NATIONAL CATHOLIC REPORTER
Published on *National Catholic Reporter* (http://ncronline.org)

+Gomez at AFL-CIO

Michael Sean Winters | Sep. 9, 2013 Distinctly Catholic

Yesterday, at the opening of the AFL-CIO convention in Los Angeles, Archbishop Jose Gomez gave the invocation. He preceded the prayer with comments about Syria, immigration reform and the commitment of the Church to the working men and women of the nation and of every nation. Here is the full text:

Good afternoon to you all and welcome to Los Angeles!

We gather this afternoon at a serious moment in the life of our country.

As we know, our leaders in Washington seem to be getting ready to make a decision to act against the Syrian regime for using chemical weapons against its people.

The Catholic Church does not believe that violence is the right answer to this atrocity. We are urging a ceasefire and negotiations. Yesterday, at the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels, we joined Pope Francis and Catholics all around the world in observing a day of prayer and fasting for peace.

So we need to keep the innocent people of Syria in our hearts today. And we need to pray for peace everywhere ? beginning with peace in our own hearts.

Today is also a day that the Catholic Bishops in the United States have asked to be a day of prayer for immigration reform. As you know, Congress comes back this week to debate this issue.

So we need to keep that in our prayers, too.

I want to commend all of you for your work on this issue. In my opinion, immigration reform is a great human rights test of our time. For me, our national debate about immigration is a great struggle for the American spirit and the American soul.

I am grateful for your invitation today. I am happy to be here to renew our friendship. As you know, the Catholic Church has always stood together with workers ? here in Los Angeles and everywhere in the world. That commitment will always continue.

So now, let us settle our hearts and minds, and let?s ask God?s blessings be upon us as we keep working together for human dignity, justice and peace.

God of love,

We thank You for the gift of life ?

that makes us all sisters and brothers.

Father, we thank you for the gift of work!

Give us love to help those who don?t have work

and those don?t have enough work.

Give us faith to build a society

where every worker is treated with dignity,

and the economy works for the common good.

Give us hope to a build a world

in which God?s gifts are better shared,

especially your gift of peace.

Father,

Give us strength to work together

to meet the challenges we face in our communities ?

to build strong marriages and healthy families,

to teach good values to our children.

Give us courage to defend the sanctity of human life,

and to stand with anyone who is suffering.

Father of wisdom,

we pray that you guide us as we seek to have

a comprehensive immigration reform now ?

that we can continue to build an America

that lives up to its beautiful promises

of liberty, equality, opportunity and justice for all.

God, we trust in Your Holy Spirit of love.

And in the love of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

And we ask all these things through Your Son, Jesus Christ ?

who worked with human hands

and loved with a human heart.

Amen.

Source URL (retrieved on *05/04/2015 - 12:40*): http://ncronline.org/blogs/distinctly-catholic/gomez-afl-cio