



- A RESOURCE FOR ONGOING FORMATION -

Part 5: Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation

4. The Dignity of Human Life 1—Work

Is there any 'work' that conflicts with the Christian calling?

Let them esteem work as a gift and as a sharing in the creation, redemption and service of the Christian community. Rule 16

When Francis heard God's call, it was 'to go and rebuild my Church'. Because Francis was not afraid of physical work, he immediately began to restore small churches in the Umbrian plain. He gathered and hauled stones, begged for other materials and used the strength of his muscle and the sweat of his brow to patch crumbling walls and replace collapsing roofs. He worked. Later in life, one might think that Francis had an aversion to work...However, the friars were encouraged to continue whatever vocation they had pursued before becoming [his] followers.

Foley, Weigel, Normile *To Live as Francis Lived* (p 155)

Human work proceeds directly from persons created in the image of God and called to prolong the work of creation by subduing the earth, both with and for one another. Hence work is a duty: 'If anyone will not work, let him not eat.' Work honours the Creator's gifts and the talents received from him. It can also be redemptive. By enduring the hardship of work in union with Jesus, the carpenter of Nazareth and the one crucified on Calvary, man collaborates in a certain fashion with the Son of God in his redemptive work. He shows himself to be a disciple of Christ by carrying the cross, daily, in the work he is called to accomplish. Work can be a means of sanctification and a way of animating earthly realities with Spirit of Christ. *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 2427 (p 518-519)

And the brothers who know how to work should do so and should exercise that trade which they [already] know, if it is not against the good of the soul and can be performed honestly...All...should always be intent on good works, for it is written: 'Always do something good so that the devil will find you occupied.' And again: 'Idleness is the enemy of the soul.' Therefore, the servants of God must always give themselves totally to prayer or some good work.

Armstrong, Brady *Francis and Clare: the complete works* (p 115)

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## Scripture—

### Gen 2. 15

The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it.

### II Thes 3. 6-12

Now we command you, beloved, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to keep away from believers who are living in idleness and not according to the tradition that they received from us. For you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us; we were not idle when we were with you, and we did not eat anyone's bread without paying for it; but with toil and labour we worked night and day, so that we might not burden any of you. This was not because we do not have the right, but in order to give you an example to imitate. For even when we were with you, we gave you this command: Anyone unwilling to work should not eat. For we hear that some of you are living in idleness, mere busy-bodies, not doing any work. Now such persons we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly and to earn their own living.