

"I was a stranger and you welcomed me."

Matthew 25:35



A HANDBOOK FOR MIGRANT FARM WORKER MINISTRY Volunteers



Archdiocese of Vancouver
SERVICE AND JUSTICE OFFICE

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A. Why We Serve the Migrant Farm Workers

Farm workers from Mexico, Guatemala, Philippines, Jamaica, and other countries have traveled to Canada under the federal Seasonal Agricultural Workers Programs since 1966.

The farm workers are predominantly groups made up of men who come to Canada to work from 4 months to up to 2 years. To make the trip they must leave their families behind.

In a Christ-like manner, volunteers of the Migrant Farm Worker Ministry are focused on the farm worker community to ensure pastoral care is provided while they reside and work in the Lower Mainland. The volunteer teams provide opportunities for the celebration of the Eucharist, sacrament of Reconciliation, bible study, prayer groups and other opportunities that can accommodate the farm workers busy schedules.

The Migrant Farm Worker Ministry also provides practical assistance in the form of transportation, food, bicycles, clothing, and other items when needed.

It was recognized that all programs must be sustained through the building of capacity with volunteers at the parish level.

B. Vision/Mission

Vision

Providing pastoral care for all temporary farm workers in our Archdiocese.

Mission

Our missionary mandate is to intentionally create and sustain a parish-based pastoral care program for temporary farm workers shepherded by the Hispanic Ministry Coordinator, who will be supported by a leadership team and volunteers from:

- Lay Scalabrinians
- Representatives from the parishes participating in farm worker ministry
- Pastor/Assistant pastor from the parishes participating in farm worker ministry
- Consultation from the Coordinator of the Office of Service & Justice

C. How to Become a Volunteer

If you have a passion for sharing the love of God and serving others, we invite you to consider joining the Migrant Farm Worker Ministry.

- 1) Contact either your parish priest, or the Migrant Farm Worker Ministry leader from your parish, or a Migrant Farm Worker Ministry volunteer. If your parish does not have a Farm Worker Ministry, please contact farmworkerministry@rcav.org or call 604-254-0691 or 604-852-5602.
- 2) Complete the necessary Safe Environment forms.
- 3) Receive training from the Migrant Farm Worker Ministry leader for your parish.
- 4) Be prepared to visit farms and help with parish activities in support of the farm workers.

D. Volunteer Responsibilities

Farm Visits – Do No Harm

It is important to remember that when we visit the farms, we are entering the private property of the farm owner and the workplace of the migrant farm worker. Consequently, everyone who volunteers to visit the farms should first participate in an Introduction to Migrant Worker Farm Visits meeting with the parish team.

- Farm visits are organized by the coordinator of the parish team.
- On the first visit to a farm, the team presents an official introductory letter from the Coordinator that identifies the team, the parish, our mission to provide spiritual support to the migrant farm workers;
- Each team member must wear an identification badge issued by the Coordinator of the Migrant Farm Worker Ministry with their name and the RCAF logo on it.
- The farm visit team must consist of two or more volunteers [no one visits a farm alone].
- The team leader will introduce the team and handle all communications with the farm owner.
- The team will provide information to the migrant farm workers regarding the local parish and Mass.
- The team will identify the spiritual needs of the farm workers with respect to bibles, rosaries and transportation to Mass.
- The team will find out how many workers are on the farm, so that, when possible, we will prepare welcome kits.
- The team will identify the physical needs of the farm workers with respect to clothing, bedding, heaters, bikes, and dishes.
- The team can assist with communication for any medical needs of the farm workers where a translator may be required. Transportation to a medical lab or doctor's appointment is primarily the responsibility of the farm owner and the consulate.

