

Anita Bryant Joins 'The Devil's Crowd'!

SEE DETAILS PAGE (9)

AN EDITORIAL

by Brian

Since coming out last summer, I have felt as if a great pressure had been lifted from my shoulders. I am so relieved that at last, I can share with, and be involved with, people and things that for so long I was too timid and afraid to reveal. However, the one thing that has kept me going and my spirit strong was my Christian upbringing. I have never thought it a paradox that I was gay and a Christian, the two just seemed to go hand in hand. We are all God's creations. Yet since I have joined Sparrow, I find that we are reluctant to acknowledge the fact that being Christian and gay is good. We only have difficulty when we try to suppress our dual character. We are suppressed enough as gays from without, why do we need to also suppress ourselves from within. Our Christianity is a strong base, but only if we permit it to be so.

We of Sparrow are a Christian fellowship group, who meet for prayer and conversation. We have discussions and try to alliviate some of our misgivings. We may not be able to solve all of our, or your, problems, but we are an outlet for you. We know the problems of the Gay community, we know what you are going through.

I know there are hundreds of gays in our community who were brought up in a Christian environment, but when they acknowledged the fact that they were gay, they put in the background their Christianity. **DO NOT DO THIS:** Let your Christianity make you a strong and better person. By doing so, you help not only the one most important to you, yourself, but also the gay community, and the rest of the community as a whole. For the most part we are good citizens, we care about what is going on around us.

As some of you may see, this is our second issue of the newsletter. Why, you may ask, has it taken us so long to get another issue out? Well, I will explain in as short a form as possible. As the editor of this paper, I have a number of things to do beside getting items together for the newsletter--what with layout work, typing, and the whole thing, I have more than I can handle. Beside the newsletter, I also handle the books for Sparrow of Atlantic Canada, as well as a number of other things such as an office Secretary would do. Finally, I do have my own personal life to lead.

Back in November, we were about to send out an issue and then my place was set afire by some unknown person(s). The complete layout for the issue was destroyed as well as most of the interior of the apartment.

Since our last newsletter, we have held in Halifax, The Atlantic Gay Conference. This conference was a success and all who attended gained much from discussions which took place. The conference was well planned and organized. Sparrow sends out congratulations to those who put so much work into it.

Since writing the above, I have resigned as editor and now Brian has taken over these duties. Please support him by sending in an article, poem, or any other interesting item which you feel should be brought to the attention of our community.

The objectives we set for Sparrow this year are to apply for a charitable deduction number, so that anyone who donates to the group will get a deduction off their income tax. Also, we shall try to endeavour to enlarge our group and get more involved with the community.

by Emerald Gibson

Very recently a friend of mine confided to me some very startling information about himself. He was a homosexual! As I sat, trying to be very nonchalant while I thought about a reply, I was bombarded by such a wide range of emotions. Surprise--Oh my goodness! Sympathy--What a terrible thing to happen! Can I do something to help? Shame--Does anyone else know?

That was several months ago.

Surprise. Well, I guess I'm still a little surprised. Ashamed of him? No. Sympathy? Yes, but only because my friend has yet to find a strong lasting relationship.

For someone to stand up and publicly say I'm different, while knowing that this will only bring ridicule and acorn from the majority of people, takes a great deal of courage. This person, therefore, deserves only our admiration, understating, and respect.

Oh yes, my friend is still MY FRIEND.

By M.A.P.

PORTRAIT OF A HUNTER

Dusk sends sly fingers of shadow,
Out from the spruce and cedar forest,
To caress the open emptiness,
Of the uplands pasture.

Shadow slithers and pools,
In dips and hollows,
of the late-March snow,
Straggling wearily through ancient sculptured drifts,
A split-rail fence bisects the pasture.

An expectant hush shrouds the land,
Still in the knowledge,
That the hunter is coming,
Weaving silently through clearing and tangle,
Of the secretive forest,
Flitting like a nightmare,
Through the Fabric of Fear.

And, there, at the split-rail fence,
Quite suddenly he is,
Standing upright and still,
As a graven image,
Eyes of tarnished gold,
Pierced the secrets of each copse and covert.
Hidden in the soft folds of thigh feathers,
His tools of execution,
They that pierce and paralyse,
He has a bearing both majestic,
And satanic.
He is the hunter,
the great-horned owl.

By Jim Donovan

Celebration '80

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Calgary AB T2P 3C1
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Community listing

NEW BRUNSWICK

Fredericton

Fredericton Lesbians and Gays (FLAG), PO Box 1556, Stn. A.

