

Labor Day 2012
All Saints Parish
Fr. Andy Szebenyi, SJ

My dear Brothers and Sisters, some consider the need for human labor as a punishment of original sin. It may be so, if we labor for something that is destructive and evil. Otherwise, human labor is holy just as God's created gifts are holy.

Consider the beautiful prayer of the offertory: "Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation, for through your goodness we have received the bread we offer you: fruit of the earth and work of human hands. It will become for us the bread of life."

In this beautiful prayer, "fruit of the earth" means that the bread we offer is a created gift. "Work of human hands" means our part in what we offer. And the words: "the bread of life," mean that God's gift, and our labor, are for our well being.

Or consider this: Jesus is the Son of God and son of Mary. He is the most wonderful divine gift, together with the most loving human labor. They together bring us our well being in our salvation.

So you see, my Sisters and Brothers, human labor can be truly holy, and it is through our labor that we become part of God's unfolding creation. This is the Christian meaning of human labor, and this is the Christian meaning of the national holiday: Labor Day.

It is through our loving and caring labor that we are stewards of God's creation. Amen.