

A Prayer

By Héctor Mondragón

But robbers are left in peace, and those who provoke God live in safety—though God keeps them in his power. Job 12:6 (New Living Translation)

Our Father, we come together to ask that you rise up. Restore the land to the four million Colombians who have fled from the violence so that they no longer are forced to beg for bread. We plead for laws and vindicating actions that allow the displaced to claim their rights; we pray for restitution of what the violence has stripped of us.

Lord, we ask for peace for our country to sow the fruits of justice. May justice and peace embrace.

We come to you because we have the experience of your salvation. From our personal experience we know that *many are the afflictions of the righteous, but through you we are freed*. We come to you because we have a living faith which is the foundation of what we hope for and can not see.

Like every displaced person, we have suffered death threat, persecution, defamation, and attempts against our life, and so we have had to break our daily routines. Our lives have been fractured and we have abandoned all we once had. We have suffered anguish, separation, terror and depression. Not once but many times. But each time and every time, we have encountered your help, Lord.

You will not deliver those who are concerned for the poor to their enemies but rather restore and sustain them. We are living the Psalms at this moment. That is why we pray for all displaced people and victims of violence. Because it is our experience, we pray with faith that surpasses understanding. Our experience is relationship with you; you have given us your grace and mercy.

It is you who dignifies the victims, who justifies them. Your son gave himself as a victim, despite his innocence, and died to save humanity and then rose again. And it was Him, Jesus Christ, who provided us with an image of the final judgment, where He will say:

Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.... I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'

If all men and women are living images of God, we can see Jesus Christ in all victims of this *evil generation*. He made them worthy and offers them the greatest dignity, which is being Jesus Christ today.

Father, in Jesus' name, help all of these displaced persons who have been forced from their homes and stripped of their livelihood. Destroy the plans of those who want to make their great loss irreversible and vindicate this poor and long-suffering people. Clarify the minds of the Colombians so that they understand that salvation is in the victims, that everything that they for

them, they do for Jesus Christ. Christ died for us even though we are sinners, and now He asks us to see Him in the victims, and to say Yes to His salvation.

Lord, do not allow the victims' suffering to be prolonged. May your Holy Spirit fill the minds and lives of those who possess the capacity to act on the behalf of others. Grant them the gifts and strength to resolve these terrible problems.

May the paths of return to abandoned land, homes, community and daily life be reopened. May they know peace and well-being.

Hear our heartfelt prayer. In the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and our king, we ask you these things with thanksgiving for all that you provide us each day.

Amen.

*Translated by Amanda Guldemond
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