Western NB

Arcoosook Lambda, PO Box 990, Caribou, Maine 04736 USA. Serving Western NB and Northern Maine.

NEWFOUNDLAND

Corner Brook

Community Homophile Association of Newfoundland (CHAN), Box 905, A2H 6J2.
 Gay Organization of Women of Newfoundland (GOWN), may be contacted at the address for CHAN given above.

St. John's

Community Homophile Association of Newfoundland (CHAN), Box 613, Stn C, A1C 5K8.

NOVA SCOTIA

Halifax

The Alternate Bookshop.

Gay Alliance for Equality (GAE), Box 3611, Halifax South Postal Stn, B3J 3K6. Ph: (902) 429-4294. Gay helpline (information, referrals and counselling) (902) 429-6969, Thurs, Fri and Sat, 7-10 pm.

Gays and Lesbians at Dalhousie (GLAD), c/o SUB (Student Union Building), Dalhousie University.

Sparrow of Atlantic Canada, Gay Christians, meet every Sunday at 8 pm, at the Universalist Unitarian Church, 5500 Inglis St. Mailing address: PO Box 3611, South Stn, B3J 3K6.

The Sisters' Lightship, Box 3611, Halifax South Postal Stn, Halifax, B3J 3K6.

The Turret Gay Community Centre, 1583 Barrington St. Ph: (902) 423-6814.

Wolfville

Gays, Box 1297, B0P 1X0.

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The Underground Church

by (Rev.) Bruce Wallace

The phrase, 'the underground church', the title of a 1968 theological paperback by Rev. Malcolm Boyd, captures the reality of the Sparrow in worship.

A small ecumenical group with no fragile sense of denominational awareness, the Sparrow worship God quietly and reverently, open to one another and the divine spirit which motivates the self-giving love which we have come to regard as integral to Christianity.

Yet the organized church--or churches, if you will--denies them recognition as a worshipping community within its structure, on the basis of sexual orientation.

Many people within the organized church are confused and frightened about the nature of homosexuality and its presence in their midst. They do not understand how it is possible to worship God and claim a homosexual orientation at the same time...and they receive little to no help from their own clergy.

As a Christian clergyman, I have seen countless well-meaning people invoke Biblical proof-texts ripped out of context to support at least the castigation of gay Christians--if not outright suppression and physical harm. This hidebound Biblical literalism becomes a club with which to beat the gay community into submission...and eventual extinction. I can no longer stand idly by and allow this to happen unchallenged.

Much of the present religious confusion and suppression occurs as a result of mis-information, or no information, about the nature of theology as a way of looking at the Biblical evidence and the culture with which it interacts. Theology in this sense--even the clarification of some of its terminology--acts as a weapon against the misuse of Biblical proof texts.

A point of departure.

The ecumenical thrust represented by the spirit of the Second Vatican Council of the Roman Catholic Church and the conversations toward creating an organic unity between the United Church of Canada and the Anglican Church and its world-wide communions.

March 1963. A slight paperback by an Anglican archbishop, John A. T. Robinson, called HONEST TO GOD, hurtles into the institutional church like a brick through a stained-glass window. HONEST TO GOD attempts to bring to the people a vital new understanding of the Christian faith in the light of contemporary knowledge. In very briefest compass, it draws attention to four basic issues: the understanding of God as ground of all being; the need to de-mythologize the Bible; that modern man is essentially religionless; and that all ethics must be situational.

While it is probable that the latter two of these need much revision before continuing to stand as contemporary statements, the former two--God as ground-of-being and the Biblical demythologization--rather tell it like it is.

At the same time, the appearance of the Pierre Berton paperback THE COMFORTABLE PEW (January, 1965) set the agenda for much discussion both within and outside the church. The subtitle of the book was instructive: "A Critical Look at the Church in the New Age."

These two books alone provided a challenge to the church. And they are still in print. Even alone, they provide a substantial spoke in the wheel of onrushing and insensitive Biblical literalism, had nothing else been written or anything have happened within society to which to make response.

Of course the late 1960s and early 1970s were shaped in large measure by the response to the war in Vietnam, a war and an interaction which has been capably chronicled by others. For our purposes, any theology which dismisses as inconsequential the courage of the dying on both sides of Khe Sahn, the willfully-conditioned massacre of My Lai 4, the tragedy of Kent State, and the utter horror of the saturation bombing of Hanoi is a theology of ethereal and insensitive arrogance--such as you might find among Rev. Ken Campbell's Renaissance movement.

