Priest: Fr. Donatus  
Readers: Sr. Joan Magnani & selectee

FIRST READING  Thessalonians 1:5-8a

A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Thessalonians  
Brothers and sisters:  
When we told you the good news, it was with the power and assurance that come from the Holy Spirit, and not simply with words.  
You knew what kind of people we were and how we helped you. So, when you accepted the message, you followed our example and the example of the Lord. You suffered, but the Holy Spirit made you glad.  
You became an example for all the Lord's followers in Macedonia and Achaia. And because of you, the Lord's message has spread everywhere in those regions.  
The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM  Psalm: 18:1-2, 46 and 50ce

R. I love you, Lord, my strength  
I love you, LORD God, and you make me strong. You are my mighty rock, my fortress, my protector, the rock where I am safe, my shield, my powerful weapon, and my place of shelter.  
R. I love you, Lord, my strength  
You are the living LORD! I will praise you. You are a mighty rock. I will honor you for keeping me safe. Your faithful love for David will never end.  
R. I love you, Lord, my strength

Alleluia  John 14:23  
R. Alleluia, alleluia  
All who love me will keep my words, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them.  
R. Alleluia, alleluia

GOSPEL  Matthew 22:34-40

A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew  
After Jesus had made the Sadducees look foolish, the Pharisees heard about it and got together. One of them was an expert in the Jewish Law. So he tried to test Jesus by asking, “Teacher, what is the most important commandment in the Law?”  
Jesus answered: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind.’ This is the first and most important commandment. The second most important commandment is like this one. And it is, ‘Love others as much as you love yourself.’ All the Law of Moses and the Books of the Prophets are based on these two commandments.”  
The gospel of the Lord.

Fr. Robert Wagner Celebration Center  
Priest: Fr. Donatus  
Readers: Sr. Joan Magnani & selectee  
Laurie Dion  
Kathleen “Cassie”  
Ohop  
Diane Dee  
Young James David  
Young Alexa Jade  
Carol Ann  
Martin Shevlin  
Walter Boucher  
Laurie Dion  
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Prayer Request  
We are here to Pray for you  
The community of JERICHO cares for one another. It is our desire to pray for you and your loved ones in a time of need. To add a name in our prayer list, please contact Sr. Joan via e-mail at srjoan@jerichobeca.org or call our office at 413-538-7450.

Laurie Dion  
Kathleen “Cassie”  
Ohop  
Diane Dee  
Young James David  
Young Alexa Jade  
Carol Ann  
Martin Shevlin  
Walter Boucher

Alleluia  Michael H.  
Suzanne  
David Ladizki  
Molly Fitzell  
Lisa Leary

Page 1 of 2  
Call Us! 413-538-7450
“Faith in God asks us to renew every day the choice of good over evil, the choice of the truth rather than lies, the choice of love for our neighbor over selfishness. Those who convert to this choice, after having experienced sin, will find the first places in the Kingdom of heaven, where there is greater joy for a single sinner who converts than for ninety-nine righteous people.”

- Pope Francis

If ever you were to touch a disabled child, with a warm and tender touch, the electricity that would return to you might be overwhelming.

Most of us are afraid to let go and allow disabled people to enter our lives. Here in the valley, we have been protected from disabled people because of a long history and belief that “they” like to be in institutions . . . “they” are happy when “they” are with “their own.” We, so-called normal and intelligent, have justified the enclosed walls of the institution and have permitted ourselves to exclude mentally and physically handicapped people from our society.

These feelings are changing slowly, but they are changing. At one time few developmentally disabled people were allowed in public in our society because of fears that were unfounded. Today, in schools, restaurants, stores and recreational facilities, we find disabled people, if not totally accepted, at least being slowly recognized as part of a growing value system so sorely needed in this world.

Jean Vanier, an internationally-known figure for his work with the mentally retarded, said a few years ago that “when society begins to accept ‘wounded’ people, then society will be saved.” Challenging words, yet if we could spend just a little time thinking about the concept, we realize maybe in the minds and hearts of our disabled people, the real and powerful truths of life may be revealed.

If we could be as truthful, understanding and loving as people with disabilities are, the world would change and have a new meaning and a new value. Truth, joy and happiness do not lie in power, in money or in intelligence, but in the simple fact of making and using what God has given us in the mountains, valleys, streams and color of our world and especially in our local valley.

I speak now, not for what we who are “normal” can do for the disabled, but more importantly what we can learn from the simple but honest lives of these people.

They need love, just like we do

Father Robert Wagner

No one can force another to see beauty. But when it is there before you, can you honestly pass it by without taking time to evaluate why God has placed retarded and disabled people among us? Maybe we ought to take some time and discover a miracle, the miracle of a disabled child who needs us in order that we might fulfill a need in our lives to reach out and be comforted by a warm hand, a simple smile and a loyal friend.

Take time this month to assess your opinion of disabled people. Discover if your opinion of a disabled person is as high as your opinion of yourself. Discover deep inside yourself what prejudices you have about those who are different from you. Discover a new way to make your life more meaningful by making meaningful the life of a disabled person. Discover a new world and make it brighter for you and others by helping disabled persons find a warm spot within their community through you. Discover God in a disabled person and know that, only then, will a disabled person (and the rest of us) find God in you.

The Rev. Robert Wagner, founder of Jericho, a non-sectarian retreat for disabled people and their families, is a member of the Transcript Telegram’s Board of Contributors.