- The team may not accept any gifts of products that are produced on the farm from a migrant farm worker [if the worker wants to give you a gift ask for a prayer for the team].
- The team may not pick any fruit from a tree or plant from a garden that is the property of the farm owner.
- The team will not take pictures that include the name of the farm or reveal the location of a farm that may result in harming the ability of the migrant farm workers to work in Canada.
- The team will not make a complaint to a farm owner or any outside office, agency or authority including the media that may result in an investigation that harms the ability of the migrant farm workers to continue to work in Canada. If issues of this type arise, please contact the Coordinator of the Farm Worker Ministry farmworkerministry@rcav.org , 604-254-0691 or 604-852-5602

Safe Environment

1. Archdiocesan screening for all volunteers

- All volunteers will be screened in their home parishes by their parish screener. Migrant farm worker ministry leaders from each parish will work through their pastor who will support the process and provide a contact of the screener to complete the screening.
- Any questions contact the Safe Environment Coordinator safeenvironment@rcav.org or (604) 683-0281 ext. 50469

2. Protecting the farm worker – exploitation and vetting of outside guests

Ensure that outside guests have been scrutinized to ensure they will not exploit our farm workers who are under our trust at the fellowship meal/snack after Mass. If you are not familiar with the guest, please ask them to provide you with a business card or other credential. This is important to share with all other leadership team members and can be done so by sending an email to the Farm Worker Ministry Coordinator.

Guidelines for Conduct and Interactions with Migrant Farm Workers

If you are asked a question about immigration issues, your answer is:

We wish to help you with your questions, but we have no legal training with regards to Immigration issues. The best advice that we can give to you is to consult an Immigration Lawyer. There are many legal matters that may affect your ability to work and stay in Canada. An Immigration Lawyer is the best person to give you legal advice on those types of questions.

If you are asked a question about citizenship, your answer is:

We wish to help you with filling out your forms, but we have no legal training with regards to filling out forms for Citizenship Applications. The best advice that we can give to you is to consult an Immigration Lawyer. There are many legal matters that may affect your ability to work and stay in Canada. An Immigration Lawyer is the best person to give you advice on those types of questions.

If you are asked questions about medical insurance or worker's compensation, your answer is:

We wish to help you with filling out your forms, but we have no legal training with regards to filling out forms for medical insurance or workers compensation. The best advice that we can give to you is that all work-related injuries need to be documented by a medical professional. A doctor is the best person to assist you with filling out those types of forms.

If you are asked questions about media request, your answer is:

We wish to help you with your story on migrant farm workers, but we have no authority to grant permission to the media to gain access to their workplace or invite you to shadow our team on a farm visit. If you are interested in interviewing a media spokesperson for the Archdiocese of Vancouver's Office of Service and Justice or the Farm Worker Ministry Program, then we can provide you with the contact person who oversees all media requests for pictures and interviews.

If you are asked questions about visiting a farm, your answer is:

We wish to include you in our next visit with the migrant farm workers but under the Hispanic Ministry's Handbook for Farm Worker Ministry everyone must attend an Introduction to Migrant Worker Farm Visits meeting and receive training prior to visiting a farm. When you have completed the training and have been screened by a safe environment coordinator, you will be invited to attend a farm visit with our team.

E. Team leader at the Parish

- 1) A volunteer team leader will be established by the Parish priest and the Farm Worker Ministry Coordinator
- 2) The team leader will be responsible for obtaining direction for the ministry from their Pastor, especially if there is a need for decision or commitment of parish resources.
- 3) The team leader is responsible for working with their pastor/assistant pastor to ensure they are updated on a regular basis to better support the ministry in their parish.
- 4) The team leader or team will utilize this handbook to ensure the mandate of the migrant farm worker ministry is met and that any policy developed is adhered to.
- 5) The team leader will meet regularly throughout the year with the migrant farm worker ministry leadership team for program consistency, to provide an opportunity for networking, and to work through real issues and concerns as the Ministry grows.
- 6) The team leader should manage the transportation schedule for farm pickup for Masses and other events or assign a coordinator to do this. All drivers must provide a Driver's Abstract and complete the Volunteer Driver Form from the Archdiocese.
- 7) The team leader should coordinate the activities involved preparing for the Migrant Farm Worker Mass, related activities, and after Mass fellowship, or assign a coordinator to do this.
- 8) The team leader should work on developing a budget for the parish-based Migrant Farm Worker Ministry and identify fundraising ideas.

F. How to Start a Migrant Ministry at Your Parish

Information Session

Farm Worker Ministry Formation

The farm worker ministry is parish based and therefore must have full support of the Pastor. Once the decision is made to begin the ministry the first step is to contact the Coordinator of the Farm Worker Ministry.

1. Planning the Information Session

- a) Determine date for information session. Book the room at your parish for the planning meeting and information session.