If human suffering means anything to you, these events do not encourage the construction of any cotton-candy theology...

...before going further, let's clear up another misconception. Many clergy, defensive about their pseudo-professional images, encourage the impression that theology as a field of study is rarified, turgid, and all but incomprehensible to the layman.

Nonsense!

Anyone who has ever reflected on the meaning of life and tried to understand the nature of God has done theology. But some ways are more productive than others.

Let's consider the basic direction for a moment. If you begin theology by trying to define the nature of God, you're starting with metaphysics, and going in a Biblical direction, that is, from above to below--and you're automatically hurtled into the esoteric categories of pre-existence and the like.

...work instead from below to above--from earth to 'heaven'--or as they say in mathematics, reasoning from the known to the unknown. In other words, start with man.

Man is a historical entity. But interacting with the culture around him, he makes his own sense of history, which he can now measure scientifically. Not before man acquired his historical awareness, he was a biological fact, a living organism which developed from lower life forms.

Man's conceptions of God are at first very random and polytheistic; anything which doesn't have an explanation is attributed to God, or gods. Gradually man acquires the capacity of abstract thought as language develops.

And this is a basic direction, from below to above. Trying to use human reason to make sense of this objective reality known as God, and the sub-systems of understanding religion which have been built on this basic relationship.

So the clergy are telling you not to try to understand theology?

As they used to say on the Watergate tapes, " Expletive deleted!"

Gay consciousness begins to emerge within the culture in the late '60s at roughly the same moment as the women's movement for social equality, though no articulate theology addresses it. Gay consciousness in 1968 is theologically encompassed by an embryonic feminist theology and the general need to find a new understanding of human sexuality to confer to the stream of religious traditions. An articulate attempt is made by then-Roman Catholic theologian Mary Daly in *THE CHURCH AND THE SECOND SEX* (1968).

Theologically, both the feminist movement and the gay movement receive added impetus from an unexpected source...Latin America, site of the formulation of an important new theological movement: liberation theology.

Latin America in the late 1960s was awash in a sea of oppressive economic dictatorships, fuelled in part by the American desire to overcome the influence of the socialist experiment in Cuba. Liberation theology begins with the reality of an oppressed people and the desire by God for social justice for all his people, from the structures--political and economic (and, we may infer, psychological and ecclesiastical)--which oppress them.

Welcomed by the feminist movement, liberation theology began to move into the North American context in the early 1970s.

There are several excellent books of liberation theology. Among the most useful that I have found, which consciously begins to translate liberation theology to a North American setting is by an American Catholic theologian, Rosemary Reuther, author of *LIBERATION THEOLOGY: HUMAN HOPE CONFRONTS AMERICAN POWER* (1972).

No theoretical work on a theology of gay consciousness was then available. There was, however, a startling autobiography: *THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD AND HE KNOWS I'M GAY* (1973) by Rev. Troy Perry, an American Pentecostal clergyman.

At the same time, there is a temptation to read a gay consciousness into the prayer books of Rev. Malcolm Boyd, an Episcopal priest who declared himself gay in *AM I RUNNING WITH YOU, GOD?* (1977)

In the main, gay consciousness theologically drew its strength from the new understandings available from feminist theology: Mary Daly's *BEYOND GOD THE FATHER* (1973); Rosemary Reuther's *RELIGION AND SEXISM* (1974) and *NEW WOMAN, NEW BIRTH* (1975).

The best and most comprehensive treatment of a theological gay consciousness to date appeared in 1976 in John McNeill's *THE CHURCH AND THE HOMOSEXUAL*, which works sensitively with the Old Testament sources to suggest that the wrath of God was incurred not for homosexuality but for the sin of inhospitality to strangers. Father McNeill, a Jesuit, could hardly be faulted for intellectual rigor, but the book was timidly withdrawn from publication and official sanction by the Roman Catholic Church that same year. It has since, however, been re-issued as a Bantam paperback.

Two other highly informative theological works appeared in 1976, both from England. *WHAT IS THEOLOGY?* is a slim but powerful paperback which tells the general public exactly what is involved in the study of theology from a no-nonsense empirical standpoint. It assumes no prior knowledge on the part of anyone, but does not 'talk down' to the general reader.

DEATH AND ETERNAL LIFE is a full and comprehensive study of its subject matter by British theologian John Hick, and quite simply the best treatment of its subject ever written. Admittedly somewhat heavier, the dynamics of Hick's investigations are so carefully constructed that they too can be followed with a minimum of background.

