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SPEAKERS

Jimmy Carper, Jewel Gray

 J Jewel Gray 00:02

The following program contains language or images of a frank or sensitive nature that may be considered objectionable by some listener Discretion is Advised !

 00:11

am what I am I am my own special creation so come to give me the all the Ovation it's more that I want little pride in my

 00:36

and it's not a place to live not worth a

 00:42

damn to you can say

 01:04

I am what I am I don't want praise I don't wanna bang my own drum something is no I think it's pretty

 01:22

bang why not try to see things from a different angle. God life is a sham to you can shout out



01:43

I am what I need no excuses. Do my own deck. Sometimes. It's your damn job you can shout out



J Jimmy Carper 02:36

Whoa, it must be Saturday night at midnight because you're listening to after hours. A continuing tradition on KPFT Houston 90.1 FM. The crew of after hours is ready to bring you news interviews and music here for gay and lesbian people. Just as Gloria Gaynor says in this song, it's time to open up your closets. We at after hours urge everyone to come out of their closets. By our definition that means standing up for yourself and taking responsibility for your own life. But if you feel that you can't come out right now because of your age, your job or whatever reason. That's okay, we're here for you too. So sit back relax and enjoy this week's edition of after hours



03:40

I am what I am and I do my own deck.



03:49

Sometimes



J Jewel Gray 05:00

Okay, you're here with us here at after hour. I mean, after hours, it's an after hour, right. And shortly we're going to be speaking with Father Chris from Kolbe House. He's going to talk to us about the Franciscan order that is, has a Catholic outreach to the gay community. And I have a friend here, Dennis, and we're going to talk with Dennis a little bit when Kolbe house and Chris gets here. I know that Jimmy is sitting here setting up for QMZ. You're not? He is he is he is. And we got some interesting news and tidbits for you this evening. I want to take this minute to tell you that this show that I participate in every show I participate on, I dedicate to the men and women at the Baron Care Center. And I am going to be talking about something going on. No, that went on today, unfortunately, I think. So we won't be talking about that. The the choir at the bearing was doing a special fundraiser today, I think it was today. So it's too late talk about that. But we'll be talking about a lot of interesting stuff later, and we'll be getting some community news. So get your pencil and papers together. And I'm hoping that perhaps scooter or Diane shows up tonight for a few minutes. Or I'll be winging again tonight, folks. So send your cards and letters asking where scooter and INR and we'll try to get that answer right back at. Let's see, you're gonna go to you're gonna go, you're gonna go to Are you ready to go to something? I'm ready to go. He's ready. He's ready. So I'm going to turn this over to Jimmy with the Q MZ.

J

Jimmy Carper 06:50

Well, hello, everybody. This is Jimmy with the QM Z. That's the queer music zone right here on after hours. Continuing tradition on KPFT Houston, 90.1. FM. And if you were with us last week now I know a lot of you weren't because it was Halloween? Yes, I do. We didn't have a QM Z. Because we had some special things with Ray Hill going on. But tonight, we're back with the Q MC. And this is a song that I did play last week. But it belongs on the QM Z two weeks ago, on this way out, there was a article a small interview with Elton John talking about since he's a gay man, that his latest release, called the last song off of his album, the one he's donating all the proceeds for that to AIDS causes because he just feels he should. And he also said all his future singles, all the money made off of that it's going to AIDS causes. Now, if you're familiar with his new album, the one the one is really, really a nice song. And I would like to play it but she you can hear that any top 40 station these days. And what I'd like to concentrate on is the last song, which first time you hear it you think, Okay, this is a guy who's dying, and he's talking about his life, but then you realize he's talking about getting back with his father, which is really kind of nice to hear a song about sons and fathers, especially in the gay community. We don't hear too much about that. We know that there's a special bond between gay men and their mothers. But enough of me, let's hear the song. It's called the last song by Elton John.

J

Jewel Gray 09:07

Okay, we're back. We are back. I am here. And I'm sitting here talking with Father Chris from Kolbe house. And we're going to, we're going to talk a little bit about we're going to talk a little bit about what Kolbe house is and then we'll discuss some of the religious aspects of the Catholicism. And Father Chris says we can't quote him on this because some of the stuff is stuff you need to have your little paper or your, your little book of information and tidbit facts. So we're not going to hold him to any of this stuff. But basically, we just want to find out some stuff about the Catholic faith and how it works. relates to dealing with gay population. And when, how long ago did did Kolbe house How long ago was it born? I mean, what was the inception of this Kolbe house was started Jul three years ago by Father Dennis and brother Bob. fella. Dennis had been doing ministry in the gay community for about four or five, six years before that. And then about three years ago, right about this time he went to the bishop and told them he wanted to start a ministry to the gay community and to people with AIDS. The bishop approved it are Franciscan provincial approved it. And so in December, they moved into that location on 903. A West Main. We've operated out of there for about three years, called the houses, ministry to the gay community and to people with AIDS. We do a lot of spiritual ministry. We do spiritual direction and counseling, we do hospital visiting home visiting retreats, days of renewal memorial service, we do a lot of talking with people trying to be there for people trying to answer any questions they have help them deal with any issues they've got. We were talking outside about this. And we were talking about the difficulty with the Catholic policy and dealing with homosexuals, gay people. And you didn't, I didn't see that there was such a conflict about gay people. And we discussed it and came out with that it's not specifically a policy against gay people, as much as it is a policy against premarital sex of any sort. So that unlike some other religious philosophies, this one is a kind of non judgmental, as far as, you know, lifestyles except for the fact that it doesn't condone premarital sex. That specifically, I mean, generally, what it boils down to, yeah, roughly, although people would complain that it doesn't offer the opportunity for gay people to get married. And that is one of the drawbacks. On the positive side, and just to keep the the history straight, you know that the Catholic Church doesn't have a real good record of dealing with the gay community. And we

