

A Message from Reclaiming Earth Committee – May 1, 2019

May 1st is known by many as the feast of St. Joseph the Worker, husband of Mary and foster father of Jesus the Christ. So, what does St. Joseph have to do with *Integral Ecology* and the value/holiness of human labor?

“...Beginning in the Book of Genesis, the dignity of human work has long been celebrated as a participation in the creative work of God. By work, humankind both fulfills the command found in Genesis to care for the earth (Gn 2:15) and to be productive in their labors. Saint Joseph, the carpenter and foster father of Jesus, is but one example of the holiness of human labor.

“Jesus, too, was a carpenter. He learned the trade from Saint Joseph and spent his early adult years working side-by-side in Joseph’s carpentry shop before leaving to pursue his ministry as preacher and healer. In his encyclical *Laborem Exercens*, Pope John Paul II stated: “the Church considers it her task always to call attention to the dignity and rights of those who work, to condemn situations in which that dignity and those rights are violated, and to help guide [social] changes so as to ensure authentic progress by man and society.”

www.franciscanmedia.org/saint-joseph-the-worker/

“We were created with a vocation to work. The goal should not be that technological progress increasingly replaces human work, for this would be detrimental to humanity. Work is a necessity, part of the meaning of life on this earth, a path to growth, human development and personal fulfillment...the loss of jobs also has a negative impact on the economy “through the progressive erosion of social capital: the network of relationships of trust, dependability and respect for rules, all of which are indispensable for any form of civil coexistence.” (paragraph 128)

“In order to continue providing employment, it is imperative to promote an economy which favors productive diversity and business creativity”. (*Laudato Si*, paragraph 129)

Question is: How does the average person have any impact on business models to provide employment, giving dignity and recognition of the rights of workers? Have you thought about this in terms of our purchases?



**"Work is fundamental
to the dignity of a person.
Work, to use an image, "anoints" us with
dignity, fills us with
dignity, makes us similar to God, who has
worked and still works, who always acts..."**

-Pope Francis

