

## Segment 2: Taking Stock Today

1. How is the national movement called Dignity different today than it was in the 60's, 70's, 80's, and 90's? How is your local expression different? How are You different?

The national movement called Dignity during the 60's, 70's, 80's, and 90's had much more appeal to LGBTQ Catholics during times when being LGBT was not so widely seen in the media. Dignity appealed to LGBTQ Catholics as a place to be accepted and to fight for acceptance in the Catholic Church. Today, due in part to the advocacy of Dignity USA the public coming out of celebrities, and the Aids crisis, being LGBTQ is much seems much more acceptable in the media. Many of our local chapter's members have passed away or have given up on being accepted by the Catholic Church and have moved on to other faith communities. By the 1990s, Dignity Houston had over a 100 members, now we have around 14 members. Dignity Houston usually has on average 6 persons who show up regularly. We are trying to be an active chapter, but with so few members it is difficult. Most of our members are around 50 years of age or older, which is very different from the 60's, 70's, 80's, and 90's. We are still trying to provide community and spiritual support for our members. Our retired members feel free to be themselves, whereas some of our working members do and some don't. One of our transgender members remembers being scared during her years of service in the military and working for the Post Office. Now that she is retired, she feels free to be herself .

2. Considering the passion and conviction that fueled our growth, how well is our "engine" running, in terms of inspiring passion, involvement, change, etc. – in service to our mission today?

Our engine is still working, but many of our members feel frustrated that LGBTQ persons are still not accepted fully by the Catholic Church. Our older members do feel that it will happen, but not in their lifetime. We still have a booth at our Pride Festival to reach out to LGTBQ Catholics and we still have our weekly services. However, with so few members and few young members, we are struggling. Some of our friends have given up on the Catholic Church, while others attend Catholic Church and serve as open or hidden LGTBQ members.

3. Is the mission and purpose of Dignity still relevant today? If not, why not? If it is, what key challenges and opportunities do you see ahead?

We think that the mission and purpose of Dignity is still relevant today. The key challenges are how do we convince others, especially the young LGBTQ Catholics, that the Catholic Church can be changed. We need to be rock in the Catholic Church's shoe to keep interest for change

4. With the benefit of hindsight, how has Dignity change lives for the better, locally and nationally? Changed the Catholic community? Impacted the LGBTQ social justice movement?

Dignity locally has provided a supportive place for LGBTQ to be accepted and to have their spiritual needs met. LGBTQ persons supported each other during the AIDS crisis, when our Lesbian members ministered to our Gay members. We are not sure we have achieved major change in the Catholic community, but Dignity USA does give us a national voice and presence to impact LGBTQ social justice.