A close up of a sign

Description automatically generated **CHANGING**

**CAREERS/JOBS**

## **Prayer**

*O God, thank you for the job before me today. May I find joy and satisfaction in its toil and difficulty, its pleasure and success, even in its failure and sorrow. May I always look away from myself, and look toward you and your goodness.*

*Amen.*

**New Work Experiences**

The call to a new job or a career change may be just what God has in mind for you. It doesn’t necessarily mean that your previous or current job or career was the wrong choice, but it might mean that you are now being called into something new. Pay attention to this inkling, this potential call, as it may allow you to further align the work that you do in the world with God’s work in the world. And that is the essence of responding to God’s call.

Work should be the setting for rich personal growth, where many aspects of life enter into play: creativity, planning for the future, developing our talents, living out our values, relating to others, giving glory to God … We were created with a vocation to work … Work is a necessity, part of the meaning of life on this earth, a path to growth, human development and personal fulfillment (Pope Francis, [Laudato Si](https://w2.vatican.va/content/dam/francesco/pdf/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si_en.pdf), nos. 127-28).

When work becomes a window for the worship of God and an avenue to love our neighbor, it reclaims its proper, dignified place (Matt Rusten, [The Altar of Work](https://www.madetoflourish.org/resources/the-altar-of-work-how-workism-is-the-new-religion/?utm_source=DPC+Email+List&utm_campaign=22d1636aa8-March+21-+Below+the+Glass+Ceiling&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_5531bede90-22d1636aa8-116157777&mc_cid=22d1636aa8&mc_eid=c1d878467f)).

***Reflect/Write/ Discuss***

*Take a few moments to reflect on these questions. Jot down your response and then discuss them with your group.*

* What is my true heart’s desire?
* What labor breathes life into me? What seems to take life away?
* Who do I know who really comes to life through their work? What can I learn from them?
* How can my work contribute to the good of others?
* What is God doing in my life through my work now?

## **Mission of Work**

***Reflect***

“Most of us will spend somewhere around 65% of our waking hours working. If work is not seen as a holy thing, if work is not counted as an essential aspect of our contribution to the mission of God, then no wonder our work isn’t fulfilling. No wonder it feels like toil” (Tim Suttle, [*Work as Mission: Vocation and Learning What to Count*](https://www.patheos.com/blogs/paperbacktheology/2013/01/work-as-mission-vocation-and-learning-what-to-count.html)).

***View***

*Watch the five-minute video of Tim Suttle reflecting on [Vocation: Learning to Count the Right Things.](https://vimeo.com/40538537)*

***Write and Discuss***

*Take a few moments to reflect on this question. Jot down your response and then discuss them with your group.*

* Is your work rewarding and meaningful or an experience of exasperating discontinuity?
* At this point in your life, what do you think needs to change or shift in order for your vocation to transcend your career, and in order for your career to image God in that place?

## **Meaningful Work**

***Reflect***

## In *Here is What Makes Workers Happiest at Every Age*, Valentina Sanchez quotes a CNBC/Survey Monkey survey showing that the majority of workers consider the “meaning” of their work to be the most significant contributor to their overall workplace happiness. From a faith perspective, we might equate “meaning” with “calling” or “vocation.” So, if you are tapped into the meaningfulness of your work, particularly for the sake of others, you are likely a) responding to a call, and b) happy. That is, perhaps, exactly God’s idea for you.

***Write and Discuss***

*Take a few moments to reflect on this question. Jot down your response and then discuss them with your group.*

* In what ways is “meaning” important to your work satisfaction and happiness?
* What’s the relationship between your work and your faith? How is that relationship expressed?

## **Unexpected Joy**

***View***

*Watch the video Lives Explored: Francois* [*(https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\_ continue=285&v=uqSRYLI8UK0&feature=emb\_logo*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_%20continue=285&v=uqSRYLI8UK0&feature=emb_logo)*).*

As a new immigrant in New York City, Francois found himself in crisis, wondering what God wanted from him. A career he never expected brought him deep joy.

***Write and Discuss***

*Take a few moments to reflect on this question. Jot down your response and then discuss them with your group.*

* In what ways does Francois’ story inspire you?
* Francois calls himself a “baker and a lover.” What would you call yourself?
* Francois said, “You are the story you tell yourself. Make sure to tell yourself great stories.” What does this mean to you? What stories do you tell yourself?

## **Blessing for Workers**

L: Almighty and eternal God, we see the fruits of your labor all around us. Bless us as

we strive to work like you do. As workers encounter struggles and challenges in this

call, may they be open to the Spirit’s guidance as they do everything for the glory of

God.

**R: Amen.**

L: Look with favor on the women and men whom you have blessed with skill and

talent; they seek to emulate you in their careers and jobs inspired by the Holy spirit.

**R: Amen.**

L: We pray they are strong and sure witnesses of faith in the work place.

**R: Amen.**

L: O God, in their struggles let them rejoice that you are near to help them.

**R: Amen.**

L: In their needs let them know that you are there to rescue them.

**R: Amen.**

L: In their joys let them see that you are the source and completion of every happiness.

**R: Amen**

L: We pray all this through Christ our Lord.

**R: Amen**

**Scripture Reflections**

*I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore, choose life* (Deuteronomy 30:19).

*And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men"* (Luke 5:10).

*“Here I am, for you called me … Speak, Lord, for your servant hears”*

(1 Samuel 3:8, 10).

*Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him* (John 13:5).

## **Helpful Links**

*When work replaces the church: The disaster of misplaced worship* by Matt Rusten (<http://bit.ly/2F98qA2>). Work has become more than a job that provides material needs or a career that offers stability and meaning. For many, it now functions in place of spirituality.

*Work as Mission: Vocation and Learning What to Count* by Tim Suttle (<https://www.patheos.com/blogs/paperbacktheology/2013/01/work-as-mission-vocation-and-learning-what-to-count.html>). Work is one of the most significant ways a human being can participate in the mission of God. Our vocation—our job—is to image God to all creation in every aspect of our lives including work

*God Couture* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6dXMCMKDwDU>) (video). A young woman moves to New York to work in the fashion industry. Is she moving into a world of moral compromise, long hours keeping her away from God, and meaningless casual relationships? Not on your life. Like Jesus, she finds that her business is all about people; people she loves.

*Is Your Work a Higher Calling* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dSqTuHDusTw>) (video). Kimberly Renner, owner of The Renner Project, explains how she views her work in construction.

*Here’s what makes workers happiest at every age* by Valentina Sanchez (<https://www.cnbc.com/2019/07/16/here-is-what-makes-workers-the-happiest-at-every-age.html>). The majority of workers (35%) rank meaningfulness No. 1 in contribution to on-the-job happiness.

Lives Explored Video Project: Stories of vocation, a video storytelling project on vocation. We ask everyday Christians how they see God at work in their lives. Watch how their struggles, joys, and questions capture what calling means today <https://collegevilleinstitute.org/vocation-projects/resources-for-congregations/lives-explored/>.

The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers (<http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catholic-social-teaching/the-dignity-of-work-and-the-rights-of-workers.cfm)>. Work is more than a way to make a living; it is a form of continuing participation in God’s creation. If the dignity of work is to be protected, then the basic rights of workers must be respected.