

"For I Was Hungry and You Gave Me Food" *Catholic Reflections on Food, Farmers, and Farmworkers**



The Catholic community is discovering with new urgency that our faith calls us to strengthen our presence and witness, our advocacy and action in defense of the human life and dignity of hungry people, farmers and farmworkers, and God's creation.

Our Conference has called all Catholics to work to ensure *A Place At The Table* for all God's children. Agriculture is at the heart of this moral challenge. As we have pointed out:

- A table is where families gather for food, but some have little food or no table at all.
- A table is where leaders gather in government and international negotiations and other forums to make decisions on trade and aid, subsidies and access. But some have no real voice at these tables.
- For Catholics, the table is the altar at which we gather for Eucharist to transform "the fruit of the vine and work of human hands" into the Body and Blood of Christ. It is also the table from which we are sent forth to secure "a place at the table" for all.

We cannot secure a place at the table for all without a more just agricultural system. Some small farmers are losing their place at the table. Some farmworkers never had a place. And so many people in our own land and around the world, seeking to feed their children, have no real place at that table. The moral measure of our efforts is how our community of faith works together to secure a place at the table of life for all God's children.

*"For I Was Hungry and You Gave Me Food" (Mt 25:35), United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Statement approved in November, 2003. To order, call toll-free 1-800-235-8722, <http://www.usccb.org/bishops/agricultural.htm> or <http://www.usccb.org/bishops/agriculturalspanish.htm> Copyright © 2003, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. All rights reserved.

Resources

Ethics of Eating (www.ncrlc.com)

Table Talk (www.ncrlc.com)

Catholics Should Care About What They Eat (US Catholic, March, 2004) (www.ncrlc.com),

A Prayer Service for A Wholesome Food Future, order from NCRLC.

