



Dignity of Work & the Rights of Workers

Aimee Shelide Mayer



Christ the King Catholic Church
September 20 & 27 @ 10:30am

zoom

The CATHOLIC LABOR
NETWORK

+ Faith-Labor Landscape & Practice +

Opening Prayer: Pope Francis' Prayer for Workers

Lord God lookdown upon us! Look at this city, this island.

Look upon our families.

Lord, you were not without a job, you were a carpenter, you were happy.

Lord, we have no work.

The idols want to rob us of our dignity.

The unjust systems want to rob us of hope.

Lord, do not leave us on our own. Help us to help each other; so that we forget our selfishness a little and feel in our heart the "we",
the we of a people who want to keep on going.

Lord Jesus, you were never out of work,
give us work and teach us to fight for work and bless us all.
In the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

DOMESTIC JUSTICE AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Labor - Employment



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On the Dignity of Work

"Work is fundamental to the dignity of a person. Work, to use an image, 'anoints' us with dignity, fills us with dignity, makes us similar to God, who has worked and still works, who always acts..."

- Pope Francis, Feast of St. Joseph the Worker and World Labor Day, 5/1/13

St. Vincent de Paul Society Statement on Fair Wages (2005)

Dear Brother and Sister Vincentians,

During his lifelong commitment of service and advocacy for the poor, Frederic Ozanam was concerned about the core problems of **poverty, unemployment** **And insufficient wages for the poor.**

Before anyone in the Church, Frederic Ozanam proposed the concept of a just wage as an instrument to combat poverty. He said, **“The working man (and woman), is by nature entitled at a minimum to a wage sufficient to produce the necessities of life, the education of children, and the support of old age.”**

We, the members of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul must follow Blessed Frederic Ozanam. **We must advocate for fair wages. It is a matter of justice. We Vincentians are well known for our charity. Blessed Frederic calls us to charity and justice.** He said, “Charity is the Samaritan who pours oil on the wounds of the traveler who has been attacked. It is justice’s role to prevent the attacks.” We Vincentians can do no less! May God bless our efforts.

Sincerely Your Brother in Blessed Frederic,

Eugene B. Smith, National President, Council of the United States



Think of one person you know that this
economy has killed

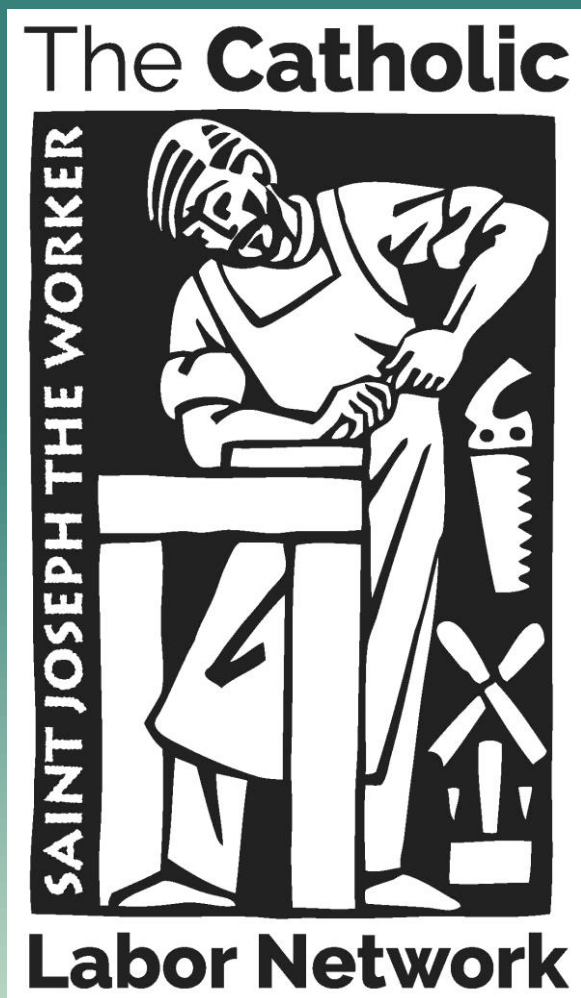
The Catholic



Labor Network

Visit catholiclabor.org to sign up!

The Catholic Labor Network





CLN vice president Adrienne Alexander from AFSCME 31
(the union involved in the Janus case).

Defending the Rights of Workers

—Catholic Labor Network (CLN)

BY BETH GRIFFIN

The Catholic Church has a rich tradition of defending the rights of workers. In 1891, Pope Leo XIII wrote *Rerum Novarum*, his groundbreaking encyclical on the rights and duties of capital and labor—the foundational text of modern Catholic social teaching. *Rerum Novarum* describes the relationships and mutual responsibilities between employers and employees and supports laborers' right to form unions.

“
As a Church, we
have something
to say. We've been
talking about the
world of workers
for 125 years.
Their work is not a
commodity.
”

There is a great deal of overlap between union life and what we believe as Catholics,” says Clayton Sinyal, executive director of the Catholic Labor Network (CLN). “Both groups support workers’ rights, organizing, a living wage, and the protection of immigrants.”

The Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD) gave CLN a Strategic National Grant to promote the cause of workers and Catholic social teaching throughout labor unions, parishes, and other organizations.

CCHD established the Strategic National Grant program as a response to timely opportunities relevant to the priorities of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). The program focuses on strategies to fight the root causes of

poverty and reflects the CCHD foundations of Catholic social teaching, including participation and nonpartisanship.

Clayton says the relationship between the Church and workers was particularly strong during the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s, when both institutions were most influential. He explains that the National Catholic Welfare Council, a forerunner of the USCCB, urged Catholics to support legislation that established the right to organize, a minimum wage, and the Social Security Administration. In addition, the Church developed a network of labor schools that offered night classes in Catholic social teaching and labor leadership.

Continued on page 3

National Initiatives

1. Priest-Labor Initiative
2. Gaudium et Spes (Catholic Employer) Report
3. Shared Values Research Project



1. Offer Education & Prayer Resources to the Community
2. Support low-income workers who are exploited
3. Promote Apprenticeship Readiness Program (MC3)

Union Decline: Four Causes

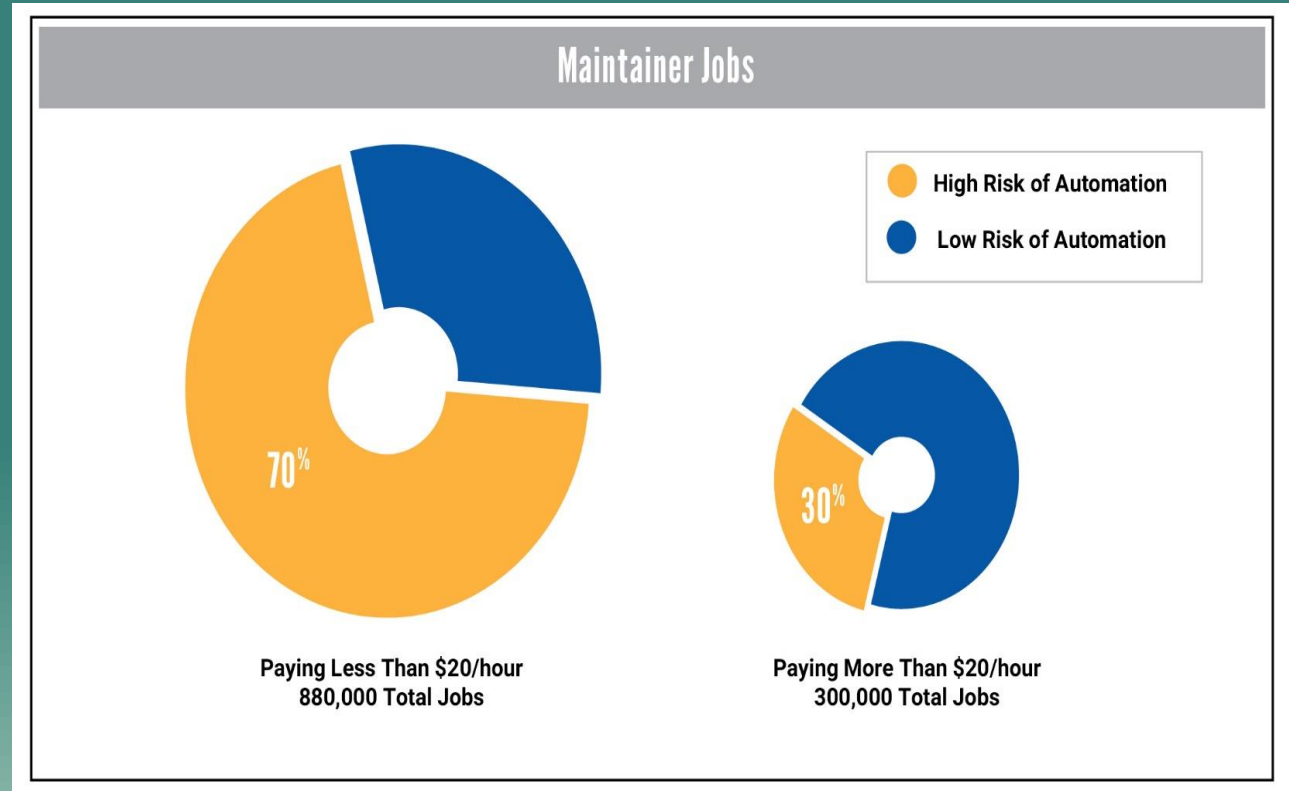


1. Globalization
2. Automation
3. Union-busting
4. Right to Work Laws

From United Way: The Changing Landscape of Work

Trends in work:

- Risk of automation
- Growth of gig economy
- Low-wage jobs growing
- Working students



What is “Right to Work”?



3 Myths about Labor Unions

1. Unions are for the working class only
2. Workers can be forced to join unions
3. Unions help



Organized Labor is (still) a Catholic cause

Primary Union Campaigns:

1. Wages
2. Safety
3. Benefits

Alignment with Catholic values:

- Address dangerous working conditions
- Eradicate sexual harassment
- Anti-Racism
- Living Wage
- Eliminating Wage Theft
- Paid Sick Leave
- Sufficient Hours





Name That Union!



