

**Excerpts from Religious Leaders Statements on the
Coalition of Immokalee Workers' Campaign for Fair Food**

Bishop William Murphy (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops)

"The Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops welcomes and applauds the impressive agreement reached between the Coalition of Immokalee Workers and the Burger King Corporation... This important agreement has been made possible first and foremost by the persistent work of the CIW in defending the lives, dignity and rights of farm workers... The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops hopes this remarkable agreement will lead to additional steps toward fair and just treatment for farm workers."



The Rev. Gradye Parsons (Stated Clerk, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.))

"The CIW's innovative and substantial agreements with Yum! Brands, McDonald's, Burger King, Whole Foods Market, and now Subway are transforming the very structure of the industry, by leveraging the enormous purchasing power of these companies to advance human rights for farmworkers. The significance of these agreements is that they not only promise a significant wage increase for farmworkers but that they also guarantee the full-participation of farmworkers in creating and upholding a more just food system. Will the rest of the restaurant and grocery industry now step forward to become part of this momentous advance for human rights? The answer is not only up to the companies but to those of us who are conscious consumers as well."



The Rev. Linda Jaramillo (Executive Minister, Justice & Witness Ministries, United Church of Christ)

"The United Church of Christ has a long history of working for social and economic justice. We have a special interest in farm workers, people with whom Jesus would have particularly identified himself. He would have classified them among "the least" of God's children when viewed through the lens of social and economic privilege. But as beloved children of God, farm workers are entitled to an equitable portion of the abundance God gives this world."



Bishop Timothy Whitaker (Bishop of the Florida Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church)

"I do not need to tell you what a difference this additional income and rights make in the lives of these hardworking persons who offer the most basic service of our society, which is providing us with food to eat... I am very impressed with the work of CIW and Interfaith Action. Along with other Christian communions, our Church does all we can to support these fine organizations that are doing work in the world."



The Rt. Rev. Leo Frade (Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Southeast Florida)

"The Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW) has established a working model for corporate social responsibility that advances and ensures the human rights of farmworkers in the corporate supply chain ... Like Episcopalians around the country, [we] are standing with the CIW in the growing movement for fair food and corporate social responsibility, and will continue to do so until justice and dignity are won."



Robert Keithan (Director of the Unitarian Universalist Association's Washington Office on Advocacy)

"The Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations has a long-standing commitment to supporting the health and well-being of farm workers. While progress has been made... we know that many farm workers in the U.S. still face harsh and often unsafe working conditions for unlivable wages and no benefits. These conditions are not in line with the ethical values we believe should be upheld by major American corporations."



The Rev. Michael Livingston (Executive Director, International Council of Community Churches)

"This agreement represents a tremendous step forward in the struggle for dignity and justice for farmworkers and the transformation of the agricultural industry toward greater respect for human rights. Though an incredible victory, our celebration should be tempered by the truth that we still have far to go to extend these just gains for farmworkers to other companies and to create a truly just food system. Yes, we mean you... companies who continue to offer explanations, rationales, and excuses for business practices and policies that do not meet the standard of a basic tenant of Christianity--treat your neighbor as yourself. "



Interfaith Action



For more information, visit www.interfaithact.org or contact us at:
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