2. Communication

- a) Create “bulletin” blurb for the parish to publish widely with help from the Coordinators of the Migrant Farm Worker Ministry.
- b) The Coordinators for Farm Worker Ministry will visit the parish on a Sunday and follow-up with announcements after each Mass.
- c) Personally invite and extend the invitation to all your parish ministries (Pastoral Council, CWL, Knights, St Vincent de Paul, Legion of Mary, Young Adult group etc.). We know this is the most effective way to get people to come to the sessions.

3. Gather those interested for planning

- a) Review workshop agenda (*See Appendix B*) and customize as required for your session.

4. Arrange for logistics as needed (projector, screen and other)

- a) Refreshments for guests – coffee and snacks to share.

5. Provide sign-up sheet for interested volunteers

- a) Host follow up meeting with volunteers soon after the information session to keep the momentum going and plan the ministry in your parish.

G. Preparing A Migrant Ministry Mass & Fellowship

1. Liturgy Preparation

- a. Liturgy preparation can be supported by using the Mass Template (Appendix C).
Please ensure you have people to welcome, lecturers, extraordinary ministers, choir.
- b. Lectionary and Sacramentary (Spanish)
The Lectionary and Sacramentary are available in Spanish.
- c. Homily – Spanish, summarized in English for the volunteers who are supporting this ministry
- d. Handouts

2. Volunteer Assignments

a. Transportation (Drivers)

- Identify a coordinator to manage the schedule and which farms to pick up from.
- Identify a list of drivers and ensure they have all provided their driver's abstract and completed the Volunteer Driver Form.
- Keep track of farms and when they expect to be picked up for the Mass\
- Ensure the volunteer drivers are informed as to which farms (provide address) they will need to pick up the farm workers (it is better if you call them the week before or create a schedule so they can keep this date free)
- Ensure the drivers are aware of the time commitment (i.e. sometimes might be later because of the fellowship after Mass)
- Sometimes the farm workers must work on Sundays and finish late. The person who coordinates the rides should provide their contact information so the farm can contact them directly if there are changes to the schedule and if they cannot attend Mass because of a change in work schedule.
- It is always good to have an extra driver handy to drive the farm workers home. Some arrive by bus or even bike. If this continually happens, please ask the farm workers if they can let you know right away that they will want a ride home, so you are prepared.

b. Mass parts (lectors, offertory, choir, ushers)

- Assign volunteers to greet and welcome the farm workers as they arrive.
- Assign one volunteer on the day of the Mass to ask them who would like to do the readings, offertory, and usher. The farm workers carry out these roles.
- Go into the church and practice (you may need one volunteer to work with the lecturers and another to train the ushers)
- Sit the lecturers in the front together and ask your volunteer to sit with them.
- Sit the ushers and those bringing the offertory together and have your volunteer sit with them.
- Try and rotate these positions to give many a chance to participate.
- If there is a chance, some may wish to join the choir.

c. Fellowship after Mass

The most important thing is to spend time with the farm workers. Whether you are preparing only coffee or a full dinner, ensure you are sitting with and sharing time with them.

Some ideas:

- **Coffee and Snacks** – Some parishes choose to have coffee and some snacks only as they begin this ministry. Ask your pastor to write a letter and ask stores if they would be willing to donate their day-old baking.
- **Light dinner** – This can happen by asking your volunteers to prepare goodies and bring them each month to share. Items such as sandwiches and fruit are a great way to share a light dinner. Prepare coffee/pop for them as well.
- **Sit down dinner** – Once you have an established ministry, we find that many ministries will prepare a full sit-down dinner. This works well when you involve different groups such as the CWL and Knights. Remember that your drivers will have to stay on and wait until this is finished so, please ensure they are aware of the time commitment.
- **Leftovers** - If you have leftovers, bring old yogurt/cottage cheese containers, and pack up the extra food to give to the farm workers.
- **Entertainment** – Music in the background, singing or a quick video. This is something you can do if you have the right location. Involve other volunteers who might consider having a monthly plan.
- **Clothing and other items** – You may have items that have been donated and wish to share them and after Mass is a great time for the farm workers to choose if they need any items (coats, jeans, gloves etc.). Please remember that items that do not get taken will need to be stored and to ensure you have volunteers and a location to store them.