just have to admit that that's why we're here in the Kolbe house, trying to be here as a presence and to say that the church really does care. And that there's a heart to the church that maybe the official church doesn't always get across to people. Dennis, you had an



12:34

associate official policy celibacy, then, but it's



J Jewel Gray 12:37

gonna be the official policy of the church. But the church has always had a trying to deal with people one on one, trying to ask them what is your relationship with God. And that's really where right or wrong comes in? What is your relationship with God, and supporting people in their personal decisions, as they follow their call from God and how God wants them to live, who God wants them to love, what kind of commitments they're going to make in their life. We call that a pastoral approach. I don't want to give people the impression though, that the Kolbe project is just a Catholic ministry. We all happen to be Catholic priest or brothers. But we're open to talking to anybody of any faith or no faith or whatever. A lot of times, people when they're coming out, and exploring what it means to be gay, they'd have to deal with a lot of baggage and crap and, and all that from religions, from many religions, and things that they just heard people tell them that maybe they thought was connected to God, but these people weren't belonging to any church. And as they come out all that guilt is there, all that shame, all those questions. And sometimes they just need to sit down, talk it out. And that's what we're there for. And we, we deal with people on a spiritual level. I know you also volunteer in the community, because Coby house is one of the biggest helps around the care center that we have singularly you guys come down twice a week and help actually prepare meals for the people at the care center. And, you know, it's one thing that I've really appreciated there is that even under the banner of, you know, this religious organization, that I've not heard anybody pushing a religion, and there's been no, no uncomfortable feelings for the people there at the care center who may or may not be religious people. And they're not threatened by the volunteers because the volunteers aren't pushing a philosophy. I think, as I've told one of the volunteers down there, Lucy aft, we've talked about this once and, and it's my impression that your idea is the best way to make a religious life attractive is by role models and example. And that the best way to do that is to be involved in the community, to take part in the world around you and to just be err for those who are interested. And I for one would like to tell you that it's been many, many years that I've had very, very hard time with organized religion. And when I first heard that Coby house was going to come to the care center, I was, I was prejudiced because of my experience in in the past, and I've been more than pleasantly surprised by the support and the love that I've seen from the volunteers there. I'm real proud to have so we don't wear a Roman collars. When we do our ministry, we just dress in street clothes, because we get that reaction First off, and then people don't listen. We weren't we're not there to push any kind of religion, we're just there to our first job is just to be here in the community. And we're also Franciscans, that's a religious order in the Catholic Church, and we follow St. Francis. And St. Francis was very big on people, his followers just living among people. He himself when he was growing up and living in a time of the Crusades when the church and the Christian churches were gathering armies and going and fighting the Muslim churches. And he wouldn't join that fact, he one time crossed over the lines, and met with one of the Sultan's personally, and said, I'm not part of that group that's fighting you. I'm part of the

church that loves and he taught heart to heart with assault and assault and respected him, and let him come back across the lines without harm. And for him, that's always been an effort of the followers. That's always been the guide. We're not here to make war to push to convert. We're just here to talk and to be with people who move gently among them instead of you know, pushing them aside for the religious.



16:46

It's good to know the church has been supportive of your group. Are there any other organizations like Kolbe house and other cities that you know?



