



Unity Acres

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February 10, 2022

*He has filled the hungry
with good things
—Luke, 1.53*

Dear Friends of Unity Acres,

We want to begin the new year by sending along a word of thanks to all who receive our newsletter; to all who think about the needs of the men of Unity Acres, who offer prayers for the Acres, who send along a donation or a word of encouragement, or who assist the men in any way, tangibly or intangibly ... It is through you that God is providing for us as He has done for more than 50 years. And we are grateful. Through Him, you have helped to provide a home and community for hundreds of men over the years, miraculously provisioning all our needs.

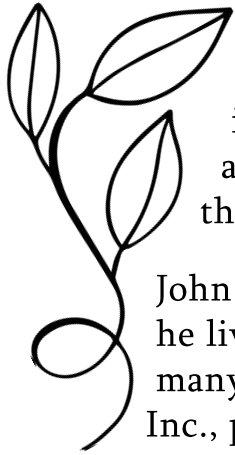
We also want to send along our concerns and thoughts for you. It has been over two years now since we have all become aware of the novel corona virus. It was a virus that no one knew very much about, nor did anyone at first really understand very well how to avoid it. We are sadly aware that many of you, our friends and neighbors, have been affected by this deadly disease. Thankfully, according to news reports, the pandemic seems to have begun to subside, the numbers of new cases are down, and fewer people are being admitted to the hospitals. As these difficult times appear to be drawing to a close, we continue to pray that your days will be less stressful and that you will again enjoy good health, safety and peace of mind.

As for ourselves, during these last months, we have food on the table. We are managing to stay warm and dry, and protected from the elements. We have an excellent source of clean drinking water. We have clothing in abundance. We have food and we are staying warm ... And we continue to be free of the virus. We have no reason to complain! We are blessed.

With the approach of March 3rd, the 53rd anniversary of the date when Father McVey first took possession of the former Oswego County TB San, I would like to ask all of us – especially all of us living at Unity Acres to reflect for a moment or two what the Acres means to us. Imagine Father Ray coming here during the cold winter of 1969 and facing the many obstacles, hardships, and yes heartaches as he set about trying to refurbish old abandoned run-down buildings so men with problems and addictions might have a safe place to heal and recover. His mind and heart had been overwhelmed with love for the men. His vision became reality, and for the remainder of his life, Father McVey worked tirelessly in furtherance of the idea of Unity Acres. Because of his legacy we are here today and enjoying the fruits of his labor. There are still a few men living at the Acres today who remember Father and speak with such love and respect for him. Then suddenly they will have a twinkle in their eye, as they laughingly recount a funny little story or anecdote about him! As in the past two years, we will be quietly celebrating this 53rd anniversary.

In closing, dear friends, I wish you all grace, peace and good health now and in the coming months of Spring.

Loretta Dickhout



PLEASE join us in praying for the happy repose of the soul of JOHN J. 'MACK' MCCARTHY, who passed away at Strong Memorial Hospital in Rochester on May 5, 2021, at the age of 65. John's death was sudden, and due to a cancer that had gone undetected. Peg was in Brockport at the time, as she had travelled there in mid-April for a visit.

John was Peg's eldest son. He was a graduate of SUNY at Brockport and he lived most of his adult life in and around the Brockport area, where for many years he worked as a Residence Counsellor for Lifetime Assistance, Inc., providing services to individuals with developmental disabilities. He was active in local theater, as well as his Church communities: Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary and Brockport United Methodist. A truly gentle and kind man, John was devoted to the people he served in his professional life, his friends and family.

John's funeral services were held in Brockport, and he was buried at St. Mary's Cemetery in Cleveland NY, next to his father, grandparents and uncle.

Rest in Peace, John.



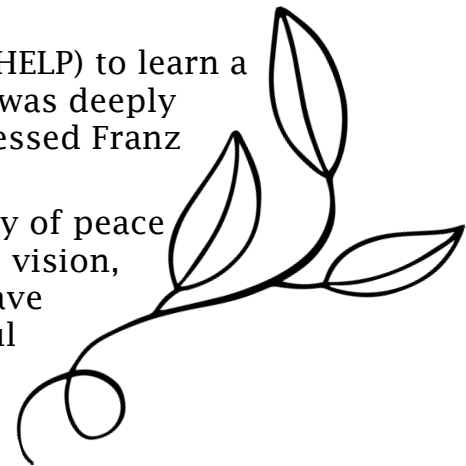
A beloved and longtime friend of Unity Acres from the earliest days, DICK KEOUGH, "graduated" (his way of looking at dying) into that "great cloud of witnesses" on January 8th and the family celebrated his "graduation" on January 15 at Saint Lucy's in Syracuse. There may well be another more public celebration also in the late Spring.

When anyone speaks of the history of Unity Acres and the supporters of Fr. Ray and Kate, one always has to mention Dick and many others as part of that key network of those who assisted in so many ways.

Dick was a deacon in 1967 working at Saint Lucy's with Father Ray and shortly after that helped develop Unity Kitchen also. Throughout these many years, he and Mary - in direct and indirect ways - reflected the spirit of the Catholic Worker movement and personally invested much energy in caring for the men in ways that were complementary to the mission of the Acres.

Dick developed Helping Ex-cons and Low-income People (HELP) to learn a trade of appliance repair and supportive life development. He was deeply committed to Pax Christi and to pacifism and influenced by Blessed Franz Jagerstatter and Ben Salmon.

Mary and Dick's home welcomed so many in a wide variety of peace movements and we know that so many who benefited from his vision, hard work, and loving commitment to peace and justice will have greeted him in that "cloud" saying "Well done good and faithful servant. Enter into the joy of your Lord."



Dave Pasinski