Both Hick and Wiles, however, are theological heavyweights who would contribute to a symposium which appeared under the title *THE MYTH OF GOD INCARNATE* in mid-1977, which challenges the very coherency of the doctrine of Incarnation itself.

On Monday, January 23, 1978, the television programme *MAN ALIVE* drew its attention to the emerging gay consciousness within the church, and that as a

worshipping community gays have been forced to an underground existence, because the organized church has been unable or unwilling to come to grips with the developing theological resources being made available to them... let alone confronting gays as living, flesh-and-blood people.

Host Roy Bonisteel put the matter concisely: "When it comes to genuine love and compassion for the Christian homosexual, the church has been in the closet far too long."

But there is little evidence of change. By 1979, the bishops of the Anglican church approved in principle ordination of gay priests and the retention of priestly orders for those already within, provided a vow of celibacy was incurred or maintained. Within the Roman Catholic tradition, there appears to be no altering of the church's official position on homosexuality under the tenure of the present pope.

The United Church of Canada has yet to render a judgement, but is expected to do so at the General Council which meets in Halifax in August, 1980. It is presently uncertain what this decision will be; a recent issue of the United Church OBSERVER admonished gays not to press for ordination at the present time.

I have already made my decision, both as a clergyman and as a caring human being.

My understanding of Christianity is to identify with the oppressed, the poor, and the suffering, not simply in an academic but a physical sense. Thus I will continue to worship with the Sparrows.

And, as a heterosexual, I make the judgement that I worship as an equal ---not as a superior.

Perhaps the organized church may one day allow heterosexuals and homosexuals to worship together. Until that time, there is another church.

The underground church.

gay horizons

A WESTERN PUBLICATION FOR LESBIANS AND GAY MEN

Gay Horizons is a publication of the Alberta Lesbian and Gay Rights Association, produced by Gay Information and Resources Calgary, Suite 319, 223 - 12 Avenue S.W., Calgary, AB. Mailing Address: Box 2715, Station M, Calgary, AB T2P 3C1.

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A book ministry has been established and anyone who wishes to purchase religious literature, may do so through Sparrow. Any monies received will go to Sparrow Gay Christians of Atlantic Canada. Such monies will be used for sponsoring conferences, enable us to bring in speakers to our meetings, form outreach programs to try to contact those who are by themselves unable to meet other members of the gay community.

Sparrow plans to send a delegation to Toronto in May to attend the National Divinity Conference. We are in the planning stages to raise funds for our trip. One of our plans calls for a mini cabaret type evening in April and May. We are sure you will enjoy it. Details are not being finalized and will be made known shortly.

Sparrow plans to hold a coffee house at the Turret the first Sunday in March. The reason for the coffee house is to permit all the gay community who are under age, and cannot attend regular Turret functions, an opportunity to meet with others for discussion and conversation. We hope that this is a success

Sparrow will hold its regular meeting prior to the coffee house, at the Unitarian Church on Inglis St.

We plan to make the coffee house a regular event, being held every second Sunday evening from 9 to 12.

The schedule for the coffee house is as follows:
 March 2:--9-12; March 16:--9-12; March 30:--9-12
 April 13:--8:30-12 Soup and Snack Night with Entertainment
 Admission \$1.50
 April 27:--9-12

ALL ARE WELCOME!!!

During the coffee house the usual Turret prices will be in effect for coffee, beverages, chips, bars, etc.

With the coming of Easter, why not remember that someone special, or even someone not so special, with a gift from Avon. Avon has an excellent range of men's and ladies' cosmetics, jewelery, and skin care products. Put on a fresh appearance this Spring, with Avon.

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FINANCIAL REPORT YEAR ENDING DEC. 31, 1979

Newsletter Account:	Deposits	\$43.01
	Withdrawals	<u>8.01</u>
	Balance	35.00
General Account:	Deposit	129.33
	Withdrawals	<u>117.33</u>
	Balance	12.00
Sparrow Account:	Deposit	47.10
	Withdrawal	<u>47.10</u>
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Sparrow Fund:	Deposit	-0-
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	Balance	-0-
Deposit Pending:	General	15.00
	Withdrawal	<u>-0-</u>
		15.00
TOTAL ASSETS:		\$62.00

In order to keep bank records, etc. straight, and more easier to handle, I will close out the Newsletter account and put all funds into one account. I shall, of course, maintain separate account records for each account.

