

strength
to make it through

dreams of respect



Harvest of Justice

the well being of family
far away

In this year's **Harvest of Justice**, farm workers share their prayers for strength to make it through the toil of each day, for the well being of family far away and for their dreams that one day they and their labor will be respected in the full measure deserved. We join them in these prayers as a way to help close the gap between those who plant and harvest our food and those who consume it.

Arturo Sepulveda, is a former worker at Threemile Canyon Farms and is now an organizer with the UFW. Felix Garza, is a member of the NFWM Board, representing the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth, KY. This reflection is based on his conversations with Arturo.

THIS JOURNEY FOR JUSTICE

Being a member of an organization that supports workers and calls for justice has been the best experience of my life. When we are able to see the benefits of working together, we cannot turn back. We can only move forward. Injustice hurts everyone because we are all members of the same human family - Europeans, Africans, Latinos, Asians - and we struggle for the same dreams. We must give a hand to each other, and together we can change the world.

Today, we leave behind our families in search of a better life. Once here in the U.S., many workers are having some very difficult and humiliating experiences on the job. People are getting seriously injured, and many are afraid to speak up. It is important that we come together to support and defend one another. I personally have suffered humiliation and discrimination, but it does not stop me.

We cannot stop working for justice. I want to help my people. The dream of César Chávez was that people stand up and defend themselves, and today, farm workers need us to stand with them.

THIS IS MY DREAM:

- That we may be respected like human beings and treated with dignity, and may our people not be discriminated against because of our language, color of skin, religion, or nationality.
- That our children will not know suffering and may have opportunities. May education not be denied, and by becoming educated may they become professionals that will strengthen this country with their knowledge and ideas.
- That we may soon have immigration reform that benefits all our people who work so hard in this country.
- That we may lend a hand to each other as brothers and sisters, and may we struggle together for the rights of our people.



National Farm Worker Ministry

438 North Skinker Blvd.
St. Louis, MO 63130
314.726.6470
nfwm@nfwm.org
www.nfwm.org



The National Farm Worker Ministry supports farm workers who are organizing for equality and justice.

We educate people of faith and their institutions about the conditions facing farm workers in this country, and activate them to stand with farm workers in their struggle for justice.

Contact NFWM for action updates, boycott news and a shopping guide for Union Label Food Products.

For additional worship resources go to
<www.nfwm.org>.

PRAYERS & TEXT: Edited by Susan Alan
Excerpts from *Prayer in Preparation for the Journey and Prayer in Time of Illness* from "Oraciones del Peregrino," used by permission of the Catholic Migrant Farmworker Network.
Thank you to all our contributors.

LAYOUT & DESIGN: Gen Cassani, SSND
School Sisters of Notre Dame SHALOM North America, 2007
PHOTO: Shiho Fukada

PRINTING: Printing Department
School Sisters of Notre Dame, Milwaukee

"I pray for the
strength to move forward
and to be able to finish my day."
a farm worker's prayer ---

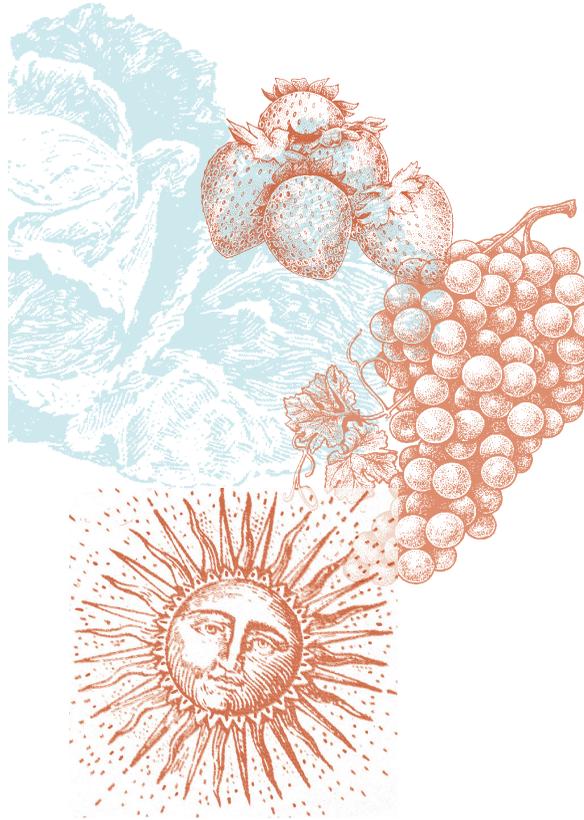


Harvest of Justice

TABLE PRAYERS

When we ask farm workers around the country

**what they pray for
and how they pray
over and over again, we are told**
“ I pray the ‘Our Father’.”



Prayer before starting the work day

As I wake up every morning and in my daily work, I ask you to give me strength to move ahead and end the day and that my family may be well in México. This is the best that I can ask you and you have answered me, thank you God, because everything I ask you I ask in faith. Amen

The prayers here were sent to us by farmworkers from around the country. They reflect a prayer style which addresses God as Father and Lord.

Padre Nuestro

Padre nuestro que estás en el cielo
Santificado sea tu Nombre
Venga tu reino
Hágase tu voluntad
En la tierra como en el cielo.
Danos hoy el pan de este día
y perdona nuestras deudas
como nosotros perdonamos
nuestros deudores
y no nos dejes caer en la tentación
sino que líbranos del malo. Amen.

Prayer in preparation for the journey

Lord God, the time nears when we will leave our home to work in the fields far away. The time flies! We have hardly arrived home, and now we leave again. But we give thanks to you for the time and the gifts you have given us to share with relatives and dear friends of our barrio.

How wonderful it is to feel the security of home, protected from the dangers of the road! But now it is necessary to leave this tranquility, leaving for the fields of work, far from here.

Thank you, Father, for the splendor of a great faith in you. We take joy always in your love, until we arrive at the end of our journey in this world, to the eternal dwelling. Amen.

Prayer for justice in the fields

Abba Father, I thank you for the many blessings you have bestowed upon me. Father, you see all that is happening in this world. You see the injustice that we, the field-workers, go through when people are being penalized for not producing at a certain rate per hour, even when we are working as hard as we can.

Your word, O God, tells me you hear our cries. God, help us to reflect on our lives, that we would not become like the people that cheat us of our pay. Breathe into our hearts a love and passion for you Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Prayer at the border in Altar, Mexico

Heart of Jesus, full of love and mercy, I want you to care for 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 we who see them pass by. Take care of their families until they return home, not with broken hearts but with their hopes fulfilled. Amen.



Prayer in time of illness

Lord, I ask you sincerely today that you be with me because I am ill. How sad to be ill in this strange place because the doctor does not understand me and I do not understand the cause of my pains and suffering. How good it would be at home surrounded by my friends and family.

I know that you will heal me, Father. Strengthen also those who care for me with so much love and tenderness in my illness. Bless all those who are sick and give them hope. May I never forget what you give me, Lord, being with me in difficult times in my journey through this world. Amen.