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Standing with Farm Workers Against Gender Based Violence

Harvest of Justice 2019

Called to the Work of Harvest Hands

To read this litany you will need two individuals (voice one and voice two) and to divide the whole group into two groups (left/right or front/back for side 1 and side 2).

All: This is the advice for “Harvest Hands”.

Voice One: “Jesus called his followers and sent them into the ripe fields. Giving them power to kick out the evil spirits, confront evil systems and to tenderly care for the bruised and hurt lives.”

Side 1: 700,000 farm worker women. 90% say abuse and harassment is a problem. Up to 79% of cases are unreported.

Voice Two: “Go to the lost, confused people right here. Tell them that the kingdom is here. Bring health to the sick. Raise the dead. Touch the untouchables. Kick out the

demons. You have been treated generously, so live generously... You are the equipment, and all you need to keep that going.”

Side 2: Initiatives like the Fair Food Program and the Bandana Project build justice and dignity for farm worker women and men and accountability for the agriculture industry.

Side 1: But there are no jobs when you are not being harassed. They tell a woman if you don't do this...I'm not going to give you work.

Voice One: “Stay alert. This is hazardous work I'm assigning you. Some people will impugn your motives, others will smear your reputation—just because you believe in me.”

Side 1: Sexual harassment isn't individual violence. It is violence that is done in community...there are always observers and stand byers.

Voice Two: “Don't be upset when they haul you before the civil authorities. Without knowing it, they've done you—and me—a favor, given you a platform for preaching the kingdom news!”

Side 2: “...We needed to send a message to the perpetrators. When they tell farmworker women that they are alone, and that no one cares about them, that they are absolutely wrong.”

Voice One: “And don't worry about what you'll say or how you'll say it. The right words will be there; the Spirit of your Father will supply the words.”

Side 1: “It is more difficult for them to violate your rights, if you are surrounded by fellow workers and allies as opposed to being alone. It is a circle of support between all of us.”

Voice One: “Don't be intimidated. Eventually everything is going to be out in the open, and everyone will know how things really are. So don't hesitate to go public now.”

Voice Two: “There's nothing they can do to your soul, your core being. Save your fear for God, who holds your entire life—body and soul—in hand.”

Side 2: “Stand up for God's justice against world opinion and we know that God will stand up for us.”

All: We are intimately linked in this harvest work. Farm worker women and men, farm worker advocates and allies...anyone who accepts what we do, will be able to realize that our faith is the source of our actions or it is our faith that sends us into action. This is a large work we have been called into, but we will not be overwhelmed by it. We know that we can start small. Give a cool cup of water to someone who is thirsty, believe a woman's story, affirm her rights. These smallest acts of giving and receiving can make us true apprentice harvest hands.

Written by Elmira Nazombe 2019

Adapted and inspired by Matthew 10 from The Message (MSG)

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and NFWM's video “Maricela's Story: Standing with Farm Workers Against Gender Based Violence”