

Atrisco is located just west of the Rio Grande. Go north on Atrisco off Bridge Blvd. or south on Atrisco off Central Avenue and go one mile to Holy Family Church.

Take the Stadium Exit off I-25 and turn west on to Stadium. Stadium becomes Bridge Blvd. and crosses the Rio Grande. Turn right on to Atrisco and go about 1 mile to Holy Family Church on your right hand side. Just past the Church, pull into the parking lot and drive all the way to the rear of the lot. The C.A.C. is the long building at the back of the parking lot.

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• Radical Grace, P.O. Box 12464,
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87195
Telephone: (505) 242-9588
Fax: (505) 242-9518

CAC Founder: Richard Rohr, OFM

CAC Staff: Meg Ashcroft, Wendy Corry,
Hugh Doyle, Marylu Kropelnicki,
Jane Mobley, Shari Sommers

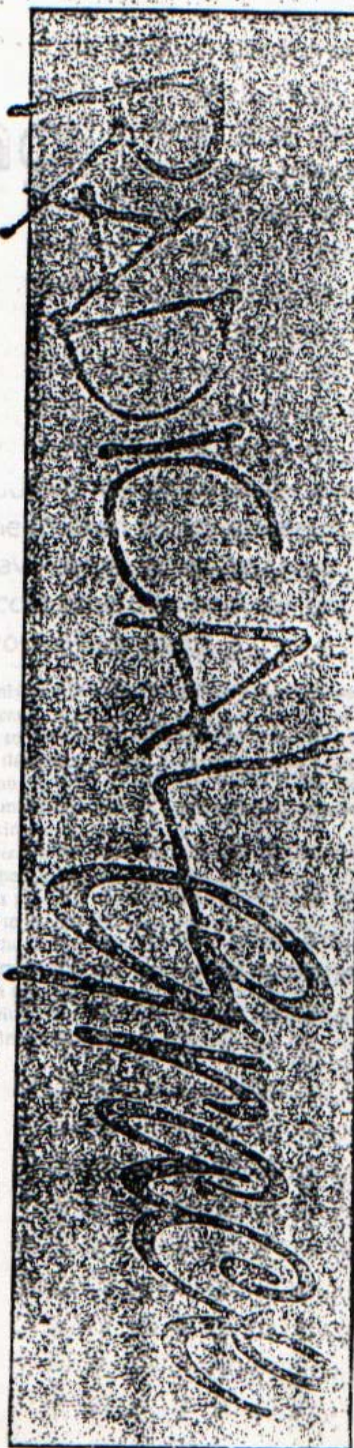
Editors: Meg Ashcroft and Shari Sommers

Layout and Design: Carole Wright

R.G. Staff: Justine Buisson, Teddy Carney, C. Rachael
Howell, Kathy Nolan, Jane Mobley,
Jerry Criz y Pino, Michael Roche,
Richard Rohr, OFM, Patricia Simmons

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Bridge Building

By Thomas M. Williams

In the last issue of *Radical Grace*, an olive branch of reconciliation was offered to the lesbian and gay community. Not only did Rev. Brian Taylor make such a gesture but the CAC took the courageous and natural step to reach out to those of us in the Church who have been faithful to the Gospel in spite of years of institutionalized marginalization and condemnation.

In response to the Church's message, some of us have acted up and expressed in loud voices our desire to be recognized much in the same way Martha called on the Lord to see her. I believe the energy of Mary has been equally present for the homosexual community. Many of us have sat at the feet of Jesus while others were disrupting liturgy in Saint Patrick's. Others have quietly sat and listened to the words of the Lord and the resonance of those words with our being. We have reclined in awe of the wonderful and healing words of Christ.

The words of Andrew Harvey seem to fully express the response to Christ's teaching by many lesbian and gay persons in the church. "I realize that the voice, that inner voice, was telling me to bless and accept my sexual nature, which had filled my youth with loneliness, pain and guilt. I had to love my sexuality fearlessly before I could transform it." Through the truth of Scripture many of us have come to love our sexuality, transforming the gift of homosexuality to a glorification of God.

The olive branch of reconciliation can never be a one-sided offering; there are always two parties involved, whether it can be the individual and God or Church. There is always the giver and, for the peace of reconciliation to be realized, there must be a willing recipient.