Jewel Gray 16:53

Well, there is one called Tao house in New Orleans. We have some people coming to visit us later on this month that are interested in doing something like this in New Mexico. We've had some inquiries from people in San Antonio. But pretty much across the country. When we meet people, they tell us that we're unique, especially that we have approval of a bishop to do gay ministry and aids ministry, what's nice, with our ministry to people with AIDS, one of the things that we do a lot of hospital visits, and I was going to talk about that. And the way that works is usually people call us and say I've got a lover or I've got a friend or a brother, who's in the hospital, would you go see them? And usually that's the case when somebody's in sick and they want to talk when you're sick. It brings up lots of questions. And maybe if you've never even veers to a lot of fears. Maybe you've never been part of a church or your but just the questions of what's this all about what's gonna happen to me? Those are spiritual questions. But if they're afraid, you know that if a minister or priest comes, you might start yelling at them or carrying on or ranting and raving, and people trust us. They know we don't do that. What did you do before you? I mean, what kind of experience did had did you have before you became part of comi house? Were you this kind of, you know, kind of street outreach for people before that, or were you like, mainline? You know, I've done it all. I started out working with Navajo Indians on the Navajo Indian Reservation, trying to learn Navajo and learn Navajo history and culture. I've worked with Navajo and Pueblo Indians. I've worked in a Newman center on a college campus, I've worked in parishes. The last four years before I came to Houston last year, I worked as an alcohol and drug counselor full time specializes working with crack addicts for about three years. I think my own kind of conversion that said is it's just get out of rectories and get among people came when I went into treatment for alcoholism myself, I'm a recovering alcoholic. And that's given me a whole different appreciation for spirituality. For where people were really hurting and where the need is. And it's put me in touch with a lot of people who society gave up on but who I have found are very deeply spiritual people very, very good people. Well, that's, that's good because you know, having a diverse background is bound to help here because you you specialize in, in your ministries to HIV people, and a lot of people put people who have HIV into one little category and what they don't realize is that it's a total cost cross a spectrum of cultural range of cultural differences of people who are infected, and that you in one bedroom might have African American and another Middle Eastern person, and the next one would be Puerto Rican of Spanish ancestry. So there's a lot of diversity. That's why I was interested in in your background. I was fascinated about I talked to Dennis one time and he was talking about his background I was just fasten Even with the diversity in it, too. And it strikes me that that seems to be the common ground that you all have here at Kolbe houses that you have this real diverse background, and you've come together to use that background and in a

place that most people are labeling people the same. And that, that this diverse background is going to be a big plus. And dealing with people who really aren't the same. They share a common ailment, physical chemical ailment, and not backgrounds. So that's, that's going to be positive. We were kind of talking a little bit about the Catholic history and how that when we were outside how the policy deals with gay people, and I was brought to mind some, you know, we were, I was trying to figure out where, you know, the church is split and, and how that all came about, and where the philosophy differed from the other churches that were that I know that you're aware that that gay culture has a major problem with, because instead of preaching or not preaching, I don't want to use that instead of espousing a non judgmental kind of, as I said, outside, I thought that was so clever, I want to use it. As I said, outside that, you know, it's my impression from your group that, that you recognize that people are going to be judged by a higher power that you are not the one to make those judgments. And that's one of the things that makes me respect your group so much. But there are those religions who had their, you know, birth in, you know, the cradle of Catholicism, that have moved into hate mongering, there's just really no other way where they point the finger of specific people, specific groups of people, and denounce the people not so much the behavior now, when they hit the six o'clock news, they say, oh, it's the behavior, we love the Senator. But the truth is that, that that's not how it plays out, when they're out here on the streets, you know, willing to hurt people for their belief and to push and to convert to their belief, it's definitely they hate the senator or when they're preaching at conventions. Exactly, Father, how, what would your position be, and how a gay person should respond to that sort of person, because it's awfully hard not to become the mirror image of them, and hate back and point out their faults just as their co founder pointing out hours, which seems pretty non productive. And it'd be helpful if we could somehow find a more effective way of reaching these people and to defuse the situation instead of escalating it. So tough situation, I have never found a way in with the people you're talking about, you know, the real fundamentalist, any way of convincing them or changing their minds. And that's my position, I just don't try. Because it's pretty much a closed conversation, you know, it's one sided conversation, they're out to change me, but they're not willing to listen or to move themselves or change. So in as far as possible, I just say, you know, I don't want to talk about because we're in two different camps. And, but what I try to give people as a sense of their own strength and their spirituality, instead of saying, you know, tell me if I'm right or wrong or from Okay, or not, okay, and then I believe that which leaves us open to whichever wind blows at the time. Or, you know, I may, you know, Father Chris may say, God loves you, and you're unconditionally and you're okay, and you feel good, and you walk down the street and this other preacher jumps out and says, you know, you're, you're an abomination, and God hates you. And then you're back down again. We try to help people build that spiritual basis inside where they know that they're loved by God unconditionally, and they can stand up to that to the attacks or whatever else they might hear. And sometimes that means trying to get some kind of direct connections and kind of prayer connection. I think if you go back to the Bible to Jesus, I mean, Jesus was people finally killed Jesus and persecuted him because he was welcoming sinners and he wasn't condemning them. Like the Pharisees thought he should. And every time Jesus told stories, everybody the Pharisees thought were the good guys turned out to be the bad guys, and everyone that they thought were bad or evil or beyond God's love. Those are the ones that Jesus said were first were vindicated, were judged or were justified or were loved. And, and I can't understand how anybody who uses the name Christian could be judging or attacking people, or degrading people or trying to exclude them