By Emerald Gibson

TREASURER AND
 CHAIR PERSON

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Atlantic Gay Conference

by Glenn Walton

"Building a Community Spirit: Atlantic Gay and Lesbian Conference, November 9-11." This harmless looking notice appeared recently on noticeboards throughout the province. Many were ripped down (including at Dal) by upset (and presumably heterosexual) individuals. Some of these self-appointed offenders of freedom of expression felt moved to scribble retaliatory messages to the conference. One of them read "Christ has condemned and destroyed your kind. Read your Bible, scum of the Earth, molesters of innocent children—agents of Satan, cursed by God and damned forever." Clyde Richardson of the Gay Alliance for Equality opened last weekend's conference by letting this notice sail: through the air and onto the floor, where it belonged. Religion? Well, the Gae has plenty of that, and lots more. Consider:

The GAE, a non-profit organization operating out of

headquarters at the Turret on Barrington St. at present counts a 1,000 plus membership and provides a wide variety of services to local gays: regular religious and political meetings, a civil rights committee, films, dinners, a phone line (429-4294) and yes, a disco, recently outfitted with a new light show that had its spectacular debut during the final act of Sunday's conference-closing Cabaret. The place, if the feeling generated at the three day conference is any indication, is thriving.

It wasn't easy in the beginning. The organization's founding in 1972 was plagued by financial, organizational and legal difficulties, and the GAE was 'on ice' for a year until Robin Metcalfe and a few others revived it in 1975. It has grown because it fills a real need for gays in the city and throughout the Atlantic provinces to meet and develop a sense of belonging to a community, a sense often denied them by a hostile 'straight'

world. If the problems from outside weren't enough, there was dissension in the ranks. "We spent 3 hours debating on what colors the tiles in the men's washroom should be," Richardson related. Well, it's the only home they've got.

All is not rosy for Halifax gays, despite the GAE's success. There is talk about moving from its present location because of lease problems, and there is occasional harassment from the community. Recently there was a bomb threat on the Turret, and crank calls are regular fare on the Gayline. A recent fire in the stairwell may have been the work of arsonists: at the time of the blaze there were over 100 people at the club, who trooped down the fire-escape onto the street, while the fire was doused. Exhibiting a dauntless nonchalance in the face of what, after all, may very well have been a mini-holocaust, the gays were back on the dance-floor in half an hour, boogying to Dolly Parton's disco hit

Burning.

More serious are the periodic attacks on gays at the nearby cruising area, the Triangle, which have resulted in near deaths in the past. As the police aren't cooperative, there is reluctant talk about organizing a rescue squad. "We've got members who aren't to be fooled with" a spokesman says, "and those queer bashers aren't going to savor the sight of a gang of irate faggots and dykes descending on them. Usually, though, whenever a few of us do get together, they just run away."

All of this seemed far away at the weekend conference. Its theme 'Developing a Community Spirit' was interpreted as a challenge to help other groups get started up in the Maritimes. Fredericton, New Brunswick was well represented by several enthusiastic organizers, and plans to establish an organization there are well under way. "The conference has been very valuable to us" one of them

said, and FLAGS (Fredericton Lesbians and Gays) appears ready to go. "We need more women" he admitted, "otherwise we'll have to drop the 'L'." Some of the New Brunswickers got a taste of the volunteer work that the GAE depends upon, serving gamely as waiters during the tumultuous show on Sunday evening. "It's been a great conference!" was their verdict.

Films and workshops, book and craft sales rounded out the official part of the conference. On Sunday morning 2 representatives from the GAE, including one former serviceperson, laid a wreath at the Remembrance Day ceremonies, in honour of all the gay service people who died in Canada's wars. In many ways it was a fitting gesture, exhibiting the gay community's integration into society. What it lacks is recognition of that status, and the Halifax Herald ignored the gesture in its reporting.

THIS SPACE PROVIDED BY SPARROW

GayTide

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Box 1463 Station A
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HIGH NOON

It's high noon in this desert ghost town,
The land lying shadowless beneath the sun's zenith,
In her upper room at the Russel Hotel,
Sits an old woman, silent in her motionless rocker,
Her purse in lap, face turned toward the smashed window.

Her gaze goes out over the flat, tarry roofs of the town,
Beyond these to the high monolith of Cathedral Butte,
Rising in stark relief against
The wide, azure blue of the desert horizon.

