

Labor Day, 2009: Pray and Advocate for Workers' Rights

Labor Day Litany

Lord, Bless the work of our hands.

For all those who toil and labor:

Lord, Bless the work of their hands.

For those who have lost their jobs, who are unemployed or underemployed, let us pray:

Lord, Bless the work of their hands.

For those who work in hazardous conditions without sufficient protection, let us pray:

Lord, Bless the work of their hands.

For those who face discrimination, harassment, or abuse in the work place, let us pray:

Lord, Bless the work of their hands.

For those who are not paid fair wages or who are denied legally due overtime pay, let us pray:

Lord, Bless the work of their hands.

For migrant agricultural workers and for all who work the land, let us pray:

Lord, Bless the work of their hands.

For all employers that they may seek to provide a just work environment, let us pray:

Lord, Bless the work of their hands.

For those who struggle to balance job commitments with the needs of their family, let us pray:

Lord, Bless the work of their hands.

For all humans who seek to become the co-creators of the promised Kingdom, let us pray:

Lord, Bless the work of our hands.

Loving God, through your Son you gave us an example of how to love one another and how to embody this love in labor to serve the poor and the oppressed. Give us the strength to continue working to bring forth your kingdom here on earth—a kingdom of justice and peace, where all know compassion, grace and mercy. Grant this through Christ, our Lord. *Amen.*

(adapted with permission from an Interfaith Worker Justice resource)

Through the combination of social and economic change, trade union organizations experience greater difficulty in carrying out their task of representing the interests of workers, partly because Governments, for reasons of economic utility, often limit the freedom or the negotiating capacity of labor unions. Hence traditional networks of solidarity have more and more obstacles to overcome. The repeated calls issued within the Church's social doctrine, beginning with Rerum Novarum, for the promotion of workers' associations that can defend their rights must therefore be honored today even more than in the past, as a prompt and farsighted response to the urgent need for new forms of cooperation at the international level, as well as the local level.

- Pope Benedict XVI, *Caritas in Veritate*, #25

LABOR

