

May 1, Feast of St. Joseph the Worker

The feast falls on the first day of the month that is dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary: it was established by Pope Pius XII in 1955 in order to “Christianize” the concept of labour and give all workers a model and a protector. He expressed hope that the feast would emphasize **the dignity of labour** and bring a **spiritual dimension to work**. In many parts of the world, especially in Europe, May 1 is Labour Day or "May Day". So, it is appropriate that St. Joseph, a worker who became the foster-father of Christ and patron of the universal Church (and of Canada), should be honored on this day.

Joseph's work, offered to God with patience and joy, provided the necessities for Mary, his spouse, and for the Son of God: he is an example to all laborers. *"Workmen and all those laboring in conditions of poverty have reason to rejoice rather than grieve: they have in common with the Holy Family daily preoccupations and cares"* (Pope Leo XIII).

The texts of the Mass (not given in our *Living with Christ Missal*) provide a catechetical summary of **the importance of human labour** seen in the light of faith. The Opening Prayer: *"God, creator and ruler of the universe, you call men and women in every age to develop and use their talents for the good of others ... we ask that we may do the work that God has asked of us and come to the rewards he has promised."*



Joseph exemplifies working people, dignified by labor. The liturgy for this feast validates **the right of every person to work**; a message that needs to be heard in our modern society. In the last 100 years many Church documents make reference to the Christian spirit that should permeate one's work, after the example of St. Joseph. **There is special dignity to work done caring for the family**. An excerpt from the Vatican II's document, The Church in the Modern World: *"Where men and women, in the course of gaining a livelihood for themselves and their families, offer appropriate service to society, they can be confident that their personal efforts promote the work of the Creator, confer benefits on their fellowmen, and help to realize God's plan in history"* (no. 34).

HAPPY FEAST DAY!

Fr. Brian and pastoral team