



Dear Jericho Friends and Families,

During 2021 we started to transition to what is called our “new normal”. We were able to open our doors for Mass, Religious Education, Faith and Light, as well as our special social events for individuals and their families with disabilities. We wore masks, sanitized our hands, and tried to keep ourselves and everyone we love safe. Our Dances, Caroling, Sensitive Santa, Winterfest events were different, but they offered a bright light in a time of few opportunities to see friends and enjoy being together.

These changes, however small have brought us a sense of hope. Hope that the next wave of “new normal” will be closer to the one pre-Covid. In the bible hope is mentioned many times.

Jeremiah 29:11

"For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope."

Psalms 10:17

LORD, you know the hopes of the helpless. Surely you will hear their cries and comfort them.

Lamentations 3:22-24

The unfailing love of the LORD never ends! By his mercies, we have been kept from complete destruction. Great is his faithfulness; his mercies begin afresh each day. I say to myself, "The LORD is my inheritance; therefore, I will hope in him!"

Hope is what we chose to reflect on. At Jericho and through our work as the Bureau for Exceptional Children and Adults, we chose to inspire others with hope. We have been doing this since Fr. Robert Wagner chartered this organization 50 years ago.

Throughout this year we will be hosting several 50th anniversary events to remember the people and reasons for this incredible place and mission we all refer to as Jericho, but the hope, the true hope, is that we are here for the next 50 years and that we will continue to be a bright light for our future families and meet their spiritual, social and advocacy needs.

Thank you to each of you for helping us now and in the future,

Linda LaPointe, Executive Director



FATHER ROBERT WAGNER'S LEGACY

It was 50 years ago that Father Bob came upon a young child with a disability, unable to keep up with the other children in “catechism” class and was given a handful of crayons and set apart in the back of the classroom to keep occupied while the other children “learned” about God.

That event sparked what became known as the Bureau for Exceptional Children and Adults at Jericho, a ministry for persons with disabilities. This ministry has forged many diverse paths, provided much direct pastoral care, service and social programs and access to pastoral and special education.

With respect to this ministry, Jericho's mission represents yet another approach for addressing the ongoing challenge for, the People of God in this world, to work together towards enabling all persons with disabilities to participate fully in the life of the Church and the community..

The barriers seen and unseen were remain many. It is our hope that we will help to bring them to light for examination and reflection and to offer concrete resources for breaking them down, just as the walls of Jericho came down.

Please consider supporting Fr Wagner's legacy by making contributions to Jericho to continue his work.

Please consider supporting Fr Wagner's legacy **sustains charities and impact people's lives**: Charities and non-profit organizations have limited budgets and often depend on private funding to continue doing their work. Leave a personal legacy: Planned giving is an opportunity to contribute to a cause that's meaningful to you. by putting Jericho in your Will or in lieu of flowers at your funeral.

DIGNITY, RESPECT, AND WHOLENESS...

Jericho – Building Inclusive Christian Communities

This was on the cover of the first edition of *the Trumpet*, a beautiful quarterly magazine started in 1989. **The Trumpet** name was chosen for its symbolic value. The conquest of Jericho as pictured in the Old Testament, recounts the fall of the walls due to the encirclement of the town by the warriors of Israel. Followed by the sound of the sacred trumpets to show that God is with Israel.

The Trumpet was dedicated to nurturing those who shared the vision of full inclusion of persons with disabilities into the life of the Christian Community. We will be sharing some of these stories in our newsletters, on our website and on our Facebook page to help us reflect on the last 50 years, the accomplishments of JERICO and to build upon these accomplishments for the next 50 years of Jericho being a place *Where Everyone Is Welcome*.

Portraits of Advocacy, Sister Martha Day, SP



In 1972 Sister Martha became a full time staff member at JERICO. But in the beginning she admitted it was difficult. “It was uncharted territory all the way. I was deeply touched by the suffering of the parents because their children were not accepted at school, in society, or even in the churches at times. As I became to know many families, I began to feel that my presence and ministry to them was supportive. I decided to do everything in my power to draw their lives more fully into the love of Jesus for all. The power of faith carried into a ministry which did not yet exist.” she said.

