

FROM THE HEART

A Magazine for Hope and Fun
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12 South Lake Ave., Albany, New York 12203
Phone: 518/449-7119; E-mail: info@AlbanyDamienCenter.org
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In honor and memory of Robert Pacheco

The following article about Robert which appeared in an earlier issue of *From the Heart* is repeated here..

To activate good feelings comes naturally to Robert Pacheco, who is known to all who come into the living-room at the Albany Damien Center. When he's around everyone feels better because of his cheerful ways. How does he do it? The basis of his life, he says, is being a Christian, and being a Christian for Robert means loving people and praising God in all that he does.

About 6 ½ years ago he almost died. But he survived and that changed him. He was so happy with God that he "died to self" and started loving the people around him. He realized that if he truly loved food, he would eat only what he needed. He decided to eat in order to live, not live in order to eat. He gave up cursing and curses only now and then as part of a joke. He stopped smoking and drinking alcohol.

Because he is so happy with his present way of life, he spends time every day singing hymns of praise to God.

SMILING

"Sometimes your joy is the source of your smile, but sometimes your smile can be the source of your joy," is one of the profound remarks of the Vietnamese Buddhist thinker Thich Nhat Hanh. And not only of our own joy, but that of others. There is no simpler or more expressive way of communicating goodwill than by smiling. Whether or not we know the person to whom we present it, a smile is always a gift worth giving.

From *1001 Pearls of Wisdom*, edited by David Ross, page 122-123.

A Prayer

Let my delight be
to care for the earth and its inhabitants,
to mend that which is broken,
to give rest to the tired and to feed the hungry,
to comfort the angry and befriend the lonely,
to respect the worth and dignity of all human beings,
to be emotionally present with the distressed,
to appreciate the nuances of life,
and to rejoice in Beauty and Goodness everywhere around me.

Wise Sayings

“Youth is happy because it has the capacity to see Beauty. Anyone who keeps the ability to see Beauty never grows old.”

Franz Kafka

“Never lose an opportunity of seeing anything that is beautiful, for beauty is God’s handwriting—a wayside sacrament. Welcome it in every fair face, in every fair sky, in every fair flower, and thank God for it as a cup of blessing.”

Ralph Waldo Emerson

“The pursuit of truth and beauty is a sphere of activity in which we are permitted to remain children all our lives.”

Albert Einstein

“The sight of the stars makes me dream.”

Vincent Van Gogh

“Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in, where nature may heal and give strength to body and soul.”

John Muir

“Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these.”

Matthew 6:28-29

To submit an article for *From the Heart* send it to Jim Masters. My e-mail address is jmasters002nycap.rr.com. My phone number is 518 459 7827

We Are Not Alone

Our stories may all be different, but yet they are often all the same. We are in a daily fight for our lives, a fight against an enemy that threatens to destroy us, t-cell by t-cell. We fight back with the tools we have, the skills we’ve learned, and we adapt with each passing day and experience. In all, we share one common thread - We are not alone!

Maybe you tested HIV+ very recently; maybe you’ve known it for some time but this is the first time you’ve reached out for information or support. The Damien Center creates an environment where people can gather to share information, experiences, and make new friends - friends who understand what it is like to live with this disease.

There’s no need for you to handle this by yourself. You are not the only person in our community facing this. Just hearing how someone else has adjusted to living with the virus can be enough to help you realize that life is still good, that you can still have love and laughter. We are not alone. And neither are you.

By Perry Junjulas, Executive Director of the Albany Damien Center and person living with AIDS. Reprinted in part from *The Body Positive*