



## On the Call to Work

### OPENING SONG

"Those Who Love and Those Who Labor"\*

### READER

"As the seeker prayed, along past him came the crippled and the beggar and the beaten. And seeing them . . . he cried, 'Great God, how is it that a loving creator can see such things and yet do nothing about them?' . . . God said, 'I did do something. I made you.'"

—Sufi parable

### LEADER

In the opening chapters of the book of Genesis, our Scriptures tell us of the work of God that is creation. With tenderness and care, day after day, God labors to bring forth the earth and all that is in it. On the last day of creation, God takes one creature from amidst the rest and breathes into this being God's very own breath—God's very own life. This creature, Scripture tells us, is formed in God's very own image and likeness. This creature is called to participate with God in the ongoing work of creation. This creature has a most special role in the universe: This creature is a worker.

### READER

"Workers are called to pursue justice. In the Catholic tradition, work is not a burden. Work is a way of supporting our family, realizing our dignity, promoting the common good and participating in God's creation. Decisions made at work can make important contributions to an ethic of justice. Catholics have the often difficult responsibility of choosing between competing values in the workplace. This is a measure of holiness."†

### LEADER

Let us take a moment to reflect on our own call to work. (Pause for silent reflection after each question.)

- In what way does the work that you do support those that you care about most?
- In what way does your work help you to realize your full dignity, your full potential?
- In what way does your work serve the common good?



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- In what way is your work part of God's ongoing work of creation?
- What are the kinds of difficult decisions that your work calls you to make?
- How does the work that you do call you to holiness?

*(If time permits, invite participants in the prayer to break into pairs for five to 10 minutes to share one of the fruits emerging from their personal reflection.)*

### LEADER

When considering the great dignity and call of the human person, our ancestors in the faith were moved to marvel. Let us now pray together in their timeless words of praise:

### SIDE 1

O Lord, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have established; what are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them?

### SIDE 2

Yet you have made them a little lower than God, and crowned them with glory and honor. You have given them dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under their feet.

### ALL

O Lord, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

—Psalm 8

### LEADER

And so, as we conclude our time of prayer and reflection this day, do not let the learning and conversations of this gathering die, but allow them to germinate within us and bear fruit in our ministries throughout the year. We ask this in the name of Jesus, in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

### CLOSING SONG

"We Are Called"‡

\* Lyrics: Geoffrey Dearmer; Melody: "Hymn to Joy," Ludwig van Beethoven, GIA Publications.

† U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Everyday Christianity: To Hunger and Thirst for Justice*, Washington, DC, 1998.

‡ David Haas, GIA Publications.

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