



*Unity Acres*

*P.O. Box 153*

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Advent/Christmas 2004

"Prepare the Way of the Lord", "O Come Immanuel", are words heard this beautiful season of Advent as we await the birth of our Savior, our God Incarnate. Here at Unity Acres, preparations are certainly underway for the wonderful feast of Christmas. Twinkling lights colorfully displayed in windows, trees popping up in the buildings, the Dining Room all aglow with a lovely live tree decorated by some ladies this past week-end. Neighboring groups planning on programs/parties in the next couple of weeks. Other groups calling and assuring us that they are gathering gifts for our men. Stockings being filled by some, gift bags being readied by others, and the mail every day coming in with your generous donations. A brand new shiny gift of a 10 burner, 2 oven stove cooking us delicious meals and proudly ready for that Christmas Dinner. Our tired old stove is "sitting" in the dining room but also all dressed up with decorations. We are so blessed by you, our faithful supporters. Everyday you are remembered in prayer and thanksgiving in our Sacred Heart Chapel.

We wish also to thank all for the generous response to our Fundraiser on October 28 at St. Andrew's Church Hall in Syracuse. A wonderful pasta meal with salad and desserts was enjoyed by nearly 200, a program describing Unity Acres during these 35 years was an inspiration to the many who have contributed to the founding of the Acres by Father Ray McVey, as well as the hundreds of volunteers and "staff" and the thousands of contributors over these years. We are in awe of the response to our needs. We wish to thank all who had anything to do with making this event a success and great fun as well.

#### CATTLE CAPERS

Not lions and tigers and bears, but cows and bulls and steers had a day of freedom last Friday when a certain bull came visiting, pushing in our pasture fence and our entire herd headed up Route 2 and frolicked in Linda's garden and beyond. Much pushing and pulling of these hefty bovine and after six long hours they were back in their pasture, safe and sound, and seemingly none the worse from their antics. Not so sure about a few cowpokes we know, covered from head to toe with mud, and such!!

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Two days before Thanksgiving, we were stunned with the sudden death of one of the men, our beloved Millard "Skip" Burbridge. We print below a beautiful prayer/tribute to Skip written by our Robert "Bear" Koos.

FAREWELL TO A FRIEND

We bid a fond farewell to a good friend, Skip, he will be missed by us all. Good hearted, and always ready to lend a hand to help out where he could. A positive word or just a smile, a pat on the back of encouragement. A man of good nature and friendship, who accepted you for who you were.



Never bitter or one who would complain, or say a bad word about anyone. A man of faith, who loved and trusted his God. We celebrate his life and honor his memory. We now Lord entrust the care of our good friend Skip over to you and know he has found his rest in the safety of your arms.

God, keep our friend Skip, and comfort our hearts knowing the depth of our loss. We thank you for Skip, for him being our friend. We look forward to the day when we will see him again in your Heaven in Glory. All Honor and praise to you our Lord, Rock, Friend, and Redeemer.

Skip's Funeral Mass was celebrated here in our Chapel and he is buried in our St. Martin de Porres Cemetery.

Rest in Peace Skip. We miss you.

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December Prayer--Thanksgiving, Advent, Christmas

THANKSGIVING - "...our desire to thank you is itself your gift. (from Preface Prayer week-days). Prayer - We thank you O God for the 35 years of Your Spirit on Unity Acres; for the countless Blessings You have granted. We thank-you especially for the gifts and graces of this 35th year. May all who have been the Instruments of your Love, know your Blessings and our gratitude.

ADVENT - "Do not be afraid Mary, for you have found favor with God. Behold you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High." Luke 2. Prayer - Grant O God that we may follow Mary's example. May we respond to your message with Faith, Hope, Humble Obedience to Your will. Holy Spirit give us the Wisdom to prepare a place in our hearts for your Son.

"As we prepare to celebrate His Birth, may He find us watching in prayer." (Advent Preface)

CHRISTMAS - "A people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; upon those who dwell in the land of gloom, a light has shone." Is.9:1,2 Prayer: O Loving God, there is much darkness in our world; the darkness of families, homes, cities, countries, torn apart by war; the hardness of addiction, despair, loneliness and grief. The gloom of rejection, confinement, sickness, poverty. Help us to see Christ, the Light of the world, shining through it all. May that Light brighten all of our lives with hope and joy. Amen

God Bless You, Father Jones

Please remember our friends and former residents in nursing homes and other institutions:

Ray Petrie, 700 E Brighton Ave, Syracuse NY 13203

Lewis Schreiber, Vale Haven Nursing Home, E 2<sup>nd</sup> St and Oneida St, Oswego NY 13126

Tom Wojcukiewicz, Sunrise Nursing Home, 17 Sunrise Drive, Oswego NY 13126

George White, 94-B-0605, Groveland Correctional Facility, P O Box 104, Gonyea NY 14556

Jimmie Roberts, Pontiac Nursing Home, 303 E River Road, Oswego NY 13126

Eugene Rodriguez, Pontiac Nursing Home, 303 E River Road, Oswego NY 13126

William Kimball, Pontiac Nursing Home, 303 E River Road, Oswego NY 13126

Michael Ross, Pontiac Nursing Home, 303 E River Road, Oswego NY 13126