

## The Arc of the Moral Universe is Long But It Bends Toward Justice

Good news from Albany..... but the struggle continues



### Justice for Farmworkers:

Cesar Chavez, who organized farmworkers to stand up for themselves many decades ago, has been quoted as predicting that America would put a man on the moon before farmworkers would be given their rights. This month marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first moon landing.

It took half a century, but finally, here in New York State, legislation has been passed granting farmworkers basic labor rights! **We helped to make this happen!**

This winter, for Public Policy Weekend, over 10,300 signatures were collected around the diocese in support of the Farmworkers Fair Labor Practice Act. In June, our state legislature passed a bill which granted farmworkers the **right to form a union and bargain collectively** and to receive **one optional day of rest per week**. If they choose to work on their day off they are entitled to overtime or 1.5 times their regular wage rate.

The bill also makes farmworker eligible for unemployment insurance and workers compensation benefits.

We had been advocating for farmworkers to get paid overtime as well; the final bill establishes overtime for farmworkers after **60 hours of work** per week. This is still not equal with other workers, who are eligible for overtime after 40 hours per week, but it is a step forward towards justice.

Thank you for standing with the people whose labor feed us!

### Surrogate Parenting:

“This involves the creation of human embryos in a laboratory through in vitro fertilization (IVF), using egg and sperm that may or may not be from the intended parents, which are then transferred to the uterus of a surrogate mother. This woman, who is genetically unrelated to the child, will then bear that child with the intent of relinquishing the child at birth to the “intended” parent or parents, pursuant to a monetary contract.”

*-from the New York Catholic Conference*

The bill that would have made it legal to pay a woman to, in essence, rent out her body in this way, **did not become law!** It passed the New York State Senate but did not pass in the Assembly. Thank you for advocating against this measure that would turn women and babies into commodities.

This issue may return in the coming legislative session, so please be ready to speak out against it again. You can learn more here:

[www.nyscatholicconference.org/?s=surrogate](http://www.nyscatholicconference.org/?s=surrogate)



## Speak Up for our Immigrant Sisters and Brothers Today!



"Public opinion also needs to be correctly formed, not least to prevent unwarranted fears and speculations detrimental to migrants."

Pope Francis

### *“Appalling and Unacceptable”*

*Bishops condemn dire conditions of migrants at border*

Please add your voice to those from the US Conference of Catholic Bishops and Catholic Charities USA in supporting greater funding for Customs and Border Patrol’s migrant care and processing facilities, along with funding for organizations serving hungry and homeless people in the US. The bill contains no funds for a wall on the southern border or additional detention by Immigration and Custom Enforcement.

Sign the petition here:

[www.catholiccharitiesusa.org/advocacy/action-center](http://www.catholiccharitiesusa.org/advocacy/action-center)

**Additional step:** Call Sen. Schumer and Sen. Gillibrand to express your opposition to S. 1494, the “Secure and Protect Act of 2019” that would prolong detention for migrant children and diminish rights for asylum seekers. Learn more at [www.justiceforimmigrants.org](http://www.justiceforimmigrants.org) by reading Bishop Vásquez’s letter. Senate switchboard: **(202) 224-3121**

**Statement** by Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo, President of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, and Bishop Joe S. Vásquez of Austin, Chairman of the USCCB Committee on Migration:

*“We join with our Holy Father Pope Francis in immense sadness, having seen the horrific images of Oscar Martinez and his daughter Angie Valeria who drowned in the Rio Grande Valley while attempting to flee persecution and enter the United States. This image cries to heaven for justice. This image silences politics. Who can look on this picture and not see the results of the failures of all of us to find a humane and just solution to the immigration crisis? Sadly, this picture shows the daily plight of our brothers and sisters. Not only does their cry reach heaven. It reaches us. And it must now reach our federal government.*

*All people, regardless of their country of origin or legal status, are made in the image of God and should be treated with dignity and respect. Recent reports of overcrowded and unsanitary conditions are appalling and unacceptable for any person in U.S. custody, but particularly for children, who are uniquely vulnerable. Such conditions cannot be used as tools of deterrence. We can and must remain a country that provides refuge for children and families fleeing violence, persecution, and acute poverty.*

*Congress has a duty to provide additional funding to address the needs of children in federal custody. Their supplemental appropriations bill should also increase protections for immigrant children, including heightened standards and oversight for border facilities. It is possible and necessary to care for the safety of migrant children and the security of our citizens. By putting aside partisan interests, a nation as great as ours is able to do both.”*

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