“All parents wonder, ‘What will my child be like when he or she grows up?’ Parents with children with developmental delays often cried out in pain—‘What will happen to him or her when we are gone?’”

“Gods gift of deep compassion for the parents and their children became a way of life for me”, reflected Sr. Martha. “I have a mission to share their frustrations, burdens, pains and disappointments, as well as sharing in the joy at their smallest achievements.”

Sr. Martha retired from JERICO years later and when asked about her work continuing, she stated “It’s only the grace of God that keeps us hoping, working and praying for a better tomorrow—a tomorrow when each person with a disability is loved, cared for, accepted and integrated in the church and the community.

Called to Worship—Called Into His Presence, by Paula Brunault

I count many among the many wonderful blessings in my life a very special group of people, the JERICO Community—a community of children and adults with and without disabilities. Although I am active in my own parish, I choose also to worship at JERICO because it is there I experienced community.

There are some who think I am involved at JERICO to help the people with disabilities but the truth is, it is they who minister to me. They have accepted me into their community with unconditional love, with open arms and open hearts, as they accept everyone. They have taught me about love and vulnerability, about conversion and community, about freedom in worship, for without freedom there can be no true worship. In a spirit of wonder and awe, they welcome the Lord into hearts with simple faith. Their faith ushers me into his presence and it is here, among them, that Jesus reveals himself to me, I am reminded...we think that WE will teach them of God. But it is THEY who will teach us that the most important lesson: if you wish to have a relationship with God, you must come before him just as you are.

We need people with disabilities to be present at and part of all our parishes liturgies and gatherings, for they have much to teach us about how to worship “in Spirit and in Truth” - and in Love.

IN THE FRONT ROW

We are all creatures of habit and that is expressed ritually when people attend Mass. We all have our spots where we sit at Mass but at Jericho's Celebration Center every Sunday at Noon Mass, the front row belongs to Nathan Stewart, Marti Baillargeon, and Miguel Rodriguez.

Marti is Nathan's grandmother and caregiver. She discovered Jericho in 2013, when Nathan was having a difficult time sitting through mass at their local parish and a fellow parishioner invited her to Jericho. Marti recalls how the first time she brought Nathan to Mass and how he went right up and sat at the alter.

Nathan is very comfortable at Jericho. He made his First Communion and rides horses at the Therapeutic Equestrian Center. He has a weekly responsibility to blow out the candles at the end of Mass.

Miguel, who also calls Marti grandma, came to Jericho with his caregiver Dianne, to ride at the Therapeutic Equestrian Center. He then inquired about "that other building", the Celebration Center. This led him to Mass for the first time. He loved it and decided he wanted to fully participate, by being baptized and making his First Communion. Miguel loves Mass and has a strong belief in God.

We hope that you will join us at our Sunday Mass and get inspired by these three.

Just remember the front row is taken.

Please look for us at the **St Patricks Day Parade** on Sunday, March 20th. The Jericho Float will ride again with our Lad's and Lasses of Jericho on board to share with the community our gratitude for supporting the last 50 years of love, faith and inclusion where Everyone Is Welcome!



FOR YOUR CALENDARS

FR. ROBERT WAGNER MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP & BARBARA KIELY SCHOLARSHIP DUE MARCH 31ST

We are pleased to announce the availability of the Father Robert F. Wagner Memorial Scholarship. Two \$1,000.00 scholarships will be awarded to students from Western Massachusetts who are graduating from high school or are enrolled at an accredited college or university. Preference given to students who had an IEP, 504, or are going into a field of study to work with individuals with disabilities.

Barbara A. Kiely was a dedicated mother, friend, and teacher in Holyoke and Granby. She loved books and was a Trustee of the Granby Library for many years. She had a vibrant personality and was a woman of faith. An annual scholarship has been established in her memory by Brown Kiely LLP to support individuals with disabilities who are pursuing post-secondary education.

See www.jerichobeca.org

ROCK & ROLL DANCES

Our next dances will be held at the Castle of the Knights Chicopee:

- Valentines Dance, February 16th, Sponsored by the Phillip Family
- Easter Dance, April 20th, Sponsored by the Forrest Family
- Almost Summer Dance, June 1st by the Tyler Family

GOLF TOURNAMENT:

Our 43rd Annual Tony Strycharz Golf Tournament will take place on Wednesday, June 15th at Oakridge Country Club. 11am Registration and lunch, 12pm Shotgun Start. Cocktails, Dinner, Raffles and Awards Follow.