CLN + Nashville Construction Landscape



Nashville Building

Trades:

- Boilermakers
- Bricklayers
- Carpenters
- Cement Masons
- Electricians
- Elevator Constructors
- Heat & Frost Insulators/Asbestos
- Ironworkers
- Laborers
- Millwrights
- Operating Engineers
- Painters & Glaziers
- Plumbers & Pipefitters
- Sprinkler Fitters
- Sheet Metal Workers
- Teamsters
- "Helmets to Hardhats"*

MUSIC CITY CONSTRUCTION CAREERS

NEXT CLASS:
11/9-11/20



*Learn about this life-changing opportunity
to prepare to enter a Union apprenticeship
program in the construction trades!*

ONLINE INFORMATION SESSIONS:

Wed, Oct 14 & Thurs, Oct 15
5:30-7:00 p.m.

SESSION LINKS & MORE INFO AT:
musiccitymc3.org  **@MusicCityMC3**

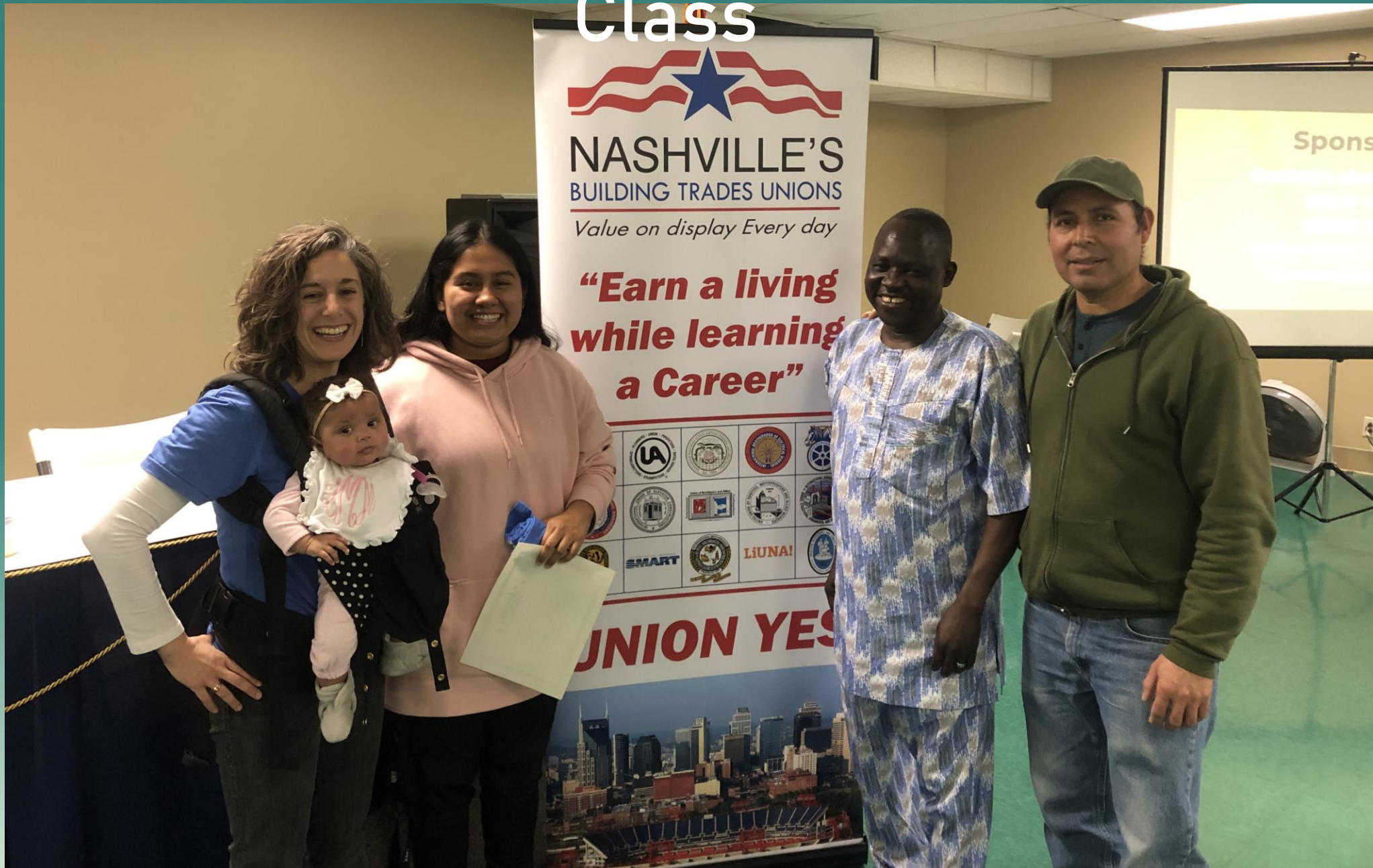




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Catholic MC3 Graduates from 2nd Class





Systemic Change: Pathway to a Stable Career!



