

1. May 2020

**“The sanctification of the work”  
Feast of St. Joseph the Worker**

*Kol 3,14-15,17,23-24*

*Over all these clothes, put on love, the perfect bond. And may the peace of Christ reign in your hearts, because it is for this that you were called together in one body. Always be thankful and whatever you say or do, let it be in the name of the Lord Jesus, in thanksgiving to God the Father through him. Whatever your work is, put your heart into it as done for the Lord and not for human beings, knowing that the Lord will repay you by making you his heirs. It is Christ the Lord that you are serving.*

It is very appropriate that the Church associates this day, which is generally celebrated as Labour Day, with Saint Joseph. In doing so, it gives the message that even the foster father of Jesus, and thus the Lord himself, sanctified man's work. If God himself in his Incarnation has also entered and penetrated this area, then no work is too low, especially when - as the Apostle advises us - we do it “*as done for the Lord and not for human beings*”.

We see how the holy apostle is intent on connecting everything to the Lord, and this is the important message for us as far as work is concerned; it too comes from the Lord and is for the Lord. If we understand it in this way, then it is a participation in the Kingdom of God, which also has a physical component on earth.

Let us allow these thoughts to have a deeper effect on us: Everything I do, when I do it for the glory of God, participates in the shaping of the Kingdom of God on earth!

Important is the apostle's advice to do the work with joy. Here the view is directed in the direction that we should understand more deeply.

God has called his creation into existence out of love, including ourselves. The whole of existence - even if we have to suffer the destruction caused by sin - sings in its

depth the love song of God, because he has done everything well! (*cf. Gen 1,31*). To cooperate in this creation means to ennoble it and also to purify it from its lostness. Let us think, for example, of something quite ordinary: a meal. How is it prepared? Man can eat it only for its purpose, prepared with the least effort, it can be served to him unlovingly, but it can also be served to him with pleasure. In this "gladly serving", whereby I do not mean feasting, the meal is ennobled; it even becomes something special through love; it becomes the essential, because God gave us food out of love, he gave it to us - humanly speaking - gladly!

So, if we do our work in the Lord and for the Lord with pleasure, then in the area entrusted to us, we bring the work to its deeper meaning, it reflects his creative love!

Now what about the resistance we experience in the work, the weeds, the dirt, the fragility of things, etc.?

Perhaps we can look at them in this way: Overcoming the difficulties and resistances at work is part of that struggle into which we are all drawn by the Fall. If we accept it (always in the Lord), we will lead things to their goal in spite of the adversities! At this particular level - where work is located in its various dimensions - we participate in the revelation of the children of God, for which the whole of creation is waiting with a sigh! (*cf. Rom 8,19*).

So let us do our work with pleasure and with great care, and thus open up the deeper meaning of our activities. Let us remember Saint Joseph, who, we can be sure, worked with his divine Son! By doing our work for the Lord, we also work with God! So it is not only proclamation in the strict sense where we can work for God! No, all areas are permeated by him, if we remain in him! No work is too little if it is permeated by love and done out of love!