H. Budgeting and Fundraising

Purpose of Fundraising

To initiate activities that will generate funds to finance the various expenses that the ministry will have in the care and support to the temporary workers coming to work in the Lower Mainland.

Creating a Budget

It is best to create a budget using historical data if you have it or ask the other leadership team members what they have spent on this ministry. This will help determine how much money you will need to fundraise to meet a program that is appropriately funded. Work with the entire team and then share with your pastor the plan and budget so he is aware of the budget required to carry out this ministry.

Appropriate, realistic, and objective planning is an essential step for success in conducting a fundraising campaign. It is very important to consider the following points:

Fellowship and Practical care

- After Mass – snack, light dinner, sit down dinner
- Welcome packs – in kind donations, purchases
- Buying items of need, obtaining donations etc.

Visiting Farms

- Cost of transportation
- Have you collected donations to create the welcome kits – how much was in kind and how much did you spend to complete the kits?
- Are there other expenses associated with farm visits?

Things to consider when starting a Fundraising campaign

- Do you or anyone on your team have experience in organizing a fundraising campaign?
- When do you think you will start the campaign?
- How much time can you dedicate to fundraising?
- How many people are willing to participate in the fundraising?

Some ideas for Fund Raising Activities

The following are only general ideas of what the Ministry can consider according to your program needs to the type of relationship you have between the ministry and the parish community to which it belongs.

Food sales:

After Mass provide different foods/snacks. The menu can be as extensive and elaborate as you wish (maybe themes each week, Mexican varieties as an example) This activity nets a great profit margin if you keep the cost of food down and sell at a reasonable rate, people will come to enjoy the food and fellowship. (You can consider teaching more about the ministry).

Car Wash: (summer season or dry weather)

Host a car wash at your parish by donation. Wash cars, vacuum, and clean windows if they would like to donate more. Provide a concession stand of snacks, hot dogs, drinks, etc.

50-50 raffle: This activity is easy and effective as the benefit is shared for both the donor and your ministry.

Other Parish groups

It is important to build relationships with the different groups that belong to your parish, such as St Vincent de Paul, Knights of Columbus, CWL, Legion of Mary, as some examples, to participate with you in this ministry. Ask them to help sponsor a dinner, welcome kits, or other in-kind donations. Some groups may offer financial support. Knights of Columbus have been very supportive in helping with rides. Share the handbook with them so they know you have a guide, and each parish has their own plan. Invite them to meetings so they can learn more.

I. Trusted Resources and Onsite Support

1. Umbrella Multicultural Health Co-op <https://umbrellacoop.ca/>
This organization provides onsite medical to the farm workers before and after Mass.
2. Mosaic <https://www.mosaicbc.org/>
Offer a variety of services, i.e. interpretation, translation, counselling, and more.
3. Archway <https://archway.ca/program/migrant-workers/>
Provide legal aid and advocacy.

J. Appendices

Appendix A – Parishes Currently Serving Temporary Farm Workers
Appendix B – Info Session and Agenda Template
Appendix C – Mass Planning Template
Appendix D – Welcome Kit
Appendix E – ID Name Tag (Customize [here](#))

Appendix A: Parishes Currently Serving Seasonal Farm Workers

Parish	Description	Location	Day	Time	Comment
Our Lady of Sorrows	• Mass In Spanish • Reconciliation • Charitable works • Seasonal Farm Worker Ministry • Yearly Christmas Mass and dinner	555 Slocan St Vancouver, BC V5K 2B7			According to Need
Sacred Heart	• Mass in Spanish • Reconciliation • Charitable works • Seasonal Farm Worker Ministry • Rosary • Discovery Program (CCO)	3900 Arthur Dr, Delta, BC V4K 3N2	1 st Saturday Tuesday Wednesday	7:30 pm 7:00 pm Dependent on Schedule of workers	Scalabrinian Priest
Precious Blood	• Mass in Spanish • Seasonal Farm Worker Ministry	17475 59 Ave Surrey, BC V3S 1P3	3 rd Sunday	4:00 pm	Scalabrinian Priest
St. Ann	• Mass in Spanish, Reconciliation • Charitable Works • Seasonal Farm Worker Ministry • Rosary	33333 Mayfair Ave Abbotsford, BC V2S 1P4	2 nd Saturday	7:30 pm	Scalabrinian Priest
St. Joseph	• Mass in Spanish • Reconciliation • Charitable works • Seasonal Farm Worker Ministry	20676 Fraser Hwy, Langley, BC V3A 4G5	2 nd Sunday	5:30 pm	Scalabrinian Priest
St. Luke	• Mass in Spanish • Reconciliation • Charitable works • Seasonal Farm Worker Ministry	20285 Dewdney Trunk Rd, Maple Ridge, BC V2X 3C9	4 th Sunday	3:00 pm	Scalabrinian Priest
St. Mary	• Mass in Spanish • Seasonal Farm Worker Ministry • Reconciliation • Charitable works	8909 Mary St. Chilliwack, BC V2P 4J4	Last Sunday of the month	6:30 pm	Parish Priest