CLN Partners in Nashville

VANDERBILT  Divinity School

Wendland-Cook Program
in Religion and Justice



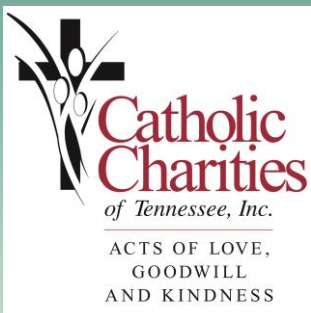
Central
Labor
Council



Tennessee Catholic
Public Policy Commission



A VOICE
FOR THE REDUCTION
OF POVERTY



* Discussion *

- How has the changing landscape of work affected you or your family and friends?
- Where have you seen the dignity of work or the rights of workers violated or protected—both in your own community and around the world?
- How can our personal choices (e.g. where/how we shop or eat) impact whether others' rights are violated or protected?



+ Faith-Labor Practice +

Moving from Faith to Action

1. Educate



2. Advocate



3. Act



Educate



Introduction to ALICE in TN 2020

ALICE: Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed.



ALICE Household Survival Budget, Davidson County, Tennessee, 2018

	Single Adult	Two Adults	Two Adults Two School-Age Children	Two Adults, Two in Child Care	Single Senior	Two Seniors
Housing	\$1,208	\$1,348	\$1,656	\$1,656	\$1,208	\$1,348
Child Care	\$0	\$0	\$344	\$1,063	\$0	\$0
Food	\$287	\$596	\$996	\$870	\$245	\$508
Transportation	\$332	\$504	\$801	\$801	\$286	\$412
Health Care	\$193	\$517	\$760	\$760	\$501	\$1,003
Technology	\$55	\$75	\$75	\$75	\$55	\$75
Miscellaneous	\$263	\$383	\$558	\$639	\$287	\$415
Taxes	\$557	\$791	\$950	\$1,160	\$573	\$799
Monthly Total	\$2,895	\$4,214	\$6,140	\$7,024	\$3,155	\$4,560
Annual Total	\$34,740	\$50,568	\$73,680	\$84,288	\$37,860	\$54,720
Hourly Wage	\$17.37	\$25.28	\$36.84	\$42.14	\$18.93	\$27.36

<https://www.unitedforalice.org/household-budgets/tennessee>



ALICE Household Stability Budget, Davidson County, Tennessee, 2018

	Single Adult	Two Adults	Two Adults Two School-Age Children	Two Adults, Two in Child Care
Housing	\$1,685	\$2,070	\$1,304	\$1,304
Child Care	\$0	\$0	\$625	\$1,667
Food	\$575	\$1,167	\$2,076	\$1,811
Transportation	\$812	\$1,010	\$1,331	\$1,331
Health Care	\$165	\$431	\$651	\$651
Technology	\$125	\$145	\$145	\$145
Miscellaneous	\$455	\$633	\$794	\$920
Savings	\$455	\$633	\$794	\$920
Taxes	\$1,192	\$1,508	\$1,806	\$2,291
Monthly Total	\$5,464	\$7,597	\$9,526	\$11,040
Annual Total	\$65,568	\$91,164	\$114,312	\$132,480
Hourly Wage	\$32.78	\$45.58	\$57.16	\$66.24

