

For Our Rural Communities

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CALL TO PRAYER

LEADER: From the mid-19th century, Catholic health care has been a vital presence in America's rural communities, lovingly caring for women, men and children at every stage of life, binding up their wounds, healing their infirmities, comforting them in their sorrow. Because Catholic health care is a community of persons, it recognizes the sanctity of life of each individual, as well as the treasure that rural communities are to our American way of life. As we gather today in this land of plenty, let us pray for our sisters and brothers living and working in rural America.

RESPONSE *From Psalm 37 NIV®*

Recite alternately:

Trust in the Lord and do good;
dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture.

Delight yourself in the Lord
and the Lord will give you the desires of your heart.

Commit your way to the Lord;
trust in him and he will do this:

He will make your righteousness shine like the dawn,
the justice of your cause like the noonday sun.

Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him . . .
. . . the meek will inherit the land
and enjoy great peace.

Those the Lord blesses will inherit the land,
but those he curses will be cut off.

For the Lord loves the just
and will not forsake his faithful ones.
They will be protected forever . . .

The righteous will inherit the land
and dwell in it forever.



PRAYERS OF PETITION

LEADER: That we in Catholic health care may learn from our rural sisters and brothers that we are a community called to care for one another, let us pray to the Lord.
ALL: *Gracious God, hear our prayer.*

LEADER: For the rural sick, that they may receive the excellent tending that Catholic health care endeavors to give to all persons, let us pray to the Lord.
ALL: *Gracious God, hear our prayer.*

LEADER: For migrant workers who toil in the fields throughout our country, that they may receive the justice that is their due as children of our loving God and co-laborers with each of us, let us pray to the Lord.
ALL: *Gracious God, hear our prayer.*

LEADER: That we in Catholic health care may show our respect for the earth through responsible use of our resources and respectful practices that diminish our carbon footprints upon the land, let us pray to the Lord.
ALL: *Gracious God, hear our prayer.*

LEADER: That we in Catholic health care may learn from our rural sisters and brothers that all that we have is a gift from our beneficent God, let us pray to the Lord.
ALL: *Gracious God, hear our prayer.*

CLOSING PRAYER

LEADER: Lord God, deepen within each of us the realization that we are sisters and brothers, your loving daughters and sons. Help us to understand our interdependence with all persons, but especially with those living in rural communities. Teach us to value the gifts that they give us and to learn from their lifestyle that we, too, depend upon the earth and upon you as our loving Creator. Bless them; bless the land you have given us. We ask this through Christ, our Lord.
ALL: *Amen.*

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