



Farmworker Sunday

Prayers

Grace Over a Meal

O God of seed and harvest, we pause to give thanks for the table set before us and the food that graces it.

[The people gathered take turns naming the various foods on the table being blessed, by saying, “thank you for the _____” until all the foods have been named.]

In a moment we will eat this food, harvest from many parts of the nation and world. It will be transformed into the flesh and blood of our bodies. Keep us mindful of the many workers who labor in field and factory to bring us this food.

From the bounty and nourishment of the meal, we dedicate ourselves to work to abolish poverty, unsafe working conditions, workplace abuse, and unjust wages among those who feed us through their labor.

We pray this in the name of the Creator God, who not only fed the Israelites in the desert but transformed simple folk like us into disciples for justice and peace. Amen.
(Interfaith Worker Justice, www.nicwj.org)

Prayer for Bounty and Responsibility

God of all creation, we pray today for this marvelous world you have given us. You have created the land in beauty and filled it with a variety of plants and animals. You have set complex relationships between mountains and valleys, deserts and plains, land and water and sky. Bless the earth so that it provides home and food for all of your creatures. Heal the land of all the wounds that we have allowed through our own ignorance and our desire for an easier life. Bless the farm communities and those who work the land. Give each one the wisdom to work your land with reverence and skill. Above all keep your hand of encouragement upon those who work grueling hours in these fields for unjust wages. Amen (National Catholic Rural Life Conference, www.ncrlc.com)

Blessing Prayer

Bless the hands of the people of the earth,
The hands that plant the seed,
The hands that bind the harvest,
The hands that carry the burden of life.

Soften the hands of the oppressor and
Strengthen the hands of the oppressed.

Bless the hands of the workers,
Bless the hands of those in power above them
That the measure they deal will be tempered
With justice and compassion. Amen.

(National Farm Worker Ministry, www.nfwm.org)

Prayer for Farmworker Justice *(written by His Eminence Roger Cardinal Mahoney)*

Father, God of goodness, you give us the land to provide us with food. Hear the prayers of your people and give all who work on that land a full measure of human dignity and justice. May we bring the spirit of Christ to all our efforts, and may these efforts yield a rich harvest of justice, peace, and love. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All Respond: Amen.

Prayer for My Brother and Sister Migrants

Prayer on the wall at CCAMYN (Centro Comunitario de Atencion Migrante y Necesitado) in Altar, Mexico.

Heart of Jesus full of love and mercy, I watch over my sister and brother migrants. Have pity on them and protect them; they suffer mistreatment and humiliations on their way, looked on as dangerous by most, and marginalized for being foreigners. Help us to respect them and appreciate their dignity. Touch with your goodness the hearts of we who see them pass by. Take care of their families until they return home, not with broken hearts but with their hopes fulfilled.

May it be so.

Prayer for Forgiveness

God, we have failed to understand and accept the great demands placed upon us by your kingdom. We have joined your causes, but have lost interest. We promised to be courageous, but find ourselves afraid. We want to be sensitive, but find ourselves hard and callous. We are confronted with great opportunities for service in the work of justice and peace, but fail to take advantage of them. Forgive us when we let our comfort stand in the way of the cries and struggles of the poor, the hungry, the sick, the prisoner. We have allowed self to blind us and have forgotten that whatever is done to any one of your children is done to you. Have mercy, O God, and hear our confessions. Take our limitations and turn them into possibilities for service; Amen. (National Farm Worker Ministry, www.nfwm.org)