

Work: A Path to Holiness

Since the time of Adam, man has been called upon to work. Many believe that work is a curse due to the Fall, but, in fact, God gave work to man as a gift to draw him closer to the Almighty and to his creation.

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Work allows us to participate in the creative act, thus imitating our Creator. But as with everything, work has been affected by the Fall and is therefore now a burden. Yet it

still remains a way to participate in God's creative power.

The Church has always valued work, and seen it as a means to build community and further the kingdom of God on earth. For most of mankind's history, work has been a mostly physical affair – plowing the fields, shaping wood and laying stones. But today, work for many Americans is primarily intellectual, performed inside an office with many other workers. This means that there are unique challenges inherent in our work that previous generations never had to face: resisting the temptations of constant access to the internet, being available to our company 24/7 and working closely with members of the opposite sex, to name just a few. Fortunately, God raised up a saint in our times to show us a way to make modern work a path to holiness and a way of leading others to Christ. That saint

was St. Josemaría Escrivá, the founder of Opus Dei.

St. Josemaría looked at the ordinary life of each person as the pathway God gives him or her to personal holiness. And what is more ordinary to most people than work? Most of us spend many of our waking hours at work (except stay-at-home moms, who spend all their waking hours at work), so St. Josemaría asserted that work is a perfect place to pursue holiness. Doing work well, offering difficulties to God and being a witness to co-workers: these all help draw us – and those around us – closer to God.

Ask St. Josemaría Escrivá for his heavenly intercession the next time you feel work is keeping you from God – he'll help show you how to make work the road to heaven.

Cormac Burke

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