

## “... GLAD TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY!”

At certain moments life can be so good! One of those occasions is Christmas, when we celebrate the coming to us of Christ. The infant Jesus is God's own child, come to be with us and to show us that the last word over our lives is spoken by God and not by the rulers of this present darkness. (Ephesians 6:12) The truth is that the present is not all that dark, because of Jesus. The child comes to us; the itinerant rabbi walks the whole way with us; the Son of God rules over all of life.

*When we live in his strength, He reigns;  
When we live in our own weakness,  
He reigns.*

*When we serve him, He reigns;  
When we avoid serving him, He reigns.*

*When we are joyful and confident, He reigns;  
When we are in despair, He reigns.*

*When we live for others, He reigns;  
When we live for ourselves, He reigns.*

*The Lord has come!      The Lord is with us!      The Lord reigns!*

### Richard Cook Appointed Executive Director of the NFWM

At its regular December meeting, the National Farm Worker Ministry Board of Directors voted to appoint the Rev. Richard B. Cook, age 37, as Executive Director. Richard succeeds the Rev. Wayne "Chris" Hartmire, who directed the NFWM from its beginning in 1971 until May of this year. Serving for the past six months as Acting Director, Richard was previously in charge of the Mission Department. His assignments with the NFWM have taken him to California, Arizona, Florida and Missouri.

Richard together with his wife Barbara and their three children, Matthew (age 12), Sarah (age 11), Benjamin (age 6) will reside in Salinas, CA. where Barbara is a resident in Family Practice at the Natividad Medical Center. However, Los Angeles will continue to be the chief administrative office for the NFWM.

*"The work of the NFWM is important both to the farm workers' movement and to the churches," says Richard. "I have always felt it an honor to work beside the remarkable people we have on our staff. I will continue to do my best to serve them, our Board and the farm workers, who have accepted us as allies in their justice struggle."*



*The Rev. Richard B. Cook*

*... farm workers, who have accepted us as allies in their justice struggle."*



## SUPPORT FLOC: Boycott Campbells & Libbys

The Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) has completed 4 years of harvest time strikes in Ohio. These strikes are aimed at the tomato growers, who supply the canneries of Campbell Soup Company and Libby, McNeil & Libby. The farmers themselves have no bargaining power with the canneries, so FLOC is seeking recognition from the canneries. FLOC has also called for a boycott of Campbells & Libby products. (Libby is a subsidiary of Nestle.) The boycott will continue until contracts are signed.

Boycott pressure is growing. FLOC staff and support Committees are now located throughout the Midwest and the East. Opposition to the Campbell's "Labels for Education" program has increased dramatically. (For information write Sr. Betty Wolcott, 1016 N. 9th St., Milwaukee, WI 53233). Campbells has responded to the mounting pressure by calling for "good will" while refusing to recognize FLOC or even to agree to representation elections in the tomato fields of Ohio. You can help! Write John T. Dorrance, Chairman of the Board, Campbell Soup Co., Campbell Place, Camden, NJ 08101 and to I. W. Murray, President, Libby, McNeill & Libby Corp., 200 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60604.



The NFWM supports FLOC. In the past, the NFWM has assigned staff to work with FLOC and has given money toward food for FLOC strikers and their families. We have supported FLOC's efforts to organize farm workers and to boycott Campbells and Libbys. Here are the reasons why:

- (1) FLOC's history: For more than 10 years, Baldemar Velasquez and other FLOC leaders have been at work in the tomato fields of the Midwest. They have demonstrated their abilities and their seriousness of purpose. FLOC now has members in Florida and Texas. Through hard work and sacrifice, Baldemar and FLOC have shown their staying power. If they keep at it, they will eventually win.
- (2) FLOC's principles: A commitment to "militant non-violence" is part of FLOC's governing policies. FLOC's day-to-day adherence to the practice of non-violence has been tested time and again and cannot be questioned.
- (3) Relations with organized labor: FLOC works closely with the UFW and with other labor organizations in the Midwest.
- (4) Relations with the churches: FLOC values church support and has been willing to invest much time and effort in gaining and maintaining this support.

For more information about FLOC, write the NFWM or FLOC, 714½ S. St. Clair, Toledo, Ohio, 43609 (Telephone: 419/243-3456).

## Ralston Purina Signs Contract: Boycott Called Off!



On Oct. 27, 1981, negotiators for the UFW and Steak Mate, Inc. (a mushroom plant owned by Ralston Purina) reached an agreement on a one year pact, which ended a 3-month strike and boycott of Ralston Purina products. The agreement guarantees job security and an immediate 22% wage increase to the 275 farm workers, who voted overwhelmingly for UFW representation in September 1980. Thank you to all who responded to the initial boycott appeal. (See NFWM Newsletter, 9/81)

UFW continues to negotiate new contracts at the rate of almost two a month. Ten agreements have been signed since June 1, 1981, adding about 2,000 workers to UFW membership roles. In addition, agreement has been reached in 24 re-negotiations. Active negotiations are underway with 93 growers.



## "WOMEN IN STRUGGLE—MUJERES VALIENTES": Farm Worker Week 1982

*"Look at me! Look at my arm! I have ploughed, and planted, and gathered into barns and no man could head me! And ain't I a woman? I could work as much and eat as much as a man — when I could get it — and bear the lash as well! And ain't I a woman?"*  
—Isabella Baumfree /Sojourner Truth, 1851

Women are counted among the founders of the farm workers' movement. And it is among women and women's organizations in the churches that the strongest and steadiest support for this movement is to be found. Farm Worker Week, 1982 will provide the opportunity for us to celebrate the role of women. The theme for Farm Worker Week (FWW) is "Women in Struggle — Mujeres Valientes." FWW will be celebrated April 26—May 2, 1982. The NFWM will have the following materials available: (1) a FWW poster (by Susan Percy) (2) bulletin inserts (3) worship materials and resources (4) a document outlining the role of women in the farm workers' struggle in America from colonial times to the present (5) interviews and photos of contemporary women in leadership in the movement. For further details write NFWM.

