



UNITY ACRES  
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Dear Friends of Unity Acres,

It's the early morning of the last Friday of March. It snowed last night, several fresh inches of wet snow now cling to the branches of the scotch pines and other trees around the Acres property. Heavy late winter snows of the past several weeks have not yet melted here in Orwell; still there are signs of spring to be noted here and there. Yesterday, en route to Oswego, I noticed three robins near the intersection of Centerville and Peck Roads, about four miles distance from the Acres. I am told as well that some of the spring bulbs, crocuses and daffodils, have begun to emerge from the south-facing flower beds in front of our Main Building. Some people have reported the arrival of red-wing blackbirds. Spring, perhaps, is on its way.

After months of heating the Star Building, which houses the kitchen, dining hall, and recreation room, by means of a wood boiler, our supply of firewood is now depleted. Once the snow in the woods has melted, teams of men will be able to start cutting next year's supply. In the meantime, plans for an additional shed for storing firewood have been submitted and approved. Again, once the snow has gone, and the frost has gone out of the ground, we will be in a position to set these plans in motion.

Late winter and early spring are a difficult time for many of us here. The weather slowly improves, the days grow longer. We are past the time of the year when many of us are busy with dealing with shoveling, plowing and clearing snow, not yet at the time when we get busy with other outdoor activities such as gardening. Boredom sets in and becomes a problem for some.

One of our former residents, Richard Oswald, died at Oswego Hospital during the early morning of Saturday, March 15. Since 2005, Rick had been one of the group of former Unity Acres men currently resident at Sunrise Nursing Home. In fact, at the time of his death, Rick was the president of the Residents' Council at Sunrise. Prior to his admission there, Rick had spent several years at Unity Acres, his several stays with us going back at least to the early 1990s, perhaps the 1980s. Rick was well-liked for his easy-going and affable manner.

In conversation with Peg McCarthy, I was reminded that Rick had helped out in the mailroom and with answering the phones during some of his stays at the Acres during the late 1990s. During the past four years, it has always been a pleasure to visit with Rick at Sunrise; he enjoyed hearing the news from Unity Acres, and passing on his own news. Rick will be missed. May he rest in peace.

On March 11th, we celebrated a Mass of the Resurrection for Ray Petrie. The Old Testament reading read out that day was from Isaiah 58: "This is the fasting that I wish: ... setting free the oppressed, breaking every yoke; sharing your bread with the hungry, sheltering the oppressed and the homeless." Rick's funeral was celebrated on the Tuesday of Easter Week. Laura read a passage from the Acts of the Apostles (2: 42-47) that describes the consequences of the reality of Jesus' resurrection in the lives of the earliest disciples: They were devoted to the teachings of the Apostles, to prayer, to breaking of bread. They shared with one another their possessions so that no one was without the necessities of life. The communal life practiced by these early disciples, and the prophecy of Isaiah, represent an ideal which we try, however

stumblingly, however imperfectly, and with many failures, to enact here at Unity Acres.

These first believers were, like us, still subject to ‘various trials’ - living out the reality of the Resurrection despite the hard knocks, the disappointments, the sadnesses and stresses of everyday life. But the Paschal mystery is realized as people freely and spontaneously share of their talents and enthusiasms and gifts, and the reality of the Resurrection is lived out as people enable one another to enact dreams and to do impossible things despite the daily grind and the hard knocks.

And so it goes with us, as always: the enacting of dreams, and the daily trials and hard knocks. Please keep us in your prayers.

Stephen Dickhout

## Easter Prayer: ALLELUIA

“This is the day the Lord has made; Let us rejoice  
and be glad in it.”—Ps. 118: 24.

### EMMAUS GOSPEL, 3rd Sunday of Easter:

“How slow of heart to believe all that the prophets spoke!  
It was necessary that the Christ should suffer these things  
and come into His glory.” —Lk 24:25-26  
“‘Stay with us, Lord’ ” —Lk 24:29  
“...He was made known to them in the  
breaking of the bread.” —Lk 24:35

Risen Lord, we pray: Walk with us. A violent, sinful world, and our own  
sins, cast us down. Where is the peace, where justice? Where are you,  
Lord? Have you truly risen? We lose our way, we cannot find you.  
Walk with us, Divine Teacher, open the scriptures to us. Unfold the  
mystery: You had to suffer and then enter into glory. So must we.

Stay with us, Lord, as each evening draws near. Help us to know you,  
gloriously alive, whenever we break bread:

- at the Altar;
- at Table, here at Unity Acres and in all homes;
- with the Hungry, at shelters, at food pantries;
- whenever we gather as Community.

Risen Lord, Divine Teacher, walk with us, talk to us.  
AMEN, ALLELUIA

--Father Robert Jones