Appendix B: Info Session and Agenda Template

Time	Presenter	Topic
7:00 pm – 7:03 pm	MC Introduces Parish Priest	Parish Priest welcomes everyone [3 min]
7:04 pm – 7:19 pm	MC Introduces Coordinator of Migrant Farm Worker Ministry	Overview of the Migrant Farm Worker Ministry [15 min]
7:20 pm – 7:35 pm	MC Introduces Coordinator of the Migrant Farm Worker Ministry	Spiritual Session [15 min]
7:36 pm – 7:41 pm	MC Introduces Lay Scalabrinian, Our Lady of Sorrows	Practical Session Begins With Fundraising and Donations [5 min]
7:42 pm – 7:47 pm	MC Introduces Lay Scalabrinian, St. Ann	First Aid Kit Supplies and Donations [5 min]
7:48 pm – 7:58 pm	MC: Break for Refreshments	Intermission Break [10 min]
7:59 pm – 8:24 pm	MC Introduces five volunteers in the Migrant Farm Worker Ministry	Shares a story about the Migrant Farm Workers Ministry. [5 min / speaker]
8:25 pm – 8:35 pm	MC: Questions and Answers	[10 min]
8:36 pm – 8:41 pm	MC Introduces La Scalabrinian, Our Lady of Sorrows	The Migrant Farm Worker Ministry – Call to Action [5 min]
8:42 pm – 8:45 pm	MC Re-introduces Parish Priest	Closing prayer and blessings [3 min]

Appendix C: Mass Planning Template

Description	In Charge	Day/Time	Status
PRE MASS PLANNING & DISCUSSION			
Communication – in RCAF events promotion (website, bulletin CWU updates, rcav.org webpage etc)			
Communication at Parish Level and all Invitations Create poster Invite nearby parishes			
Prepare Budget Food Posters Other costs			
Lectionary and Sacramentary (Spanish)			
Name Tags for planning team			
Prayers for the Faithful – prepare the prayers and translate in Spanish			
Choir – invite choir – identify will they sing all mass parts			
Media – identify in house photographer and journalist who will capture the day (inaugural mass)			
Invite BC Catholic – journalist and photographer (inaugural mass)			
Arrange for rides for Migrant Workers			
The Day of Mass			
Reserve pews – Lecturers, offertory,			
Greeters			
Ushers (collection)			
Altar Servers Training for Altar Servers <i>(if required - for Archbishop Mitre and staff)</i>			
Flowers, altar preparations			
Pastors – Greet Archbishop			
Identify commentator – someone who will talk for 2 minutes prior to the mass and welcome, turn off cell phone, remind people of the celebration following and introduce a Migrant worker for a testimonial (1 minute). Must be in Spanish/English.			
Identify farm workers for: Lectors, Psalm, Prayers for the Faithful , Bring up the Offertory Gifts			
Thank you to Archbishop – after communion			
Celebration			
Dinner - set up tables, prepare for meal (hot, cold tbd), Clean up			
Entertainment (optional)			
Mobile Umbrella Clinic will be on site			
Testimony from farm worker after dinner (optional)			

Appendix D: Welcome Kit

- Toothpaste
- Toothbrush
- Deodorant
- Soap
- Shampoo
- Shaving cream
- Razor
- Many workers arrive during the winter (January, February and March)
Therefore, we provide when possible: Socks, Toques, and Gloves

Appendix E: ID Name Tag



To personalize name tags, please use this QR code:

