



UNITY ACRES
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June 7, 2007

Dear Friends of Unity Acres,

Sounds of lawnmowers, crowing of one of Ron's roosters, the opening and closing of doors and footsteps. One of the washing machines in the laundry room below is beginning its spin cycle -- thump, thump, thump. Morning at Unity Acres -- it is time to get up and begin the day.

If anyone has an appointment at the VA hospital in Syracuse this morning, Bill Spurrier will be driving the man to a meeting point in Pulaski where the trip to the city will be continued courtesy of the DAV drivers: a DAV van travels weekdays between Watertown and Syracuse bringing veterans to medical and other appointments. Breakfast is served in the Star Building at 8:00 AM, and several of the men will shortly begin gathering in the coffee and recreation room which adjoins the dining room and kitchen.

At 8:30, Laura Paddock arrives and begins her day by opening the medication room and distributing medication to some of the men who require assistance in this regard. Laura is accompanied by two dogs: Sammy, a little Chihuahua mix, and Cisco Marie, a Mountain cur. (Sammy usually gives a happy little bark of greeting to the men she sees upon arrival each morning--he is doing that just now.)

Today being a Thursday, we are expecting the arrival of Father Jones. He will be coming up from the North Shore of Oneida Lake to celebrate Eucharist in our Sacred Heart Chapel at 11:00 AM, to share the noon-time meal (soup and sandwich most days) with the men, and perhaps later, to visit with Robert who's moved earlier in the week to Maple Manor, an adult home very close by in Richland.

Later, Mark Baker will be returning to the Acres to begin his usual long weekend duties: Thursday afternoon through Monday morning. Mark stays in the A Building during his days 'on', and assists the men in whatever way is necessary: helping with projects, running errands and so on.

One highlight to announce, already well known to the men and staff, was the purchase of a truck which we will use for plowing snow, hauling garbage, and for moving firewood. During the past winter we had troubles with our former plow truck and with the van we used to use for hauling trash. One had a bad transmission and the other a blown engine.

Having neither working for several weeks was to say the least a major inconvenience. Our newly purchased truck is a 1998 Chevrolet Silverado $\frac{3}{4}$ ton diesel with 5-speed manual transmission, 4-wheel drive. It came with a snow plow. We have been using it for several weeks now for trash removal: it can move all the trash and recyclables for a week in only two trips. We have also had the occasion to use it in hauling close to a ton of stone and mortar mix for use in the reconstruction of our hog barn.

The beautiful month of May has come and gone. So quickly it seems. Peas and corn were planted from seed some weeks ago: these can go in the ground before the last frost. Several varieties of summer and winter squash have been planted from seed as well. And we have planted cabbage and broccoli plants which we get from a local nursery. Usually the last vegetables to be planted are the tomatoes and peppers, and these too are growing nicely: just waiting for the really hot weather to set in.

Our hope in regard of the garden is that some of the vegetables will be ready in time for our annual picnic: particularly the corn, since there may not be any food more evocative of summer than freshly picked corn on the cob.

We had been experiencing several days of hot and dry weather which was beginning to dry out the soil in our gardens. More recently, cooler and damper weather has prevailed, along with some heavy and much needed rains, bringing to mind one of the Psalms (Ps 65) taken from Morning Prayer for the 6th Tuesday of Easter, which was the memorial of Saint Isidore the Farmer this year:

You care for the earth, give it water,
You fill it with riches.
Your river in heaven brims over
To provide its grain.

And thus you provide for the earth;
You drench its furrows,
You level it, soften it with showers,
You bless its growth.

Steve Dickhout

Prayer: Pentecost/June 2007

“Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Your faithful,
and enkindle in them the fire of Your love.”

Gospel Acclamation - Pentecost Sunday

O Holy Spirit, our world is too much closed to You. The fires we see are flames of destruction. Replace them with the fire of Your love. Enkindle our hearts, that we may be people of peace and justice.

We hear violent sounds echo across our world: bombs, guns, shrieks of anger and anguish. Words of contempt, lies, deceit, assail us. Replace them with the “mighty roar” of Your Word, that we might speak and hear the gentle sounds of Your wisdom and comfort.

Confusion, division, brokenness — in families, communities, nations, and among nations — make our hearts grow cold. Melt the hardness, warm the coldness, with the fire of your love. Amen.

June is dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Our Unity Acres Chapel is named Sacred Heart Chapel. As we seek the comfort and strength of the Holy Spirit, we renew our trust in the Sacred Heart of Jesus. He beckons us to turn to Him when our hearts are heavy, that he might lighten them.

O God, we honor the Heart of Your Son, broken by our cruelty, yet symbol of love’s triumph, pledge of all that we are called to be.

Teach us to see Christ in the lives we touch, to offer Him living worship by love-filled service to our brothers and sisters.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us.

Father Bob Jones