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Pray with Mexico on Sunday, March 24, 2019

BY [CARLOS SEDILES-REAL](#) ON MARCH 18, 2019

Lectionary Selection: Luke 13:1-9

Prayers for Mexico:

God of grace and mercy,

Amid pain and death, you accompany us with your saving presence. Assuming our humanity, you stand in solidarity with the causes of oppression and injustice.

Forgive us for being indifferent and for our lack of faith and commitment to justice. Teach us to be sensitive to the many situations of violence and despair that many of our brothers and sisters experience around the world.

Open our eyes to see the new opportunities you offer us in your grace. Encourage us to transform the realities of death for signs of life and hope.

We accept with gratitude your protection and your care, recognizing that in your mercy we can find the joy and peace we need. Fill us with your Spirit so that in it we can bear the fruit of love and justice.

May the word of the gospel that we share help us to find ourselves with God's grace and mercy. Help us overcome our vision of retribution, which makes us believe that God only helps the "good" and punishes the "sinners." Cause us to live a genuine life of conversion (metanoia), where change occurs not only our mind but also our heart.

May the gospel be good news for those who seek new opportunities. The fig tree in the parable was in a privileged situation. It was not unusual in Jesus' time to see fig trees and other fruit trees in the vineyards. The good land was scarce, and it had to be used well; the fig tree had good opportunities, but it did not take advantage of them. This story echoes with the overabundance of God's grace. We pray that when the Lord of the vineyard comes, God will find fruits in our lives: fruits of conversion, mercy, and justice.

Mission Stewardship Moment from Mexico:

The Theological Community of Mexico (CTdeM) is a space of new opportunities, not only for the formation of pastors and lay leaders but also for the reflection and construction of new socio-pastoral initiatives that respond to different contexts and challenges of Mexican society. Several of the programs



and courses seek to build bridges between theological education and the reality of the communities where the churches develop their ministry.

Part of the approval process in several programs or courses includes the formulation and implementation of community projects that contribute to solving problems or social needs from a biblical and pastoral approach. Students apply concepts such as integral mission to express their commitment to serve God and others. The initiatives developed are born from careful analysis, considering the socio-political, economic, and religious dimensions. We do not just ask ourselves, “What is happening in our communities?” but, also, “Why this is happening? What are the causes of the main problems that overwhelm communities? Who benefits from these situations? Moreover, how is our situation connected with that of other regions of the country or Latin America?” Once we have become aware of the reality and challenges, students are invited to read and interpret from a biblical-theological reflection, asking themselves, “What does God think, feel, and say about these situations in the communities?” By considering the biblical revelation, the Christian tradition, and the accompaniment of the victims, we are ready to listen to God and to respond to God’s Word.

This dynamic of discerning reality in the light of the Gospel has allowed students to encourage work on existing projects in their churches or to create new initiatives in response to those who suffer violence and human rights violations. Some of these initiatives are true fruits of conversion, mercy, and justice: comprehensive care for street children, accompaniment of victims of violence and trafficking, solidarity actions with migrants, and pastoral accompaniment with families both inside and outside of the churches.

We thank God for the pastors and lay leaders who have not missed opportunities, but who have responded and continue to respond with faith and actions to God’s call. Thank God for the common ministry of Global Ministries of the Disciples of Christ and United Church of Christ. As the body of Christ, we can bear abundant fruit in the grace and mercy of the God of full and abundant life.

(Prayer and Mission Moment by Carlos Sediles-Real)

Global Ministries Mission Co-worker in Mexico:

Carlos Sediles-Real serves the Theological Community of Mexico (CTdeM). His appointment is made possible by your gifts to Disciples Mission Fund, Our Church’s Wider Mission, WOC, OGHS and your special gifts.

More information on Mexico:

<https://www.globalministries.org/mexico>



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Mexico

Mexico is bordered on the north by the United States; on the south and west by the Pacific Ocean; on the southeast by Guatemala, Belize, and the Caribbean Sea; and on the east by the Gulf of Mexico.

After 70 years of one-party rule, Mexicans elected a president from the opposition party which has promised to end corruption, lead the country to better times, end the abuse against the indigenous peoples and bring peace to Chiapas.

Pray for: The Ecumenical Bible School in Chiapas as it seeks to end the tensions between Catholics and Protestants in the region.

Population (2014 est) – 120,286,655

Area – 1,220,000 mi

Capital – Mexico City

Ethnic Background

Mestizo – (Amerindian-Spanish) 60%

Amerindian or predominantly Amerindian – 30%

White – 9%

Other – 1%

Exports – manufactured goods, oil and oil products, silver, fruits, vegetables, coffee, cotton

Imports – metalworking machines, steel mill products, agricultural machinery, electrical equipment, car parts for assembly, repair parts for motor vehicles, aircraft, and aircraft parts

Life Expectancy (2014 est) – M 73 years F 78 years

Infant Mortality (2014 est) – 12.58 deaths/1,000 live births

Adult Illiteracy Rate – 6.5%