

De Colores

(pronounced *day kuh-lor'-ess*) is a greeting

De Colores is a traditional folk-song that is well known throughout the Spanish-speaking world. The song was brought to the Americas from Spain during the 16th century. In modern times, the song is widely used in the Cursillo movement, is an unofficial anthem for the United Farm Workers union, and frequently appears in collections of children's songs.

The words of the song are an expression of joy and a celebration of all creation with its many bright colours. One story as to how the song came into existence is:

There was a group of Cursillistas in Spain riding home on a bus, singing and rejoicing, when the weather turned....a frightening storm with lightning and thunder had them huddling together in the bus on the side of the road, and even halted their singing. But when the storm was over, the clouds parted and the sun peeked through. As the tension lessened, one Cursillista looked out the window at the farm they had parked in front of; and there saw a rooster, resplendent in color in the sparkling aftermath of the storm.

Singing and shouting *De Colores!* the Cursillistas began to rejoice again, writing a 70-verse song praising God and rejoicing in the shining colours of a little rooster! Hence, the greeting *De Colores*, wishes you that joy!

The four verses listed below are the most commonly used in our Diocese. Dozens of other verses (and variations of these four) are known to exist. Some of these include either overt religious references or language associated with its use as a rallying-song for farm-labourers. There have been numerous translations of the song into English and other languages. *De Colores* has been recorded by many different artists, including Los Lobos, Joan Baez, Raffi, Nana Mouskouri, Tish Hinojosa, and Arlo Guthrie.