, and friendship that cannot be found elsewhere.

5. DIGNITY has given a mission to LGBT Catholics searching for one. Without a mission, we're just a social club.