



**Comunidad  
Lesbian and Gay Ministry  
Saint Matthew Catholic Church**

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Dear Comunidad Supporter:

Would you like to make your annual contribution in memory of Father Gerald Meisel, founder of Comunidad, who died in January? It was February 1986 when Father “Jerry” gladly responded to Archbishop Roger Mahoney’s call to create a welcoming and supportive ministry for gay and lesbian persons. Although he was a new pastor, Father Jerry became the first to establish a welcoming church. From then until his death, he remained by our side no matter whether the church was saying we were “Always our Children” or “objectively disordered.”

Though Father Jerry had great friends in high places (an Archbishop and a Cardinal were his best friends), he never backtracked from supporting our ministry. In fact the first two years of Comunidad’s existence, Father Jerry and another priest, Fr. Brad Dusak, led the meetings.

We know Father Jerry received pushback from parishioners and from his fellow priests. However, he never wavered from backing St. Matthew’s outreach for 28 years.

Those who attend St. Matthew’s Masses considered Father Jerry a fixture at the side door, greeting us as we came to church and saying farewell after Mass. He had his fun side too. He loved movies. He was often seen at the Park Pantry for lunch or dinner where he would greet friends. Father Jerry had a quirky sense of humor as well as a very caring side. In fact one of his last acts the night before he died was to call Father Guillermo, the current pastor, to be sure he was safe in El Salvador.

Father Jerry’s gift to gay and lesbian Catholics and their families can never be measured. Only a few pastors took this brave step along with him. Only a few remain. *That is why we encourage you to make every effort to promote Comunidad, the ministry that he established.*

*Thank you for donations, prayers, and participation that keep Comunidad’s ministry alive!*

Sincerely,

 

Marilyn Pires

Keith Brittin

Comunidad Co-Chairs, 2014-2015

**Please see the enclosed information sheet about the various ways you can stay informed and help out with Comunidad’s efforts this year.**