

LIVING FAITH

TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
LABOUR DAY



THE GOSPEL FOR TODAY

MARK 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

Labour Day

Now when the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around him, they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with defiled hands, that is, without washing them. (For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they thoroughly wash their hands, thus observing the tradition of the elders; and they do not eat anything from the market unless they wash it; and there are also many other traditions that they observe, the washing of cups, pots, and bronze kettles.) So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, 'Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?' He said to them, 'Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written,

"This people honours me with their lips,
but their hearts are far from me;
in vain do they worship me,
teaching human precepts as doctrines."

You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition.'

Then he called the crowd again and said to them, 'Listen to me, all of you, and understand: there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile.' For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.'

TAKING THE GOSPEL HOME

On this last long weekend of summer, we celebrate Labour Day. Before we return to the "regular" schedule, Jesus challenges us to look inside, and to search our motivations.

PONDER AND DISCUSS...

- Why do you think the Church is concerned about the dignity of human work?
- Why do *you* think the dignity of labourers must be protected and enhanced?

Prayer for Labour Day

On this weekend, when we rest from our usual labors, loving Father, we pray for all who shoulder the tasks of human labor—in the marketplace, in factories and offices, in the professions, and in family living.

We thank you, Lord, for the gift and opportunity of work; may our efforts always be pure of heart, for the good of others and the glory of your name.

We lift up to you all who long for just employment and those who work to defend the rights and needs of workers everywhere.

May those of us who are now retired always remember that we still make a valuable contribution to our Church and our world by our prayers and deeds of charity.

May our working and our resting all give praise to you until the day we share together in eternal rest with all our departed in your Kingdom as you live and reign Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

Prayer adapted from Archdiocese of Detroit

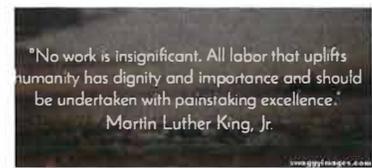
Subscribe to our weekly catechetical Resource by e-mail.

<http://www.eepurl.com/cimDOL>



THE CHURCH TEACHES

LABOUR DAY



WHAT DOES THE CHURCH SAY ABOUT THE DIGNITY OF HUMAN LABOUR?

Catholic Social Teaching holds that work is dignified and an intrinsic good, and workers must always be respected and valued.



Jesus became “like us in all things, devoted most of the years of his life on earth to manual work at the carpenter’s bench” St John Paul II – *Laborem Exercens, On Human Work*

[The state] “has also the duty to protect the rights of all its people, and particularly of its weaker members, the workers, women and children. It can never be right for the State to shirk its obligation of working actively for the betterment of the condition of the workingman.” John XXIII – *Mater et Magistra*



Work honors the gifts and talents that God has given to each one of us.

From the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops...

Work is not punishment or a necessary evil, nor is it man’s means of accumulating control, power and wealth. Both of these ideas are contrary to the biblical view of work. We understand work as something intrinsically good, we are co-creators of God’s world and work is part of our contribution.

Work must be undertaken responsibly and labour treated well, this includes how we approach the work we do, what it is we do with our work and how employers treat their employees. A strong theme in Catholic Social Thought is support for trade unions and state measures to ensure concrete safeguards in place like living wages and holiday leave.

Jesus speaks a lot about work, while much of this is in parables, we shouldn’t restrict interpretations of these parables to be only spiritual ones. Jesus spent most of the years of his life learning the trade of carpentry and we shouldn’t forget this when we hear him lament about the servant who hides his talent in the ground.

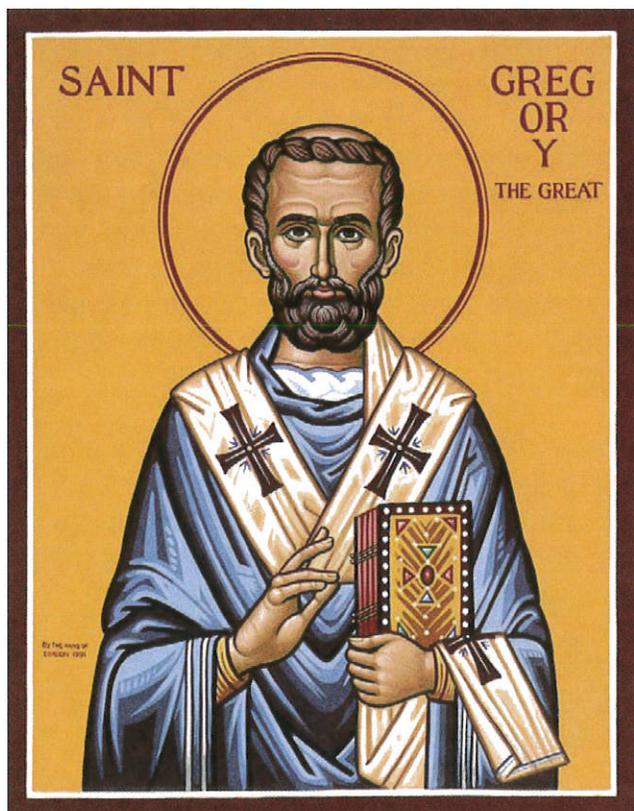
Dignity in work also touches upon work life balance, in some places cultures where people are expected to give more and more to their employers to the detriment of other spheres of our lives. The keystone of this is the importance of the Sabbath, but the principle extends to other areas of our lives and has implications for how we use our own time and how we manage the work of others in our employment.



FEASTS THIS WEEK

ST. GREGORY THE GREAT

POPE AND DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH



Pope Saint Gregory I (c. 540 – 12 March 604), commonly known as **Saint Gregory the Great**, was Pope from 3 September 590 to 12 March 604 AD. He is famous for instigating the first recorded large-scale mission from Rome, the Gregorian Mission, to convert the Anglo-Saxons in England to Christianity. Gregory is also well known for his writings, which were more prolific than those of any of his predecessors as Pope. Throughout the Middle Ages, he was known as "the Father of Christian Worship" because of his exceptional efforts in revising the Roman worship of his day. In his younger adulthood, he spent time as a monk. He was a brilliant theologian and gifted orator, and was called upon to clarify teachings and mediate disputes. He became very well-known for this.



The mainstream form of Western plainchant, standardized in the late 9th century, was attributed to Pope Gregory I and so took the name of Gregorian chant.

Gregory the Great is a Doctor of the Church and Patron Saint of musicians, singers, students, and teachers.

A short video about Pope St. Gregory can be found here:
https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=54