SAVE THE DATE — JERICHO'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY GALA

Please mark your calendars to celebrate Jericho's 50th Anniversary at the Delaney House on Friday, September 16th.



MEMORIALS, HONORS, AND PRAYERS



Aldo Rigali
Alfaso Sarno
Alice Cantin
Alice Lenkowski
Andrea Moriarty
Ann O'Leary
Ann Raftery Lanza
Antui Darkwah 11
Arlene Glanville
Arthur Viens
Ashley Brunelle
Astrid S. George
Barbara Gzuron
Betty A. Harrington
Betty Cleary
Beverly Lacks
Bill Gehring
Bill O'Hare
Carlos Rivera
Carol Beaulieu
Carol Lamothe
Carol Laramee
Catherine Moriarty
"Charles ""Jack"" Suprenant"
Christina Lanney
Claire Munger
Clara Delisle
Darlene Almeida
David Rigali
David Artiz
David Frain
David Henshon
David Ladizki
David McLaughlin
David Turgeon
David W. Wolfram
Donald Lesage
Douglas Allen Morse
Dr. Robert J. O'Brien
Dr. Thomas Bomardier

Edna Moore
Edward G. Smith
Eleanor P. Stankiewicz
"Elizabeth ""Betty"" Robertson"
Elizabeth Brisbois
Elizabeth Nadeau
Elizabeth Robertson
Emily Gorecki
Ethel Heneghan
Fernande Kelleher
Frank & Jeanne Jagodowski
Frank Jesionowski
George Keefe
Gerald McMullan
Henry Funk
Henry L. Courchesne
Hilda Reilly
James & Beatrice Burke
James A. Britton Jr.
James A. Curran
James Bronson
James Chojnowski
James H. Shea
Janet Harrington
Janet Reno
Janine Carvalho
Jay Harrington
Jenna Antonacci
Jeremiah J. Millane
Jerry Cowee
Jerry Gingras
Joan Dube
Joan Fortiar
Joanne Mundo
John Hamel Sr.
John Kochanek
John Powers
John Tyler
Joseph Desmarais
Julie Dupuis

Kara Maloney Armstrong
Karen Bourgeois
Katherine Suprenant
Kathleen M. Harrigan
Kathrine Harrington
Kenneth Olson
Kevin Fitzgerald
Kristopher Dixon
Kyle Manijak
Laura and Stephen Clare
Laura J. Grondski
Lee Dickinson
Leo Gallagher
Leon Floyd Parent
Lester Fontaine
Lisa Quaglino
Logan R. Pare
Loretta Czerniak
Lynn Baker
Marc Jennis
Margaret MacMulvan
Marguerite K Munns
Marie O'Leary
Marilyn Furnelli
Marion Anderson
Mary Arueter
Mary Lou Bathlet
"Mary Lou Gillan, ssj"
Michael Bresnahan
Michael Frain
Myron Glasberg
Nancy Ferriter
Neil Dreger
Nicola Longhi
Olga & Lionel Roy
Patrick and Ellen Clare
Paul Berry
Paul Paleologopoulos
Paula Murray
Peter Bouvier

Peter Robillard
Philip Dupuis
"Philip Nolan, Jr."
Ralph Peckham
Richard F. Mooney
Richard Mooney
Rita Moreau
Rita Tangredi
Robert Anderson
Robert Klee Jr.
Robert Piteo
Roger Miller
Roland & Alice Campbell
Roland Desrosiers
Rory & Hannah
Rosemary Stone
Ruby Murphy
Samuel Garcia Jr.
Sandra Prych
Santa Marulli
Stephen Robert Loughrey
Steven witek
Susan & Kirk Stephens
Ted Sargent
Thomas Trant
Timothy Curran
Timothy Doherty
Todd Jagowdowski
"Tom Bruno, Jr."
Uncle John's 70th Bday!
Viviane B. Glover
W. Peter Keefe
Wachusett Regional Special Ed Teachers
and Service Providers
Wilfred & Jeannette Gadbois
Young Alexa Jade
Young James David