

Third Week of Easter



Blessing of Workers

God, our Father,
bless our daily work and
help us to tend to
your work of creation.

Jesus Christ, Son of God,
you redeemed the world
through the work of salvation.
Help us to work for a just society.

Holy Spirit,
through you, God's love
is poured into our hearts.
Bless the work of our hands, hearts,
and minds.
Enable us to provide
for all in our care. Amen.

April 26, 2009 The Work of Salvation

We are a nation of workers. We take less vacation time, work longer hours, and have more two-career couples than ever. We rightly struggle to discern our vocation, to choose a career path, to take the right job. We spend thousands of dollars and many years preparing ourselves to enter the work force. Jesus was a carpenter, and probably a good one, but his work was and is the work of salvation. Through the death and Resurrection of his Son, God put an end to death, bringing forth a new creation. When God created the world and called it good, he committed to preserving and restoring the goodness of creation. Humanity's sin and inattention to God cannot ultimately diminish the power of this divine love. This is

the Easter message. As Christians, the work we are called to do in this world, the work that gives us a sense of dignity, purpose, and wellbeing, is work that honors life, blesses others, and promotes goodness. When, through the work of our hands, hearts, and minds, we can participate in God's saving work of salvation, we are less vulnerable to burnout and regrets. The work of prayer and worship, of family life and community takes its rightful place in relation to the work that provides a paycheck. We recognize that our true vocation, in all our work, is to live as children of light in a world filled with darkness, knowing that this divine light cannot be extinguished.

This Week at Home

Monday, April 27

A Heavenly Home

At Easter, heaven has been wedded to earth, so let your home resemble heaven during Easter. As a family, you might discuss what heaven is like (your children may surprise you with their imaginative and insightful answers). Is it a place of light? Then light the candles during dinners throughout the season. Is it a place of love and friendship? Invite special friends over for family dinner. Surely heaven will be a place of singing. Have a singing night!

Tuesday, April 28

Easter Table Blessing

Throughout the Easter season our meals can be festive, especially during the First Week of Easter and on the Sundays of Easter. Try singing your grace during this season. Here is a prayer that can be sung to the tune of "Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow."

Be present at our table, Lord.

Be here and ev'rywhere adored.

Thy creatures bless and grant that we

May feast in paradise with thee.

Wednesday, April 29

Memorial of Saint Catherine of Siena

Doctor of the Church and patron saint of Italy, Catherine of Siena lived in the fourteenth century when famine, the black death, and wars greatly reduced the population of Europe. Catherine joined a group of Dominican laywomen, and dedicated herself to solitary prayer until she was called to an active life nursing the sick, and then as a peacemaker among feuding families, warring states, and a divided Church. She died at the young age of 33. The world needs peacemakers. Through the prayers of Saint Catherine, become a source of God's peace.

Thursday, April 30

Give a Play

Around 1030, a special hymn (a sequence) was written for Easter Sunday by the court chaplain to Emperor Conrad. It was called "Praise to the Paschal Victim" (*Victimae Paschali Laudes*), and it inspired many famous miracle plays. For centuries, on Sunday morning people throughout the world have enacted

the visit of the holy women to the tomb, along with the angel's proclamation, "He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. . . . Then go quickly and tell his disciples . . ." (Matthew 28:6-7). Consider putting on a family drama during Easter. One person can read the Easter story while others act it out. Children might do this for parents and guests.



Friday, May 1

Saint Joseph the Worker

On this day, Saint Joseph is especially honored for his role as patron of tradespeople and workers. The fact that he is also the patron of Christian families underscores the simple truth that our work life ought to serve family life, not conflict with it. Today's families often feel an enormous tension between the demands of work and the needs of family. We can call with confidence on Saint Joseph to help us reconcile these demands.

Saturday, May 2

Memorial of Saint Athanasius

Athanasius was a famous fourth-century Bishop of Alexandria, Egypt, who defended the idea that Christ is both fully human and fully divine. At this time theological controversy was intense, and several times Athanasius was exiled to the desert, where he read, wrote, and observed the desert monks—men such as Saint Antony, considered to be the father of monasticism. Athanasius's book, *Life of Antony*, is a spiritual classic. Spend time this week reading about the life of a spiritual hero, perhaps Saint Antony, Saint Catherine of Siena, or Blessed Mother Theresa. Let their example feed your faith.



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