

The Splendor of Routine

It's hard to believe that Labor Day weekend has arrived. Filled with wistful thoughts of a waning summer we might be tempted to treat Labor Day simply as a final summer holiday before the busyness of the fall. And, of course, we should all try to have an enjoyable Labor Day holiday.

Our enjoyment, however, won't be diminished a bit if we take a few moments to reflect on this day that honors working men and women throughout the United States. It's a day to think gratefully and prayerfully about people we meet every day who serve needs of our community and who provide vital goods and services. It's a day to pray for those who are unemployed or underemployed as well as the working poor. And it is also a good day to think about the God-given dignity of our daily work.

A few days ago, I visited a few Catholic schools on opening day. I met dozens of parents in the parking lot and a few of them spontaneously told me what their morning routine is like - getting their children ready for school and themselves ready for work. And once we get to our places of work, there is usually something of a routine. While it can be good to have structure in our lives it can also wear us down.

Labor Day is a moment to press the reset button. We need to see our work, whatever it is, as an expression of our human dignity. Through our work we are not just taking caring of business and providing for ourselves and our families, we are also partnering with God, the Creator, to build a better world.

If we are really co-creators with the Lord himself, then we should want to do our jobs as well as we can - with integrity, diligence, generosity, and all the skill we can muster. And we should see our work as a means of our sanctification, a way toward holiness.

And with these thoughts in my mind and heart, I say, "Happy Labor Day!"