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Prayer Vigil

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Prayer Vigil

May 11, 2009 6:30 p.m.

Blessed Sacrament Church & National Cattle Congress

Romans 8:31-39

³¹ What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us?

³² He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? ³³ Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us.

³⁵ Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ³⁶ As it is written, 'For your sake we are being killed all day long;

we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.'

³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The people who were brought here from Postville to the Cattle Congress grounds to stand trial were children of God, just like you and me. The people who were brought here from Postville love freedom and hate poverty just as much as my Great-Grandparents did when they immigrated. But the children of God who were brought here from Postville had charges brought against them. Charges which the Supreme Court itself has now rejected. Today we are in the same place the people from Postville were charged but today there are some differences.

The difference is that today we are here in the light of day, out in open for all to see.

Today, there are no secret trails from which the media are banned.

Today, there are no scripts for the prosecutors to give to the judges,

Today there are weapons, no one is being threatened or coerced among us.

We, who cannot be separated from the Love of God in Christ Jesus, are here in the daylight to ask even as Paul did in the letter to the Romans "who brings charges against God's children?"

Where are they? They were here in this place when their actions were shrouded over in secrecy;

But now the light has shined in the darkness and the darkness could not over it.

Where are those who would bring charges against the people who would risk everything to work hard to keep their families from starvation? Just as Saint Paul writes "³³Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.
³⁴Who is to condemn?"

We do not need more raids, to arrest workers, to shut down plants, to take buyers away from our family farmers, students from our schools, and devastate our communities. What we need is immigration reform that is fair, that is profitable for all concerned, that gives dignity to workers, and that demonstrates our faith that no one is separated from the love of God.

We are gathered here were people were threatened with bogus charges to make plea deals they did not understand with inadequate defense and judges being instructed by the prosecution. We stand here today asking that this never happen again. Give us Reform!

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