

COME CHANGE THE WORLD WITH THE CHURCH ON THE EDGE

LIVING OUR MISSION

The Language of Flowers and the ILRF Fairness in Flowers Campaign

Living Our Mission is celebrated daily by members of Church on the Edge. It is as simple as this prayer from the Sarum Primer of 1514.

Sarum Primer Prayer

*God be in my head, and in my understanding;
God be in my eyes, and in my looking;
God be in my mouth, and in my speaking;
God be in my heart, and in my thinking;
God be at my end, and at my departing.
Amen.*

Living Our Mission allows us to be good stewards of the earth as we conserve our natural resources and to be good servants, living the commandment to love your neighbor as yourself and to welcome the stranger, to do for them as you would for Christ, our Lord and Savior.

It is the opportunity to become educated on how changes in our lives can change the lives of others. Come change the world with the Church on the Edge. Our topic today concerns flowers.

Many of you know that flowers have a 'language'. Through the ages flowers became a way for men and women to communicate. Not only did flowers themselves

have meaning, but their position was crucial too. Wearing a marigold in the hair expressed mental anguish while the same flower pinned to the bosom conveyed indifference. By tradition, roses represent love and good fortune; red roses signify eternal love, white roses for truth, red and white together for unity and so forth. In Tahiti, wearing a flower behind your left ear shows that you are married or engaged.

Yes, Flowers have a language and meaning. But, did you know that flowers tell another story. The story of flowers is one that may contain unfair labor and unsafe working conditions for many of those involved in the production and processing of flowers.

I confess that I recently became aware of the Fairness in Flowers campaign of the International Labor Rights Fund (ILRF) through an email I received from Witness for Peace. As you have heard me say many times, I am so thankful for my participation in the Witness for Peace delegation to Chiapas, Mexico. It was a life-changing educational and personal experience for me. I experienced first hand how we can make changes in our lives that have a positive impact for others.

I would like to thank the ILRF for their assistance in helping with the preparation of this worship bulletin insert. I would like to call your attention to the bulletin and the ILRF action flyer items and how you easily you can incorporate important changes into your flower buying habits. The flyers and insert give you questions

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to ask your florist. Together, we can ensure that the flowers used in the celebrations of our lives do not continue to oppress others.

Jesus tells us to love our neighbors and to take care of the least of us. When we are informed consumers and understand how important it is to purchase items that are produced in safe conditions with fair wages, we are helping our neighbors.

I know that I do not want to continue the oppression of others if I can avoid it. So, look for flowers that will be fair trade certified when you celebrate life's events.

Change the way you make your purchases. Come and Change the World with the Church on the Edge. **Agitate, Activate and Advocate to Change the World for Others.**

Let us pray.

For the Courage to Do Justice¹

O Lord,
Open my eyes that I may see the needs of others;
Open my ears that I may hear their cries;
Open my heart so that they need not be without help (succor);
Let me not be afraid to defend the weak because of the anger of the strong,
Nor afraid to defend the poor because of the anger of the rich.
Show me where love and hope and faith are needed,
And use me to bring them to those places.
And so open my eyes and my ears
That I may this coming day be able to do some work of peace for thee. Amen.

Attachments:

International Labor Rights Fund flower flyer
International Labor Rights Fund action steps
Church on the Edge Flower Bulletin insert

Janet Helene Martin
Transformational Minister-Justice Ministry
March 25, 2007

¹ Shona prayer, Zimbabwe. In: "The Prayers of African Religion", John Mbiti © 1975 SPCK, London, U.K. In the US: Orbis Books, Maryknoll NY, USA, 1975, pp. 148-49.)world council of churches <http://www.oikoumene.org/index.php?id=2757>

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