<https://www.unitedforalice.org/household-budgets/tennessee>

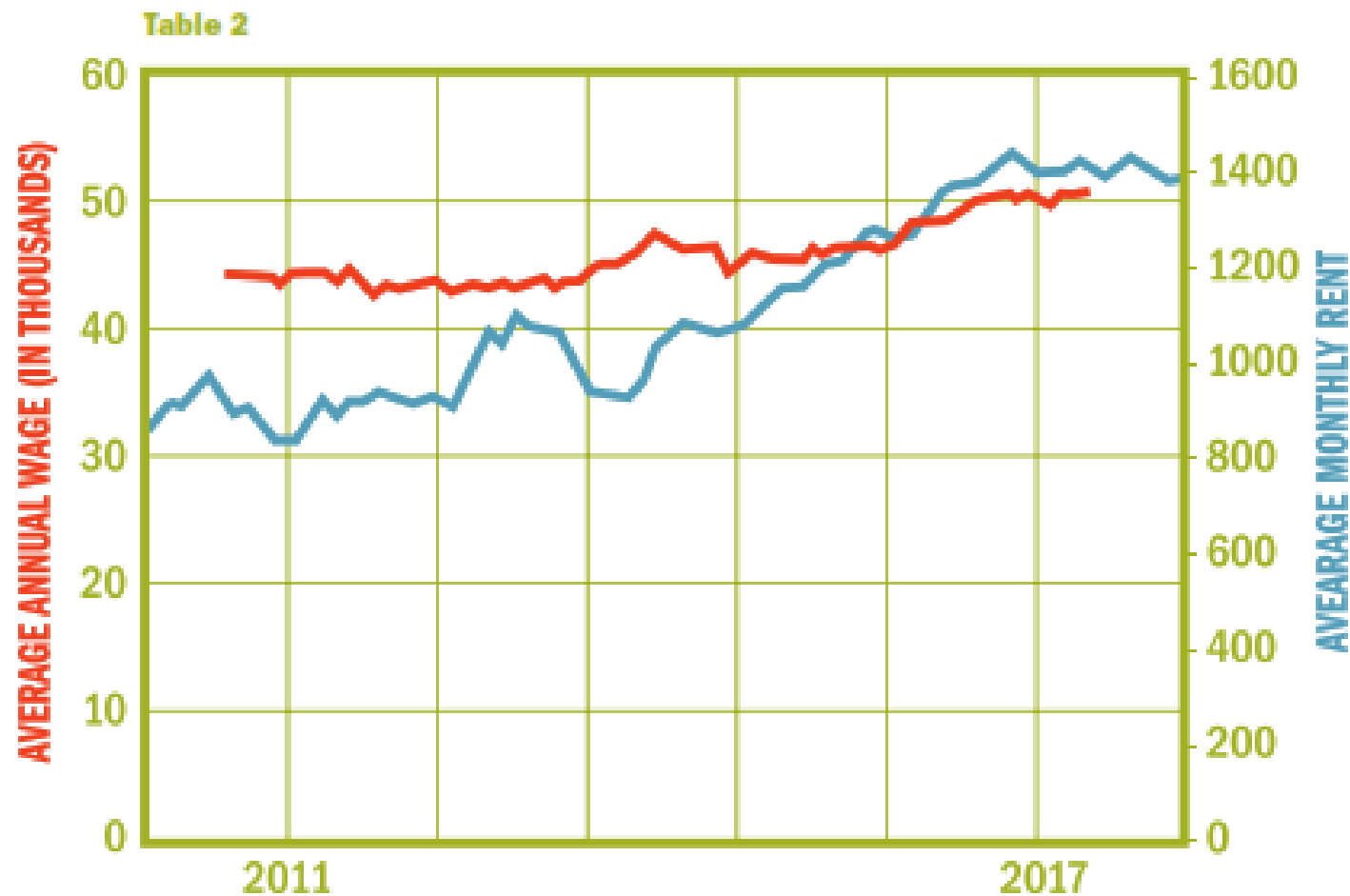


About 35% of all jobs in the Nashville region are
in sectors where the median wage is less than
\$15 per hour

Table 1

Job Classification	Jobs 2010	Jobs 2016	% Increase	Median Hourly Wage (2016)
Security guards	5,620	8,100	44.1	\$11.98
Combined food prep & serving workers	15,690	22,400	42.8	\$9.02
Waiters & waitresses	14,220	17,180	20.8	\$8.78
Janitors, cleaners (except maids and household cleaners)	4,820	7,660	58.9	\$10.53
Personal care aides	2,690	4,400	63.6	\$8.98
Cashiers	15,840	18,630	17.6	\$9.23
Retail salesperson	24,170	28,970	19.8	\$10.87
Customer service representative	17,280	22,450	29.9	\$15.11
Hotel, motel & resort desk clerks	1,250	1,670	33.6	\$10.28
Stock clerks & order fillers	12,960	16,220	25.2	\$11.67
Taxi drivers & chauffeurs	600	810	35.0	\$11.74
TOTAL	115,140	148,490	29.0	

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics, Nashville MSA 2010, 2016.



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Average Annual Wage Nashville MSA monthly data; Monthly rent data aggregated by Rent Jungle (<https://www.rentjungle.com/average-rent-in-nashville-rent-trends/>)

Since 2011, rents have risen roughly 64% while average annual wages have grown by only 14%.

Discussions, Lectures, Movies,
Podcasts, oh my!



The Labor Café *First Fridays*

Where the Notre Dame community convenes for casual yet critical conversation on contemporary issues related to work, opportunity, and social justice.

***Farm and Food Workers
during the Pandemic***

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 2, 5:00–6:00 PM

Visit our calendar at socialconcerns.nd.edu for the Zoom link



CENTER FOR
SOCIAL
CONCERNS



HIGGINS
LABOR PROGRAM

<https://socialconcerns.nd.edu/higgins>

Advocate: The Minimum Wage

The erosion of the minimum wage

In inflation-adjusted terms (2018 dollars), the minimum wage peaked in 1968



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

The Washington Post

WHO'S HELPED BY RAISING THE MINIMUM WAGE?

