

Editorial reflects uncertainty regarding labor

The editorial, "U.S. workforce continues to evolve," (CR, Aug. 28) reflects the uncertainty we all feel about the value and dignity of our labor. It rightly praises the Catholic Church for its steadfast embrace of workers' rights. Bombarded by the virtues of the "free market" since the 1980's, and urged to accept its omnipotence and our impotence before it, the "standard of human dignity" noted in the editorial recedes farther and farther from our grasp.

The American people must regain their confidence that they can create a future which has as its centerpiece the value and dignity of those who daily make our society work. We can create a society where all Americans have the opportunity to earn a decent living, have safety nets for those in need, health care for all, and adequate benefits when people are no longer able to work. We have the talent and resources to make that happen if we choose and if we are not intimidated by those who elevate free markets to a set of immutable laws. Properly functioning markets are essential, but their operation is subject to our control far beyond what we are told to believe. They are being controlled now but not to the benefit of workers. When worker productivity grows five times faster than real wages over the last three decades, and CEO's make 400 times what the average worker makes (Institute for Policy Studies; Inequality.org), Americans need to act.