Too often I have waited for the Church to accept me. I have come to realize I must

homosexuality a sin against
it was important for us to
develop an understanding of what the Word said in
regard to our lifestyles. We looked at key Scripture
passages for both scholarly and personal meanings.
The series seemed to lead to a number of significant
insights. One such insight was that none of the
scriptures specifically spoke against homosexuality
and, in fact, all of the scriptures pointed to other
noted sins, such as the lack of hospitality
and the practice of temple prostitution. Another
insight was the realization that those who use the
Scripture to condemn the homosexual will not
necessarily take the time to understand the actual
meaning of the scripture references they cite. For

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accept the Church in all her
wounded beauty.

As only one gay man within the Church, I openly and sincerely accept the olive branch and desire to bring it to the many who need to be renewed in the love of the Church. But I also recognize as a gay man I must offer my own olive branch. There were many times I rejected the Church and her rituals, often using my sexuality as the wedge and rationalization of my disdain. Angrily, I would blame the Church for all the ills of my life and the world as a whole. Too often I have waited for the Church to accept me. I have come to realize I must accept the Church in all her wounded beauty.

As a means of contributing to the reconciliation between the gay community and the Church, I, along with a number of others, have formed a group called Bridge Building. Bridge Building is a

monthly, parish outreach and support group of all lesbians and gays desiring a deeper spiritual community.

Nun seeking to bridge gay gap to speak in N.M., Ariz.

Journal Staff Report

A controversial Roman Catholic nun whose ministry with gays and lesbians has been under investigation by the Vatican will hold a series of daylong workshops in New Mexico and Arizona over the next two weeks.

Sister Jeannine Gramick — co-founder of a group promoting "reconciliation" between the lesbian/gay community and the Roman Catholic Church — will present "bridge-building" workshops in Albuquerque, Las Cruces, Tucson, Scottsdale, Flagstaff and Farmington.

Gramick and the Rev. Robert

Nugent, who co-founded New Ways Ministry in Mount Rainier, Md., in 1977, have raised Vatican concerns since 1981.

A three-member American commission was named in 1988 but was inactive until 1994 when the panel, headed by Cardinal Adam J. Maida of Detroit, began studying whether the views of Gramick and Nugent are compatible with church teaching on homosexuality.

The probe was put on hold in February when more information was sought from Gramick and Nugent.

Gramick told Religion News Service at the time that the delay was "a hopeful sign," saying she expected the ministry would be recog-

nized as "valid and legitimate."

New Ways is founded on a pastoral rather than punitive approach to homosexuality — and is a advocate for lesbian/gay civil rights.

The ministry has been criticized for affirming a homosexual lifestyle and for contradicting church teachings that homosexuality is an "objective disorder."

Gramick has continued her ministry with the approval of her religious congregation (School Sisters of Notre Dame) and the knowledge of the Vatican.

She and Francis DeBernardo, program director at New Ways Ministry, will offer church teaching, scripture, spiritual approaches and

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pastoral outreach in the workshop — with opportunity for questions, comments and other feedback from workshop participants.

The workshop — which uses education, dialogue, story-telling and prayer — is aimed at Catholic clergy and lay people, educators, counselors, social workers, HIV/AIDS ministers and other professionals, gay and lesbian people and their friends and family members.

"We need to ask questions, seek the understanding of our tradition, and find nourishment for the common task of reconciliation," Gramick says of the workshop's goal.

Each workshop runs from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the following

locations:

■ Tuesday, Center for Action and Contemplation, 550 Atrisco SW (behind Holy Family Church) in Albuquerque.

■ Thursday, St. Albert the Great Newman Center at New Mexico State University, 2615 South Solano, Las Cruces.

■ April 27, Our Mother of Sorrows Parish in Tucson.

■ April 29, Franciscan Renewal Center in Scottsdale.

■ May 1, Holy Trinity Newman Center at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff.

■ May 4, St. Mary's Church, 2100 East 20th St., Farmington.

Cost of the workshop is \$35 in

advance, payable to New Ways Ministry, 4012 29th St., Mount Rainier, Md., 20712 (phone 301/277-5674, fax 301/864-6948), or \$45 at the door.

Partial scholarships (participant pays \$20) or full scholarships (no fee, but service on the day of the workshop) are available. Participants are asked to bring brown-bag lunches; coffee and tea will be provided.

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