WHAT PEOPLE THINK

Teenager

Works part time
after school

Lives with parents

Earning extra
spending money



THE REALITY

Average age:
35 years old

88% are not teens.
They're 20 or older

36% are
40 or older

56% are
women

28% have children

55% work
full time

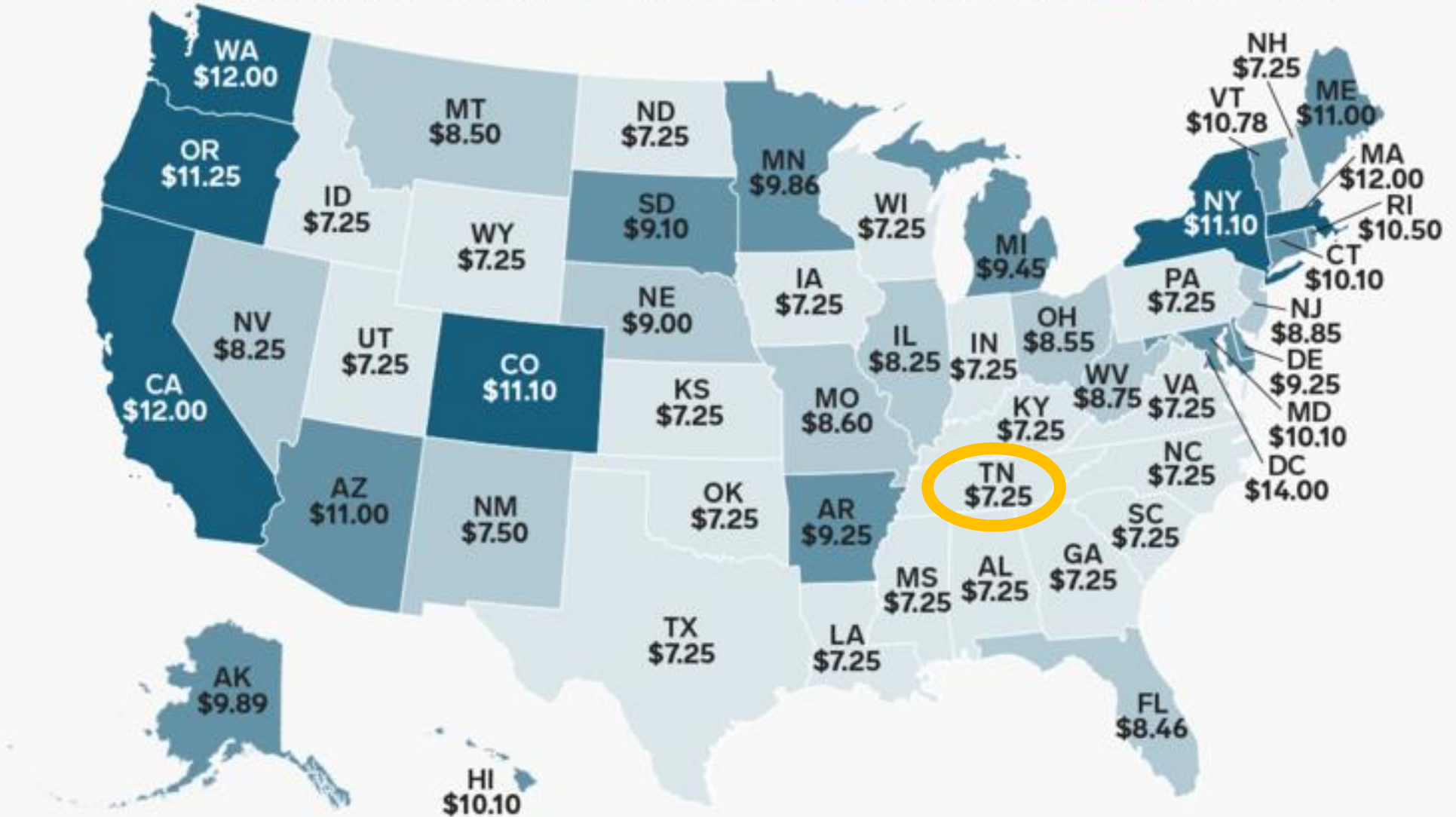
On average, they
earn half of their
family's total income



Note: Statistics describe civilian workers, ages 16+, that would be affected by an increase in the federal minimum wage to \$10.10 over three years, as explained in *Raising the federal minimum wage to \$10.10 would give working families, and the overall economy, a much-needed boost*. The median age of affected workers is 31 years old. Visit epi.org/issues/minimum-wage for more details.

2019 minimum wage

\$7.25 (Federal minimum) \$7.50–9.00 \$9.10–11.00 \$11.10–14.00





Advocate



Department of Justice, Peace, and Human Development
Office of Domestic Social Development

Just Wage and the Federal Minimum Wage February 2014

"A Just wage is the legitimate fruit of work. To refuse or withhold it can be a grave injustice. In determining fair pay both the needs and the contributions of each person must be taken into account. 'Remuneration for work should guarantee man the opportunity to provide a dignified livelihood for himself and his family on the material, social, cultural, and spiritual level, taking into account the role and the productivity of each, the state of the business, and the common good.' Agreement between the parties is not sufficient to justify morally the amount to be received in wages."

-Catechism of the Catholic Church, No. 2434

ISSUE

The federal minimum wage is currently \$7.25/hour, meaning a full-time worker earns \$15,080 over the course of a year. According to the [Census Bureau](#), the poverty level for a single parent raising one child is \$15,825, and for a couple with one child is \$18,480, meaning the current federal minimum wage fails to meet the most fundamental of Catholic criteria for just wages: it does not promote family stability.

The federal minimum wage is static, meaning that it does not raise annually to adjust for inflation or cost of living increases. As a result, workers at the low end of the wage scale fall further behind every year. The federal minimum wage has lost more than 30% of its value and would be more than \$10/hour today if it had merely kept pace with the cost of living over the past forty years. If it had kept pace with worker productivity growth over the same period, it would be over \$18/hour. Low-wage workers are doing and making more with the same amount of time, working harder, but not enjoying the fruits of their labor.