### NEWS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY

The Illinois Farm Worker Service Center was dedicated October 25, 1981 in Onarga. The Serv-Center is jointly sponsored by the UFW and the Illinois Farm Worker Ministry. Cesar Chavez was featured speaker at the dedication ceremonies which were also attended by Fred Eyster and Chris Hartmire of the NFWM staff.

In Michigan, the Fourth Annual Farm Worker Educational Conference is scheduled for February 12-14, 1982. Write the Michigan Farm Worker Ministry Coalition (P.O. Box 10206, Lansing, MI 48901) for details.

In Arizona, on November 15, 1981 at Casa Grande, there took place the Founding Meeting of the Arizona Friends of the United Farm Workers. This new organization has been formed by the coalition of two other groups, the Tucson Friends of the Farm Workers and the Valley Friends of the Farm Workers, under the respective leadership of the Rev. Ken Kennon and Harriet Cunningham. The purpose of the "Arizona Friends" is to "be with and support farm workers as they organize under the leadership of the United Farm Workers of America. Present at the charter meeting were NFWM staff, Pat Drydyk and Richard Cook.

Cesar Chavez addressed the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, October 24, 1981, in Milwaukee. In his remarks, Cesar thanked the BHM for its steady and important support through the years, "with no strings attached." BHM Executive Vice President Howard Spragg emphasized that BHM support for the farm workers' movement will continue. NFWM Board member and BHM staff person, John Moyer had arranged for Cesar's presence at the meeting. Chris Hartmire and Fred Eyster were there to represent the NFWM.

In North Carolina, on Sept. 13, 1981, farm worker Robert Anderson was digging potatoes for crew leader Dennis Warren. Anderson became ill, but Warren ordered him to continue working. Shortly thereafter, Anderson died. The crew leader has now been charged with holding workers in involuntary servitude, threatening to shoot and kill workers who attempted to leave the labor camp, and causing the death of Robert Anderson. An FBI agent in Charlotte, N. Carolina said, "This is just the tip of the iceberg."

Numerous recent press reports have stated that the UFW has been "ordered" by the government to return \$600,000 in grant money, that is supposed to have been misspent. The fact are that the government has not asked for any money back. Furthermore, the UFW has not received any money. The press reports are wrong and UFW Attorney Carlos Alcala is asking for retractions. These stories are based on the charges made by "reporter" Patty Newman, who received \$5,000 from the Farm Bureau for her "investigation." (For further information, please write to the NFWM.)

In the next few months, farm workers will hold organizing conventions in three states: Texas (San Juan, 2/28/82), Arizona (Phoenix, 3/7/82) and Florida (Winter Haven, 3/21/82). Write NFWM for details.



## "FLORENCE, WHO IS YOUR REPLACEMENT?"

(Quote from Eulogy given by Cesar Chavez, 10/3/81)

Sr. Florence Zweber of the UFW staff was killed in an auto accident on October 1, 1981. Florence, age 62 was a member of the Rochester Franciscans. She came to work for the union in September, 1976. Her work included: design of the union's budgets and financial management systems, and, most recently, new plans for field office administration.

Over 300 people attended a Resurrection Mass for Florence at La Paz on October 3. In his eulogy, Cesar spoke of Florence as "a pure gift from God."

(What follows is an interview with Florence for her Community's newsletter a year before her death.)



Sister Florence Zweber

### "I Am Not Wasting These Years of My Life ..."

"One thing has struck me since I first came here....your needs are so little. We were only getting five dollars then for food. First I thought, 'How can you live that way?' And then, I was doing it myself....I really cleaned up the union's bank accounts all over and, you know, the checks that never got cashed were those five dollar checks. I thought, 'Gee, how do they live when they don't even cash these?' Soon I found the same thing happening to me. You know, they are so small and you lay them aside. They get caught in your papers and you didn't notice any difference because they were so little.

"I'd like my sisters to be aware of the true purpose of the movement....The UFW is not a group of people who are trying to take advantage of profit or anything like that. Money that comes in from the farm worker is considered very sacred. Priorities are totally with the worker; our headquarters are very, very poor....Cesar lives in a poor house, a little room you see across the tracks. It didn't have any paint on it until we remodeled the financial office and painted it with paint that was left over. They painted it while Cesar was gone one day.

"Sometimes, after a big negotiation session, we have a big celebration — we go to Baskin-Robbins (an ice cream parlor), and that is a big treat! Not a binge, but more just the spirit of celebration.

"One thing I really would like to do is to start up a health system. I think it could be done, and I would really like to do it. Then I feel I would like to have some of our sisters in the health field. Many of our sisters have asked me about that. I have gotten support from so many sisters, really. And when I get started with that I would like to have them come.

"I have become much poorer inside and I have lost all taste for anything extravagant. Things like that seem so empty for me now. Sometimes I think I have lost a lot of creativeness because you are always in this harsh struggle, and you don't see refined things around, but you see things like pictures of people from a magazine tacked on the wall. This is what you notice.

"These are very respected and tremendous people I work with. You don't meet with opposition. It is hard pulling, but you get tremendous support.

"I think what is most life-giving is that I just feel that every waking moment I have is spent working deeply within a cause I believe in. And that I am not wasting these years of my life. I would just hate to miss this chapter of my life!"