

Unity Acres
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40th Anniversary

May 23, 2009

Dear Friends of Unity Acres,

"For forty years Unity Acres has welcomed hundreds of homeless men into its community with love, acceptance and dignity."

On April 23, 2009 approximately 300 people gathered in the Empire Room on the New York state Fairgrounds to celebrate those forty years. After many months of planning by a devoted committee headed by Kris Waelder and Dan McCann all of us who attended this event were treated to a very special evening. Upon entering the vestibule we were greeted by posters of large photos of UnityAcres people from the past. Walking into that spacious dining room the first thing that met our eyes were three hundred ruby-colored linen napkins like flames of fire in the white coffee cups at each place setting! In the center was a setting of hors d'oeuvres and fruit punch, a stage with the musicians in front of a large replica of our "Body, Mind, and Spirit" sign. To the right of the dining room was set up a large array of donated creations for the silent auction, and in one corner a slide show running of photos of faces of Unity Acres past up to nearly the present.

At seven o'clock the music stopped, and after a welcome by the president of UnityAcres' Board of Directors, Sister Monica Nortz, Father Jones extended a Blessing, and we were then served a wonderful dinner of a 'melt in your mouth' steak and chicken, roasted potatoes, vegetables, salad, rolls and a decadent chocolate dessert. Over coffee and dessert, the program opened with our emcee Bishop Costello introducing the Staff and Board and reflecting on Father Ray: *Priest, Prophet and Friend*. Pat Waelder spoke about Yesterday and Bob Detor, Jerry Berrigan, Frank Woolever and Dick Keough added reminisces of their experiences with Father Ray. John McNard and Roger Irwin, two of our men, shared their story with the audience expressing their appreciation for the Acres Today. Mark Waelder followed by Steve Dickhout took us into **Tomorrow**.

Jimmy Glavin entertained us with another story about Father McVey in years gone by and then announced the Silent Auction winners could pick up their 'prizes'. Father Ted Sizing led us in a benediction prayer and John Cadley closed our perfect evening with his moving song "Up Where the Men Go", a beautiful tribute to the Acres, to Fr. Ray and to Kate Stanton.

We'd like to thank all who made this wonderful evening such a huge success and pray that we do not leave out anyone. Kris Waelder and Dan McCann deserve a big, big hand for their efforts, expertise, and experience in putting together a real winner of a gala celebration and fund raiser as well. We also thank Marie Cullen, Madeline 'Cookie' and Jimmy Glavin for organizing the very successful silent auction along with much help from Mary Maples. Dave Pasinski had 40th Anniversary T-shirts available in the vestibule and for those we say, "Thanks Dave." Another vote of appreciation goes to John Cadley for the CDs of his wonderful "Up Where the Men Go." To all those who spoke we offer our appreciation, especially our beloved Bishop Costello.

So many people helped put this night together: Dupli and J. Kemper Matt Jr. for paper and printing of the invitation; to Nancy Osborne and staff of Lettergraphics and also to Cheryl Abrams, Communications Associate for Crouse Hospital; to LeMoyne College Professor Ann Allen and her students Ashley Ahmadipour, Caragh Fisher, Brooks Robinson and Tim Spillet for the historical posters and programs; to Five Seasons Florist, our Dan McCann, for the beautiful flowers; to Bill Waelder for making the "Mind, Body and Spirit" sign.

We certainly want to thank the Sandy Creek School District and their driver Cindy for transporting twenty-two of us to the celebration and back home safely. The bus ride in itself was lots of fun! To all those who spoke and shared, we give our thanks -- to our fund raising women who work so diligently we appreciate you more than you can realize, and to Billy Johnson and his very efficient and friendly wait staff at The Empire Room, we extend our deepest appreciation for a most enjoyable evening! To all of you who attended, or sent your prayers and contributions to make this so successful, and last but certainly not least we wish to thank our dear friend Dennis Owens for his willingness to be our honorary chair for this blessed evening.

God Bless All of You,

Peg McCarthy

May 2009 Prayer: Mary, Mother of God and our Mother

“When Jesus saw His mother and the disciple there whom He loved, He said to His mother, ‘Woman, behold your son.’ Then He said to the disciple, ‘Behold your mother.’” And from that hour, the disciple took her into his home.”

— John 19, 26,27 (Good Friday)

The month of May is dedicated to Mary, the one chosen to be Mother of God and our mother, and to all mothers.

Hymn and Prayer to Mary, the Chosen One:

Refrain: O chosen one, O chosen one! Woman of peace, woman of hope, bearer of life for us all! O chosen one, O chosen one! Gifted and graced, blest by our God, holy are you.

V1—O mother of peace, bring a new peace to our lives. Help us to be makers of peace, bearers of peace to our world. (Refrain)

V2—O mother of sorrows, comfort us all in our grief. Help us to comfort all those who mourn, to be with them in their need. (Refrain)

Mary, our mother, we at Unity Acres seek your intercession, that, following your example, we may be a people of peace, hope, love and tender strength.

Jesus, gloriously risen, as You hung on the cross in agony, You still gave John, and all of us, to the care of Mary, Your Blessed Mother. You told John ~ and all of us ~ to behold our mother as well. May we turn to her with trust.

May her example of quiet strength, faith and obedience assist us here and throughout the world.

Help us to ponder ~ “to treasure all these things” in our hearts.— Luke 2, 19

Father Robert Jones