

Rainbow Fish Pin Ministry

By Mary Byers [This story originally appeared in the February 2006 Fortunate Families Newsletter]

One day my husband Joe and I were shopping in Home Depot for carpet. A thirty something man came to ask if he could help us. He was a manufacturer's rep and he was helpful with carpet information. During our conversation, he commented on the rainbow-colored FISH PIN I was wearing. I explained that the Fish symbolizes early Christianity and the Rainbow symbolizes acceptance of race, creed, color, and sexual orientation. I said I wear this pin to honor my three gay sons.

He stopped talking and his eyes filled up. He went on to say he had a brother who had recently died of Aids and he was heartbroken. He said there are so few people he can discuss this with and wondered if he could tell us about his brother and how he hoped to set up a memorial trust fund in his memory.


It was a touching story filled with love and sadness and he hoped that by setting up a memorial fund in his brother's name his death would have some meaning and his memory would live on to help educate other folks.



He again mentioned the PIN. I offered it to him and he was so pleased but very reticent to take mine. I told him I would be honored if he would accept it and wear it when he could. He immediately took the PIN and put it on his sweater right there at work. He said he would wear it always and hoped that it would be a door opener to conversation about homosexuality. He gave me a hug, shook Joe's hand and we wished each other peace and good luck.

Many folks comment on my PIN. Of course, I tell them about it and so many wonderful opportunities have arisen to tell and put a positive spin on our mission. In this way, Joe and I are able to impart honest and useful information about homosexuality in a very simple and forthright way. Usually the subject of religion isn't a factor although we do not discourage it. Generally, these are brief encounters.

I keep a supply of PINS on hand and I am very willing to share them with anyone who shows interest. I am half way through my second hundred PINS. I give thanks to God that this small mission brings a modicum of peace to those who need it.

 *If you'd like to know how get one or more FISH PINS, you can email Mary at byersjm@juno.com*

Here's what the pin looks like:

