

Dear Friends,

“Whatever you do, do from the heart, as for the Lord” (Colossians 3:23).

As summer is coming to an end and fall approaches, we celebrate Labor Day on the first Monday in September. It is a national holiday, a day dedicated to honor the workers and the dignity of labor. While it is often associated with rest, barbecues, and the unofficial end of summer, Labor Day for people of faith also provides an opportunity to reflect on the spiritual meaning of work. Our Catholic faith invites us to go beyond picnics and reflect on the deeper significance of work in our lives.

From the very beginning, God gave work as a purpose for our lives. In Genesis, Adam is placed in the garden “to cultivate and care for it” (Gen 2:15). Work is not just a way to earn a living- it is a way we participate in God’s ongoing creation, support our families, and contribute to the common good. The Church has long taught that work is an essential aspect of human dignity, and that workers have fundamental rights to fair wages, safe conditions and rest. These principles are rooted in Catholic Social Teaching since the Encyclical “Rerum Novarum” which has the English title, “On the Condition of Labor.” It was written by Pope Leo XIII, and published on May 15, 1891. I encourage you to read this Encyclical Letter; you will find out that the issues he touches on are still very much relevant today. It is interesting to notice that our new Pope, who is from our country, took the name Leo XIV. I may be speculating, but I believe that Pope Leo XIV will advocate for workers and the poor.

Catholic Social Teaching is very clear:

- The economy should serve the people, not the other way around.
- All work, no matter how simple or hidden, can be holy.
- We are called to stand in solidarity with workers, especially those who are vulnerable or exploited.

Have a blessed and restful Labor Day!

Fr. Krzysztof Kardzis