The old woman sees none of this,
Face frozen in the rictus of death.
How came she to be left here,
Alone in this attic-hot upper room,
With it's speckled wardrobe mirror,
King James Bible on the night stand,
The china ewar and basin,
Once filled with fresh, cool water,
Now a receptacle for windblown grit and cobwebs.

So she is and so she shall remain for all time,
Indifferent to the searing touch of mid-day sun,
Or the pale, chill caress of the desert night's moon.
With her canvas valise carefully packed and by her side,
Purse clasped protectively in mummified hands,
She waits for a journey,
That shall never begin.

By Jim Donovan

MEETINGS

GAE GENERAL MEETING HFX.

Wednesday 5 March 7:30
Wednesday 19 March 7:30

FLAG (FREDERICTON)

Wednesday 27 February 7:30
FOR MORE INFO CONTACT
FREDERICTON GAYLINE
1,506,454,8130

"READINGS FOR THE WEEK"

From the "Living Bible" readings for the next six weeks. Also, a daily thought from each reading and a thought to begin each week with, which will remain the same for the next six weeks.

- First week: Saint John, Chapter 14: 1--6
"Let not your heart be troubled. You are trusting God, now trust in me"
- Second week: Saint John, Chapter 14: 6--12
"Jesus told him, "I am the Way-- yes, and the Truth and the Life"
- Third week: Saint John, Chapter 14: 12--22
"Yes, ask anything, using my name, and I will do it!"
- Fourth week: Saint John, Chapter 14: 22-27
"I am leaving you with a gift--peace of mind and heart!"
- Fifth week: Saint John, Chapter 14: 27-30
"So don't be troubled or afraid."
- Sixth week: Saint John, Chapter 15: 1--8
"Take care to live in me, and let me live in you."

Weekly reading, Saint John, Chapter 15: 9--14:

"I have loved you even as the Father loved me. Live with my love. When you obey me, you are living in my love, just as I obey my Father and live in his love. I have told you this so that you will be filled with my joy. Yes, your cup of joy will overflow! I demand that you love each other as much as I loved you. And here is how to measure it--the greatest love is shown when a person lays down his life for his friends; and you are my friends if you obey me."

ALTERNATE BOOK STORE

IF YOU WANT ANY OF THE LATEST GAY MAGAZINES OR BOOKS, PLEASE WRITE TO THE ALTERNATE BOOK STORE FOR AN UPDATED LIST (Please enclose 50¢ to cover mailing charge.) YOU CAN ALSO GET SUCH THINGS AS LOCKER ROOM AND RUSH, AT \$6.00 EACH, OR THE LATEST BODY POLITIC. Send along your request to:

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		10:30-2:00a.m.
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BEST WISHES FOR THE NEW YEAR FROM THE ALTERNATE BOOK STORE

SPARROW SENDS ITS CONGRATULATIONS TO FLAG OF FREDERICTON ON THE FORMATION OF THEIR GROUP AND WE WISH THEM EVERY SUCCESS IN THE FUTURE.

ALSO SPARROW WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE UNIVERSALIST UNITARIAN CHURCH FOR THE MEETING SPACE THEY PROVIDE US EVERY SUNDAY.

Sparrow is again accepting advertisements for its next issue of the newsletter--the deadline is March 20th. Anyone with letters to the editor, do not hesitate to send them alone to us. We ask for articles from anyone who wishes to write them. Please enclose a donation of 50¢ to \$1.00--to cover cost of printing. Anything over and above this would be most appreciated. Make your cheque, or money order payable to: Sparrow of Atlantic Canada, and send it to:

Sparrow of Atlantic Canada
P.O. Box 3611, South
Halifax, N.S.

Sparrow is a member of Dignity International, Canadian Division #11.

The comments expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of Sparrow, The Gay Alliance for Equality of Halifax, The Canadian Lesbian Gay Coalition or Dignity International.

THE FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF A HOMILY GIVEN BY FR. TOM ODDO ON THE OCCASION OF THE DIGNITY CELEBRATION OF THE EUCHARIST DURING THE NATIONAL MARCH ON WASHINGTON, OCTOBER 13-14, 1979.

"Lord, in your strength you have guided us to your holy dwelling, and you planted us here on your holy mountain."

Tonight, brothers and sisters, we have indeed gathered on the mountain of the Lord. Like branches pulled in from far and wide we have come from dioceses and cities across the U.S. to this vine of our political life. And we want to speak loudly and proudly and effectively.

