



Newsletter – June 2021

CFSM Singapore

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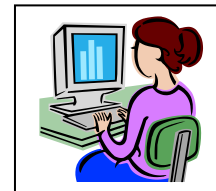
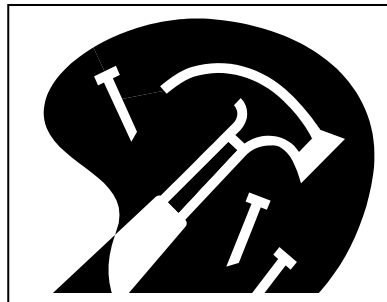
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FEAST OF ST JOSEPH, THE WORKER

1ST MAY 2021



SEE

The 1st of May is celebrated all over the world as Labour Day, a day dedicated to workers in every country. The origins of this Labour Day can be traced to the 1880s when workers during the Industrial Revolution had to work hard 12 to 16 hours a day, seven days a week. Child labour was also prevalent during that time. These unmerciful working conditions lead to protests and strikes and also the loss of many lives. Fortunately, these conditions did not persist. Workers demanded eight hours work, eight hours of rest and eight hours of self-development each day. Trade unions for workers were formed as time on and the 1st of May was designated the day for the celebration of the rights and welfare of workers and respecting and upholding the dignity of work and every worker.

JUDGE

It should not be just workers versus factory owners- how to enable the factory owners see that the worker is not just as a digit factor of production but a human being who deserve the dignity of one created in the image of God? How to enable all parties to see the dignity of work? The Church teaches:

“The great mistake made in regard to the matter now under consideration is to take up with the notion that class is naturally hostile to class, and that the

wealthy and the working men are intended by nature to live in mutual conflict. So irrational and so false is this view that the direct contrary is the truth. Just as the symmetry of the human frame is the result of the suitable arrangement of the different parts of the body, so in a State is it ordained by nature that these two classes should dwell in harmony and agreement, so as to maintain the balance of the body politic. Each needs the other: capital cannot do without labour, nor labour without capital. Mutual agreement results in the beauty of good order, while perpetual conflict necessarily produces confusion and savage barbarity. Now, in preventing such strife as this, and in uprooting it, the efficacy of Christian institutions is marvelous and manifold. First of all, there is no intermediary more powerful than religion (whereof the Church is the interpreter and guardian) in drawing the rich and the working class together, by reminding each of its duties to the other, and especially of the obligations of justice.”

- Para 19, *Rerum Novarum*: Encyclical on Capital and Labour

To bring all Catholic workers together and to establish Christian Justice (as opposed to Secular Justice), in 1955 Pope Pius XII designated 1st of May as a Feast Day of St Joseph. He chose St Joseph, the spouse of Mary, the foster father of Jesus, as the model worker. He encouraged all Catholic workers to have a deep devotion to St Joseph, imitating his virtues, and also to have a love relationship with the foster father of Jesus. He also wanted to ensure that the roles of workers, laity and the Clergy are very clear.

St Joseph, the spouse of Mary was chosen as the Patron Saint for workers based on his attitude as a humble and creative builder all his life working as a carpenter and being a husband and father. He was the key builder of his family. He too was like you and me with so many thoughts, fears and anxieties. With all these realities he was committed to his family and his work that was demanding and challenging.

The Feast was a message of love and peace to bring about understanding of “brotherhood” of humanity rather than one of confrontation such as the secular class struggle that resulted in the founding of communism. One only has to read history books to understand the evils of communism: which led to bloodshed, division and spiralling to authoritarian rule and atheism and which made religion illegal.

The Social Character of CFSM Singapore covers all pastoral concerns of human life and an environment that promotes sustainable and progressive development of all families. Social Character affects families not only in Singapore but in all countries, all races and all religions. CFSM Singapore works locally with Caritas, of which it is a part, and with all organizations in Singapore and also with International Organizations such as Asia Continental Christian Family Movement (ACCFM) and the World Movement of Christian Workers (WMCW). The purposes are to respect and uphold the dignity of every worker and the dignity of work, work for the Common Good and care for our Mother Earth.

St Joseph was an ordinary man, a carpenter with wisdom. He was a man of faith, listening to the voice of the Angel. He surrendered himself to God, was selfless and gave hope to others. We ask the question what makes me, a Catholic, a CFSM member unique and special. It is the call to our Adult Lay Apostolate responsibilities especially

at work places and within families and all other institutions wherever we are. This is clearly stated by our founder, Cardinal Joseph Cardijn. We, the Laity, are uniquely placed to bring the Good News with love, bring hope to others at workplaces and the other institutions which are irreplaceable by the Clergy. The Clergy and the Religious will be within the Catholic institutions to guide and develop each individual to live the Christian values.

Proverbs 10:4 - Lazy people are soon poor; hard workers get rich.

Proverbs: 10:5 – A wise youth works hard all summer; a youth who sleeps away the hour of opportunities brings shame.

“The dignity of others is to be respected in all circumstances, not because that dignity is something we have invented or imagined, but because human beings possess an intrinsic worth superior to that of material objects and contingent situations... The intellect can investigate the reality of things through reflection, experience and dialogue, and come to recognize in that reality, which transcends it, the basis of certain universal moral demands.” – Para 213, Fratelli Tutti, Encyclical by Pope Francis

ACT

1. What can I, a Christian, do to make myself more aware of the workers' vulnerability? The Worker as a human being, parent, an employee and a citizen.
2. After the Awareness in question 1, what can I do?
3. What must I be aware of in a gig economy and what actions can I take to uphold the dignity of work and workers when the gig economy is now a growing trend in Singapore and globally?

Announcement

Theme: Sense the Presence of God in Creation

Come and join to sense the presence of God in creation on 19th June 2021 as we take a stroll along the old Singapore-Malaysia railway track completing the walk at Railway Mall. We will implement all Covid-19 measures current on that day. Please bring along your mask and water bottle. Contact person is Luke (mobile 97842891).

[Subject to the Multi-Ministry Taskforce and Ministry of Health announcements during the period covering 19th June 2021]