



ANNIVERSARY

Unity Acres

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September 9, 2018

Dear Friends,

Here we are three weeks since our Annual Unity Acres Outdoor Mass and Picnic. This year marked a difficult one for us as it was the first one in many years without our beloved Chaplain, Father Robert Jones. Father Jones had been with us since the fall of 1991 and shared in the annual picnic beginning the summer of 1992 when the 'Torch' was passed from Father Raymond McVey.

Father McVey's retirement from Unity Acres was of short duration – only six months. He returned to the Acres in January of 1993, but his health failed in March 1995 and he passed on from his illness shortly thereafter on April 21 of that same year. And so Father Jones had been our Chaplain ever since, until his passing on July 22, 2018. It is difficult and painful carrying on without him.

This year we were privileged to have our dear friend from the days of St. Francis Farm in the 90's, Father Tom McNamara, O.F.M.Cap. to preside at our Mass. Father Tom was well received and all enjoyed his homily urging us to not be afraid to get our hands dirty and stepping out of our comfort zone and to take the road less traveled. Father is a Franciscan, Capuchin priest and pastor of Our Lady of Sorrows Parish in New York City. He has a longtime association with Unity Acres and St. Francis Farm and had a close friendship with Father Jones, Father Moritz Fuchs and Father Ted Sizing. The Mass and Picnic this year was held on August 19 which was Father Ted's birthday and the 2nd month anniversary of Father Fuchs' death. It was in Loving Memory of Father Jones and included tributes to Fathers Sizing and Fuchs.

Our Director Steve Dickhout welcomed all to this annual occasion and explained to those who had not heard, that Father Jones had passed on after having been in Seneca Hill Manor for four months after a fall and subsequent cerebral hemorrhage. Also that we usually would have had our beloved long time organist Mary Agnes Alrutz-Roy leading us in a gathering song, but that Mary Agnes had just died in St. Ann's Rehab Facility in Rochester after months of struggling with a brain tumor.

Following the theme of this year, our Mass opened with Jim & Deirdre McCarthy leading us in Dan Schutte's *"If the Lord does not build a house, then in vain do the builders labor"*. We pray that our house here at Unity Acres has been built by The Lord and The Lord will keep us going for many years to come.

The first reading delivered by Steve was from the Prophet Isaiah, Chapter 25, Verses 6,7-9, *“On this mountain, the Lord of hosts will provide for all peoples. On this mountain, He will destroy the veil that veils all peoples, the web that is woven over all nations; He will destroy death forever. The Lord God will wipe away the tears from all faces....”* This reading from Isaiah speaks to us especially at this time of grief on our part.

IF TODAY YOU HEAR HIS VOICE, HARDEN NOT YOUR HEARTS from Psalm 95 we answer Jim during the Responsorial... *“we are the people He shepherds, the flock He guides. Let us sing joyfully to the Lord, let us come into His presence with thanksgiving....”*

And again following our theme for the year, the 2nd Reading done by Bill Kimball was from 1st Peter, Chapter 2, Verses 5-8, *“And now you have become living building stones for God's use in building His house... see I am sending Christ to be the carefully chosen, precious cornerstone of my church, and I will never disappoint those who trust in Him.”* We pray that we don't reject Him, *“The same stone that was rejected by the builders that became the Cornerstone, the most honored and important part of the building.”*



ALLELUIA, ALLELUIA – A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John, Chapter 21, Verses 1-18. *“When they had finished breakfast, Jesus asked Peter ‘Do you really love me’, ‘Lord you know I love you, and Jesus answered ‘Feed my Sheep’”* – three times Jesus asked Peter, and three times Jesus said to Peter, *‘Feed my lambs, feed my sheep’*. The Gospel started out with the disciples fishing to no avail until Jesus instructed them to cast their nets over the right side

and their nets were full and then they ate breakfast with Jesus. This Gospel passage ends with words that have struck a prophetic message to Father Jones, *‘Amen I say to you, when you were younger, you used to dress yourself and go where you wanted; but when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go.’* Father lived these words of Scripture in his final illness and has now been released from that suffering.

During the Offertory, Carey Landry's beautiful song *Do You Really Love Me* repeated beautifully in song the dialogue between Jesus and Peter and the final verse asks all of us *“Do you really love me, Jesus said to me, Yes we really love you, we will*

follow you. Then feed my sheep He said, My people feed my sheep.” These words speak to you and me. We must follow Jesus and on the way tend to and feed His sheep, our fellow people.



The Mass progresses through the Prayer of the Faithful and the powerful words of the Canon and then all join hands in the Lord's Prayer and finally proceed to receive the Bread of Life, the Body & Blood of our Savior, Jesus Christ, left for us as an eternal covenant. Strains of Weston Priory's *Come to Me* fill our campus as the faithful receive this living bread, *"Come to me, all who labor and are heavy burdened, and I shall give you rest. Take up my yoke*

and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart, and you'll find rest for your souls. Yes my yoke is easy and my burden is light." These words and this song were favorites of Father Jones, words that sustained him through life and are printed on his prayer card.

Before closing and after the Communion Song, we all join with Jim & Deirdre in another of Father's and that is the *Garden Song* by David Mallett and was sung as a special tribute to Father and all our gardeners, Fr. Fuchs, St. Francis Farm, Frs. Ted and Tom and our Henry. *"Inch by inch, row by row, gonna make this garden grow...someone bless these seeds I sow, someone keep them warm below, 'till the rain comes tumbling down."*

Father Tom leads us in the Closing Prayers of this holy Mass and time devoted to Father Jones with Fathers Fuchs and Sizing also in our hearts and we then join in Padre's theme song: *"SMILE, DON'T YOU KNOW GOD LOVES YOU, COME TO THINK OF IT I LOVE YOU TOO, TAKE THE TIME TO SMILE AT SOMEONE AND BEFORE YOU'RE THROUGH, SOMEONE WILL BE SMILING BACK AT YOU."*

We will try to keep smiling, Padre. It's not easy but we must remember the words of the 2nd verse, *"Do you ever feel that you are all alone? Remember God's love for you is strong, and soon your heart will sing this happy song"*.



And now the Assembly moves over to the STAR Building where a picnic feast of Hot Dogs, Hamburgers, Salads, beans, corn, fresh tomatoes from our garden along with scrumptious desserts and plenty of soda await the hungry crowd. All of this lovingly prepared and arranged by our kitchen crew along with Loretta and Mary, and helping to serve were Helen, Joan, Kathy and Bill, Gary, Roger, John, Tom, Al, and Louis.

A video presentation rolls on in the Pool Room arranged by photographer Bob W. along with Bear Foote. Also collages of photos and articles grace the dining room, reminding us of times past.

We try to visit with each guest but the time goes by so fast that before we know it people are heading for their vehicles and our annual outdoor Mass and Picnic are history for another year. We thank all of you that are such faithful followers and supporters of Unity Acres. We are planning and looking forward to the 50th Anniversary next Spring.



God Bless you.
Most Sincerely,
Peg McCarthy

Unity Acres 50th Anniversary Calendars are still available. The monthly photos were taken by two of our men whose names are printed at the respective print. We do mention however that the Mass Schedule was done before Father Jones' sudden illness and subsequent death and therefore as indicated in the Calendar, we urge you to call and verify any Mass posted.

The Acres was founded in 1969 and so we are suggesting a donation of \$19.69. Please just indicate that you would like a copy of the calendar on the memo line of your check.

Tom Maguire of the Catholic Sun attended our picnic, you can find his article on the web at:

<http://thecatholicsun.com/2018/09/05/milestone-coming-for-oswego-county-lifesaver/>