

In Their Midst

Session 13. As the Lord Had Commanded

God gathers willing hearts and Spirit-given abilities into faithful work ordered toward his presence.

What We Found

Israel's sanctuary was not built by one heroic individual. Some people gave materials, some designed, some taught, some spun cloth, some constructed, and Moses exercised oversight. Their different contributions served one received purpose.

God's initiative did not make human work unnecessary. He gave the command, called the workers, and supplied wisdom and skill. The people then cooperated freely, generously, competently, and obediently.

The people brought more than enough, and Moses stopped the collection. Their generosity was willing rather than coerced, while their leaders practiced honesty and restraint.

The completed components were brought to Moses and measured against what God had commanded. Moses saw the finished work and blessed the people. Everything was ready, but the great question remained: would God's glory come to dwell among them?

Voices of the Church

St. John Henry Newman, 1801-1890

St. John Henry Newman teaches that holiness ordinarily grows through attending faithfully to the duties of one's state of life, doing each task at its proper time and as well as one can.

Meditations and Devotions, Part III, "A Short Road to Perfection".

How this is cited. This is a close summary of Newman's practical counsel in the named meditation, not a direct quotation.

For the group. Invite the group to recognize careful, ordinary work as a real field of holiness rather than a distraction from it.

St. Josemaría Escrivá, 1902-1975

St. Josemaría teaches that Christians are called to sanctify their work, to be sanctified through that work, and to help sanctify others through it.

Conversations with Monsignor Escrivá de Balaguer 114.

How this is cited. This is a faithful summary of the threefold teaching on the sanctification of work in section 114.

For the group. The artisans of Exodus help the group ask how competence, integrity, and service can become an offering to God.

St. John Paul II, 1920-2005

St. John Paul II distinguishes the Creator, who brings being from nothing, from human artisans, who shape existing materials. He teaches that artistic creativity remains a genuine participation in the wisdom and generosity received from God.

Letter to Artists 1.

How this is cited. This is a summary of the opening section's distinction between the Creator and the human craftsman.

For the group. Skill is neither self-created nor passive. It is a received gift that matures through disciplined human cooperation.

Live It This Week

Practices

1. Choose one ordinary duty you are tempted to rush or resent. Complete it carefully, on time, and without seeking praise. Before beginning, offer it to God for a specific person.
2. Make a simple inventory of three gifts God has entrusted to you: one practical skill, one material resource, and one ability that can build up another person. Use at least one of them in concrete service this week.
3. Practice a real limit on work. Protect a period of Sunday for Mass, rest, prayer, and human communion rather than treating constant productivity as a virtue.
4. Thank someone whose quiet craftsmanship or service supports your parish, campus ministry, workplace, or home. Name the specific good that person's work makes possible.

Scripture Memory

Exodus 39:43

"And Moses saw all the work, and behold, they had done it; as the LORD had commanded, so had they done it. And Moses blessed them."

Exodus 39:43

Ready Response

One gift I will offer more deliberately this week is:

The gift or resource:

The person or community it can serve:

The concrete action I will take:

Go Further in the Catechism

- CCC 2003. Charisms serve grace and the common good.
- CCC 2427. Work can participate in creation and become a means of sanctification.
- CCC 2501. Artistic gifts come from the Creator.
- CCC 2502. Sacred art should lead toward God's mystery.
- CCC 1180-1181. Visible churches signify God's dwelling with a reconciled people and are houses of prayer where the Eucharist is celebrated and reserved.

Before next session. Read Exodus 40:1-38 before we meet again.