According to [recent research](#), raising the federal minimum wage to a level consistent with current proposals would have a substantial benefit for 30 million low-wage workers, who would make about \$51 billion more. Numerous studies suggest it would [lower overall poverty](#) by varying degrees, but it would certainly have an effect on the economic security of those families.

An increase in the minimum wage would substantially benefit children and families:

- One-quarter of all workers who stand to benefit from a proposed federal minimum wage increase are parents, raising 14 million children.
- Over one-third of them are married, and close to 90 percent of them are older than 20 years old. Contrary to some assertions, only a small percentage of affected workers would be teenagers.
- Forty percent of minimum wage workers are the sole breadwinner of their family.

The Prevalence of Low-Wage Work

An increase in the federal minimum wage is of vital importance to our economy because job growth at the lower end of the wage scale has been so substantial.

According to the [Social Security Administration](#), half of all jobs in this country pay \$27,500 or less. This is the lowest level in 15 years. The job loss during the most recent recession was distributed across the economy and

income levels. Since the recession, however, 58% of new jobs have been in low-wage occupations like cashiers and food preparation where the minimum wage sets many pay scales.

There are [over 10 million workers](#) classified as “working poor.” The ranks of the working poor are growing, representing over seven percent of the total workforce--the largest percentage of the workforce in over 20 years.

The federal minimum wage needs to be raised, not just for the financial security of the worker but also for their dignity and health of their families.

USCCB POSITION

Work has a special place in Catholic teaching. Work is more than just a job; it is a reflection of our human dignity and a way to contribute to the common good. Blessed John Paul II called work “probably the essential key to the whole social question” (*Laborem Exercens*, No. 15). Wages earned from work are the primary way people meet their material needs and contribute to the common good.

The family is the fundamental cell of society and where we first learn, love, and develop. A living wage is a fundamental right of workers and a moral imperative of employers because it provides workers with the means and resources to form and support a family. The *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* points out, “In order to protect this relationship between family and work, an element that must be appreciated and safeguarded is that of a family wage, a wage sufficient to maintain a family and allow it to live decently. Such a wage must also allow for savings that will permit the acquisition of property as a guarantee of freedom. The right to property is closely connected with the existence of families, which protect themselves from need thanks also to savings and to the building up of family property” (No. 250).

Catholic Bishops in the United States have long supported increases in the federal minimum wage to ensure that no full time worker and their family lived in poverty. The federal minimum wage is not a living wage, and it is not a silver bullet to solve all economic problems, but it is one way to ensure workers are compensated fairly.

Last year, Bishop Stephen Blaire of Stockton, CA testified to the Senate Committee on Health, Employment, Labor, and Pensions regarding Catholic teaching on wages and the Church’s longstanding support for raising the federal minimum wage, saying, “For the Catholic bishops of the United States, advocating a just minimum wage is foundational. Every time Congress or an Administration has suggested raising the minimum wage, the bishops have been supportive simply because it is consistent with our teaching and we see the effects firsthand in the families of our parishioners and our own communities.”

Earlier this year, Archbishop Thomas Wenski and Fr. Larry Snyder, President of Catholic Charities USA, told the US Senate that “Just wages allow us to develop more fully as individuals, families, neighborhoods, communities, parishes, and even society as a whole. The current federal minimum wage falls short of this standard for its failure to provide sufficient resources for individuals to form and support families.”

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

USCCB Labor and Employment Page: <http://bit.ly/1b4LIH7>

Letter of Archbishop Thomas Wenski and Father Larry Snyder to the US Senate regarding the federal minimum wage: <http://bit.ly/1bSfmZV>

Testimony of Bishop Stephen E. Blaire on the Catholic tradition on just wages: <http://bit.ly/1cnRvFl>

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Tom Mulloy, Office of Domestic Social Development: (202) 541-3445, mulloy@usccb.org

3211 Fourth St., NE. Washington, DC 20017. Tel: (202)541-3160 Fax: (202)541-3339

#csmg2014

DO YOU FEEL UNSAFE OR TREATED UNFAIRLY AT WORK?

Know Your Rights to Organize

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO:



Talk to your coworkers
about your concerns



Circulate a petition or
sign-on letter asking for
changes in the workplace



Organize a union



Distribute information about
organizing during non-work times
in non-work locations, like the
break room or parking lot



Wear a union button or sticker



Ask for a meeting with
your boss as a group
(you and your coworkers)

THESE RIGHTS ARE GUARANTEED BY:

the National Labor Relations Act Sections 7 & 8 of 1935
and the Labor Management Relations Act of 1974

IF YOU WANT TO LEARN MORE
ABOUT ORGANIZING, CALL THE
CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL AT
615-490-0453.



nashvilleclc.org
facebook.com/nashvilleclc
twitter and insta: @nashvilleclc

DO YOU FEEL UNSAFE OR TREATED UNFAIRLY AT WORK?

Know Your Rights to Organize

YOUR BOSS CANNOT:



Threaten you for organizing



Retaliate against you for
organizing



Fire you for organizing



Force you into one-on-one or
group meetings to dissuade
you from organizing



Cut your hours for organizing



Spy on you for organizing

THESE RIGHTS ARE GUARANTEED BY:

the National Labor Relations Act Sections 7 & 8 of 1935
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IF YOU WANT TO LEARN MORE
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Act



Wage Gap Is Much Bigger Than We Think

The general public has no idea how large the wage gap has become. We estimate the wage gap to be 36-to-1—lower even than it was more than 40 years ago—while we want it to be about 7-to-1.