But tonight in a special way we are coming to the vine of our spiritual life; we are remembering and reexpressing our belief that strength and courage do come from our God, that if we are to be successful at anything we must remain united to that source, listening to its directions, shaping our lives and our responses in accord with what we hear. We've come here to this Church as a DIGNITY family to express our recognition that we need both God and each other, and that when we gather in Christ's name He is in our community too, challenging us to justice, filling us with love and courage, shooting out the branches far and wide.

All of tonight's readings remind us of the necessary link between us and God's love. I hear them telling us that we can only be successful here in D.C. and beyond because we've been to the mountain—a mountain or a vine where we nourish our spiritual core, where we reaffirm our vision and sharpen it.

What is it that we see and hear tonight while we are with the Lord? What does God say to us about this weekend and about our lives that we absolutely need to hear?

First, we hear those remarkable words of consolation through St. Paul that there is absolutely nothing that can divide us from God's love—no ministers blocking a train in Utah, no homophobia, no frightened parent, not even the self-doubt and isolation we sometimes bring upon ourselves because of our fear. We hear that God's love breaks through all of that.

Secondly, we hear the message that there is, indeed, a home, a mountain where we belong, a place where justice and freedom prevail. We hear about a Kingdom (or Queendom?) of God that has already begun and that is being created by our very efforts. It's a word that says justice is coming—work for it, struggle for it, march for it, pray for it. How much we need to hear those words so that we can go on!

Thirdly, there is a message that we need to remain attached to the vine—which means doing things as Jesus would do them. We need to ask and hear how Jesus would act if He were in D.C. tonight. And He certainly is! Undoubtedly His way is one which fights vigorously for justice, but does so lovingly.

And fourthly, we hear that we might have to experience some pruning, some reshaping of our lives. We are reminded that at times being with the Lord and working for justice involve suffering and struggle. Let's look into our lives at the ways we've been trimmed by the Lord—the suffering and loneliness that have sometimes been present, the isolation and unfortunate self-pity. Maybe because of these experiences we have been honed for justice, more deeply emblazoned with God's truth. "You have been cleansed already", says the Gospel. What a fantastic assurance!

I'd like you to reflect tonight on what we as a DIGNITY family can bring from this Church to the rest of the gay community gathered for this march. Think for a moment about what we're challenged by the Gospel to bring to them.

I think we're challenged to bring the very thing that we're receiving tonight, the vision and the strength and the direction that the vine gives us. This D.C. March needs to hear so much from DIGNITY—that we can really be successful only because we've been to the mountain (as Martin Luther King spoke so powerfully in this city more than a decade ago). This march needs to hear that we are all deeply loved by God, for without that knowledge we might become vicious and destructive. A lot of us have many good reasons for being angry—anger at the acts of prejudice, discrimination, and hatred that have been directed against the gay community; anger at the distortions of the Gospel that so many use; anger at the viciousness that masks itself as Christianity. All of the people here in Washington need to hear from us the "love of enemies" and the "doing of good to our persecutors" that lie at the core of Christ's vine. There might be other ways of producing change, but it seems clear to me that *this* is the way of Christ. And we must courageously teach it to our brothers and sisters here in D.C. who, in righteous anger, wish other moves.

Maybe we can also tell them that, despite the claims of the Jerry Falwells and the Anita Bryants, the Lord is indeed on our side, that He/She has always been a God of liberation, one who is pained when any person suffers bondage or oppression. One who acts concretely for justice. Tonight all of us need to know that we are part of all the world struggling

(along with our God) to feed the hungry, to enrich the poor, to cut through racial and sexual prejudice. I'm suggesting that the gay movement needs to hear what we know—that under God our cause is joined with so many other struggles, maybe even more critical than ours (when you consider the starvation in Cambodia, the threat of nuclear destruction, races and cultures being systematically exterminated.) We are here tonight because we know ALL of these go hand in hand. We know that when one suffers oppression, all are threatened, and we are challenged to fight that oppression at all costs.

The promise of these readings is so very strong. "If you remain in me, if you live in that spirit, then you will bear much fruit". How amazing that there is no doubt! The moves tomorrow and beyond cannot help but be God-blessed.

And so tonight we are again cementing our relationship to the vine, reminding ourselves and every gay person in D.C. and across the world that the freedom we seek is rooted in the Lord. And we will settle for nothing less. May our strength and our courage always come from the Lord and bring much fruit.

TOM ODDO

Anita Bryant Joins 'The Devil's Crowd'

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The Internal Revenue Service failed to investigate possible tax violations by Anita Bryant Ministries.

