

Dear Friends,

For over a century, our country has celebrated Labor Day on the first Monday in September. This national holiday was established in the 1880s for two reasons:

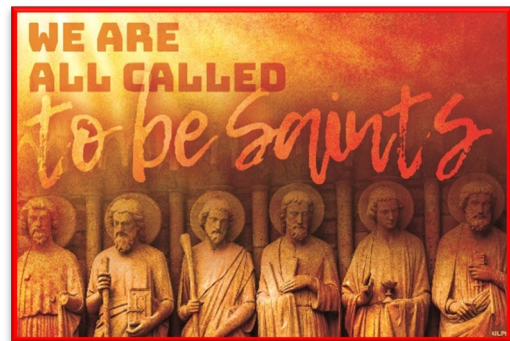
- to mark the irreplaceable role of the American worker in making this country prosperous and strong;
- to have time to attend speeches of educational aspects of work, the worker and the good that comes from work.

Today, the spiritual and educational aspects of this holiday have been almost forgotten. Labor Day has become as a day off and an end of summer. Labor Day remains an opportunity for all of us to reflect on the meaning of human work, specifically our work, not only for the good of our country but also of God's divine plan.

In the first command in the Bible, the Lord gave the human person the mission to co-operate (work together) with him in bringing His work of creation to fulfillment: ***"Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish ... the birds ... and every living thing that moves on the earth"*** (Gen 1:28). God, who worked for the "six days" of creation, made man and woman in his own image and likeness and called them to share in this work.

Right from the beginning, before the fall of Adam and Eve, humans had received the mission to make our earth more beautiful and suitable for every human being – not just for some of us.

The most important part of work was not perfecting the Earth - cultivating the land, raising animals, and in modern times, making computer chips and life-saving medicines. The most important "part" of our mission, our work, is bringing God's greatest work to perfection - the human person. It is the work to bring the human person to the "image of God", to make each one of us as God intended us to be. Jesus appreciated human work. In his teaching, he mentions shepherds, farmers, doctors, servants, stewards, and soldiers. Jesus did not just praise ordinary human work but shared in it. He spent the majority of his life in Nazareth as a manual laborer – known as a son of a "carpenter" – in modern language he was a "construction worker". Jesus called all his listeners, regardless of profession, to be a saint. And Jesus does that today: he calls each one of us to be a saint, regardless of our profession or work we do.



Each one of us is called to be saint and our work is to help everyone else to become a saint, too. Work is not just about earning a paycheck, but about serving, loving and helping others to become God's image. When work takes on this meaning, we continue the work of creation. On this Labor Day weekend, let us ask God to help us to realize that each one of us is called to make ourselves and to help others to be as God intended us to be. Before we can help others, we need to take care of ourselves, "working" on ourselves to resemble God better. Spending time with God make us more like Him. I would like to encourage you to consider taking part in ACTS Retreat. A retreat refreshes and revitalizes, gives the opportunity for more time spent in prayer, rekindles and deepens one's relationship with God.

Have a blessed Labor Day,
Fr. Krzysztof Kardzis