The Public Doesn't Understand the Magnitude of the Wage Gap



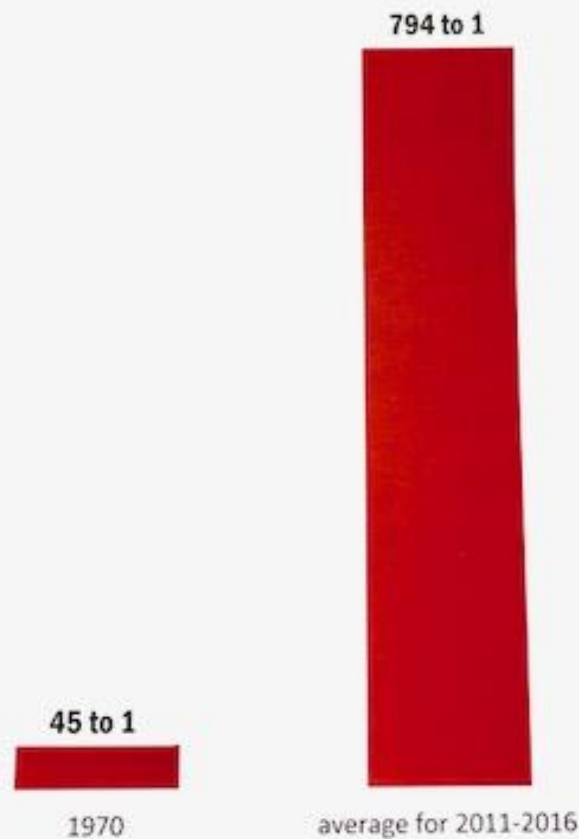
Source: Opinion data from International Social Survey Programme: Social Inequality IV-ISSP 2009, zacas.gesis.org, author's calculations based on data for 2013 from Equilar CEO compensation survey reported on in *New York Times*, June 8, 2014; average wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, www.bls.gov/data/hwages

The Wage Gap Has Skyrocketed

The wage gap has skyrocketed since 1970, when a top CEO earned 45 times what an average worker made, until now, when a top CEO makes 794 times an average worker!

Wage Gap Over Time: Top 100 CEOs versus Average* Workers

1970 compared with 2010-2016 average



*Average production or nonsupervisory worker, based on weekly wages, multiplied by 52 weeks.

How Can Catholics Respond?

(Labor Day Primer)

- Family Wages + Dignity-Affirming B
- Support local CCHD-funded groups addressing Economic Equity
- Celebrate CCHD's 50th Anniversary
- Join Nashville Living Wage
- Parish & Community Efforts
- Join the Catholic Labor Network



Nashville
LIVING WAGE
• ESTD 2020 •

The CATHOLIC LABOR
NETWORK

Closing Prayer Intentions

We pray for a renewal of spirit for the men and women who must work in jobs that ignore the dignity of their personhood. We pray to the Lord.

We pray for all essential workers who work in the agricultural, manufacturing, and public service sectors. That they are provided safe working conditions and access to affordable healthcare. We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the men and women who have recently lost employment. We pray for their continued perseverance and determination as they continue to seek ways in which to participate in God's creative work. We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the men and women who own companies, who lead companies, and who make decisions regarding safe work conditions and adequate wages. We pray that these leaders will act in the best interests of their laborers. We pray to the Lord.

Closing Prayer Intentions, *continued*

We pray for union leaders, national and local, who are responsible for speaking for workers. May they be guided by the grace and wisdom of the Holy Spirit to be servant leaders. We pray to the Lord.

We pray for men, women, and children who experience a lack of solidarity and support in their daily struggle to survive. May we be aware of our responsibility to listen to the needs of our brothers and sisters in the world. We pray to the Lord.

We pray that as we are reminded that it is right and just to receive a fair wage for work, we may strive to promote dignity and respect for all in the workplace. We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those who have lost their lives while working, and especially those who died from COVID-19, that they might be welcomed into the heavenly kingdom; and for their families, that they might be comforted and find security. We pray to the Lord.

... Amen.

Closing Prayer: Prayer of the Farm Workers' Struggle

Show me the suffering of the most
miserable;
So I will know my people's plight.

workers.

Bring forth song and celebration;
So that the spirit will be alive among
us.

Free me to pray for others;
For you are present in every person.

Let the spirit flourish and grow;
So we will never tire of the struggle.

Help me to take responsibility for my
own life;
So that I can be free at last.

Let us remember those who have
died for justice;
For they have given us life.

Grant me courage to serve others;
For in service there is true life.

Help us love even those who hate us;
So we can change the world.

Give me honesty and patience;
So that I can work with other

*Written by Cesar E. Chavez, UFW Founder
(1927-1993)*

Thank you!
Questions or Comments?



Dignity of Work & the Rights of Workers

Aimee Shelide Mayer



Christ the King Catholic Church
September 20 & 27 @ 10:30am

zoom

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