HOLLYWOOD, FL. - The Anita Bryant Show runs into financial difficulties because of "persecution from my enemies" says Bryant.

TULSA, OKLA. - 500 clergymen reject Bryant's "counselling homosexuals" seminar.

FLORIDA - Anita Bryant Ministries appeal for "gifts of love" to defeat "militant homosexuals".

CALIFORNIA - "Good Housekeeping" magazine votes Bryant one of the most admired women of 1979, bumping Queen Elizabeth II off the list.

CALIFORNIA - Anita Bryant will share billing with the Village People on an NBC-TV special, a group Bryant considers "alarming" and "the devil's crowd".

FLA. - "I don't hate homosexuals. But as a mother, I must protect my children from their evil influence."

Word also has it that Anita the "Orange Juice Queen" has gotten back her commercials, and is in the process, or had completed, by now, a three hour documentary on her crusade against homosexuality.

What do you think????

PINK TRIANGLE DAY

NEWS & VIEWS

Pink Triangle Day was a success according to the critics reviews. It raised over a \$1000.00 for Gay Alliance for Equality of Halifax Building Fund, for which the goal has been set at \$100,000, and now brings the total to approximately \$6,000. The cabaret was such a success and so well put together, that it is going on tour. To where, you ask? Fredericton, New Brunswick! The show capital of the Maritimes? Who knows-- this could be the start of the "Affair" road and success, on route to Broadway. Thank you for a job well done to the "Affair" cast and staff.

To quote Have you heard? Vol. 2 No. 11: To those hecklers: it is so easy for you to sit back and loudly voice your opinions when you have not participated, thanks for reaffirming your positions in the community.

Buttons commemorating PINK TRIANGLE DAY in Halifax, were to have been available by 14 February, unfortunately due to the Federal Election (the button business is booming, so they say) our order has been delayed. They will be on sale as soon as they arrive."

To turn to the political scene for a moment, the election of a Liberal government in Canada could spell trouble for the Gay movement. During the Liberal's reign in power, up until May, 1979, there was numerous amounts of raids on private homes and gay businesses. Meanwhile, the Progressive Conservative party was in power it seemed that these raids decreased a considerable amount. It looks like the decrease will increase again. In giving these views, I don't feel that I should support either the views of the Conservative or Liberal parties. I am a supporter of the only party in Canada that has an open platform on Gay rights. I feel the New Democratic party is the best chance for us to securing a better life for Gay people in Canada.

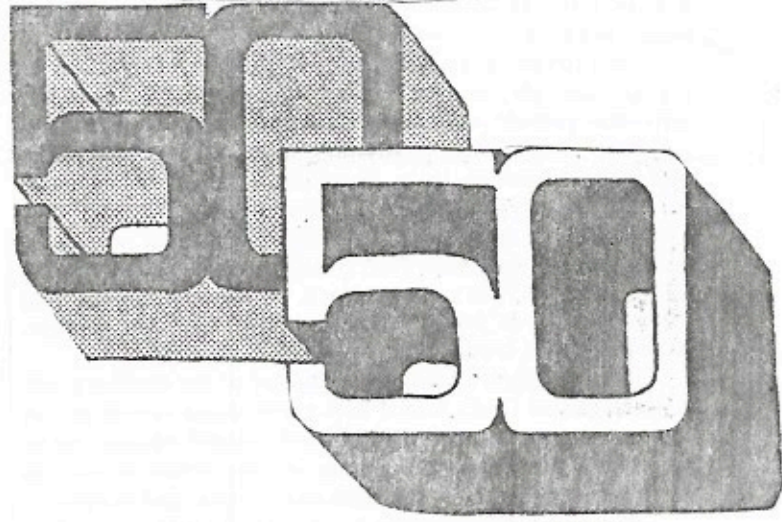
Well, I have a deadline to meet and we must get this second issue out. So, good luck and may God bless.

GOOD NIGHT

Emerald Gibson

Spencer will

hold a:



*Draw on
May 11, 1980
at the Inuit
T-shirts will
be available
at the Coffee
house on Sunday.*



Appeals can't be fought in the courtroom without lawyers and lawyers cost money. Make out a cheque or post office money order to Lynn King in Trust For The Body Politic Free The Press Fund and mail it to Cornish, King & Sachs, Barristers and Solicitors, 111 Richmond St. West, Suite 320, Toronto, Ontario M5H 3N6.