

## MAY 15: ST. ISIDORE: PATRON SAINT OF FARMERS



Isidore was born in 1070 to a peasant family near Madrid, Spain. He was baptized "Isidore" in honor of the famous archbishop of Seville.

Isidore was a farmworker, working on the farm of the wealthy John de Vergas at Torrelaguna. His life is a model of simple Christian charity and faith. He prayed while at work. Though he was poor, Isidore shared what he had with the poor, even his meals. He often gave them more than he had for himself.

A story told about St. Isidore is that he often came later to work in the fields than other laborers because he would first attend Mass in the morning. Yet his work never suffered and he always met the chores required of him. It was said angels helped him plow the fields.

Isidore is the patron saint of farmers.

"Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation,  
for through your goodness we have received  
the bread we offer you: fruit of the earth and work of human hands,  
it will become for us the bread of life."

Fruit of the earth and work of human hands. Can you imagine an Oregon without towns such as Gervais, Central Point and Tillamook? Can you imagine Oregon agriculture without the human hands of farmworkers?

Rural Oregon is about farmworkers. Almost half of all hired farmworkers (migrants) live in just five States: California, Texas, North Carolina, Washington, and Oregon. Oregon's migrant population is five percent of its total population.

The U.S. Bishops appreciate the contribution of the farmworkers: "We recognize and encourage those who carry out and contribute to the work of agriculture in the United States and abroad: farmers and farmworkers ... We offer words of support and appreciation..." *USCCB, 2003, Catholic Reflections on Food, Farmers, and Farmworkers*

### Act Now!

Farmworkers have been historically excluded from fair labor legislation that protects other workers in the United States in terms of wages, overtime and the right to collectively bargain. **We can change this in Oregon by supporting [SB718](#) and ensuring that farmworkers are paid for their work.**

### Prayer to St. Isidore

Grant, O Lord, that through the intercession of Blessed Isidore, the husbandman, we may follow his example of patience and humility, and so walk faithfully in his footsteps that in the evening of life we may be able to present to You an abundant harvest of merit and good works, Who lives and reigns world without end. Amen.



ARCHDIOCESE  
OF PORTLAND  
IN OREGON

Office of Life, Justice, and Peace