

The Vocation of Work

This pathway explores how our daily work contributes to our sanctification as part of God's divine plan. Participants will learn how, from the beginning of creation, God has entrusted us with dignified work that helps us play a part in the world as co-creators with the Father. Understanding how work is a part of rather than separate from our life of faith will help participants see how they can bring their Catholic values into their work, whatever that may be.

AT GLANCE

Sessions	5
Content Runtime	1hr 6min
Liturgical Season	Any
Content	The Dignity of Work
Content Language Offerings	English

WHAT PARTICIPANTS WILL LEARN

- An understanding of the qualities of dignified work through a Catholic lens
- Knowledge of how work contributes to our sanctification
- Appreciation for how Catholic values can be brought into daily work

WAYS TO RUN THIS PATHWAY

Retreat	1 half-day retreat
Weekly Small Group	5 1-hour sessions
Weekly Short Gathering	5 30 minute gatherings

PATHWAYS RESOURCES

Video Content

- Episode 1. God's Mission for Man
- Episode 2. Work Life and Family Life
- Episode 3. Work and the World
- Episode 4. Work and Holiness
- Episode 5. Putting Work in its Place



Pathway Resources

See all pathway information and materials on the Formed Resource Center

- Videos
- Discussion Materials
- Additional Support

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Gospel of Work with Andreas Widmer
- What Catholics Believe About Work: Purpose, Dignity & Vocation
- Why Work Matters: A Catholic Perspective on Purpose & Productivity

Video Content

Episode 1. God's Mission for Man | The Dignity of Work

13 minutes

Work is more than a paycheck or a daily grind; it is a vocation. In *Into the Breach: The Dignity of Work*, theologians, pastors, and Catholic leaders reflect on God's original plan for human work and how our labor participates in His ongoing act of creation.

Rooted in Scripture and Catholic teaching, we explore how work, whether manual or intellectual, shapes our identity, serves the common good, and can become a path to holiness when centered on Christ. We hear the powerful witness of Catholic farmer Jesse Straight, whose life and livelihood reveal the beauty of work done with humility, stewardship, and faith.

Episode 2. Work Life and Family Life | The Dignity of Work

12 minutes

Work is an essential part of a man's vocation, but it must be rightly ordered. Here, our focus turns to the relationship between work, family life, and faith, and the difficult but necessary choices men face in balancing these responsibilities. Viewers hear the powerful testimony of Damien O'Connor, whose journey through missionary work, demanding labor, family challenges, and physical suffering ultimately led him to deeper surrender and a renewed call to serve the Church.

Featuring reflections from theologians, Catholic leaders, and public figures, we challenge the modern myth that men can "have it all" and instead invite discernment rooted in prayer, sacrifice, and love. St. Joseph, faithful worker, husband, and father, emerges as the model for integrating work and family with humility and trust in God.

Episode 3. Work and the World | The Dignity of Work

14 minutes

Our work never affects only ourselves. Here our focus widens to examine how human work shapes communities, cultures, and the common good, and how each man is called to put his God-given talents at the service of others. We hear the compelling witness of firefighter Luke Bourgault, whose life of service during catastrophic wildfires reveals how courage, brotherhood, and faith bring light in moments of great crisis.

We also explore enduring questions of justice in the workplace, fair wages, dignity of labor, and the responsibilities of employers, while engaging emerging challenges posed by automation and artificial intelligence.

Video Content (Continued)

Episode 4. Work and Holiness | The Dignity of Work

13 minutes

Work does not just shape the world around us; it shapes who we become. Catholic leaders and witnesses reflect on how everyday labor, when offered to God, becomes a powerful means of personal sanctification.

Drawing on the teachings of St. John Paul II and the lived experience of men striving to live their faith at work, we discover how habits formed through work can lead us toward virtue, or away from it. Viewers hear the moving testimony of Col. Dr. Ed Lopez, whose demanding work as a military physician became a crucible for faith, perseverance, and deeper reliance on God.

From the hidden years of Christ the carpenter to the ordinary, often unglamorous tasks of daily life, no labor is wasted when it is done with integrity, humility, and love. Christ Himself is the true worker, and we are His apprentices.

Episode 5. Putting Work in Its Place | The Dignity of Work

14 minutes

Work is essential to human flourishing, but it is not the highest purpose of our lives. Our series culminates in a powerful reflection on leisure, worship, and the right ordering of work within the broader call to holiness.

Drawing on Scripture, Catholic tradition, and the wisdom of the Church, this episode explores leisure as something far deeper than rest or entertainment. True leisure is the space where we encounter truth, beauty, and goodness, and ultimately, where we give God His due through worship. In a culture of constant distraction and disordered busyness, this episode challenges men to reclaim Sabbath rest, intentional presence, and meaningful leisure as essential to a fully human life.

We also hear the compelling witness of Deacon Patrick Toole, whose career as a global executive reveals how faith, leisure, and rightly ordered priorities—God, family, and work—make authentic leadership and lasting peace possible.

Additional Resources

Gospel of Work with Andreas Widmer

8 episodes

What is the purpose of work? Why do so many of us struggle to find meaning in our jobs or careers? In this 8-part video series led by Andreas Widmer, *The Gospel of Work* wrestles with the significance of work, and how to find purpose in our work, no matter the field in which we labor.

Informed by the teachings of the Catholic Church and inspired by what Widmer learned from Pope St. John Paul the Great while serving as a Swiss Guard in the Vatican, this series takes a close look at what Scripture and Tradition have to say about the vocation and meaning of work and the important role it plays in our human flourishing. The sad truth is that 85% of employees are not actively engaged or (are) actively disengaged at work.

This series was created to help you get re-engaged and find joy and meaning in your work. Work should be liberating and infuse you with purpose: it should sanctify you! We want you to experience this good news for yourself and to take away the life-giving fruits of your labor. Are you ready to not just make more, but become more through your work? Looking to implement the Gospel of Work course into your professional and personal life?

What Catholics Believe About Work: Purpose, Dignity & Vocation

9 minutes

Join Fr. Nathan Cromley as he answers some of the Internet's most pressing questions about work. Is work a result of sin? How should I balance work and family life? What is the meaning of work? Find out the Catholic Church's answer to these questions and more in this episode of *What Catholics Believe*.

Why Work Matters: A Catholic Perspective on Purpose & Productivity

51 minutes

Work isn't just a paycheck — it's a path to holiness. In this episode of *Practicing Catholic*, Taylor Kemp and Dr. Scott Hefelfinger dive deep into the Catholic understanding of work: why it's fundamentally good, how Scripture and Church teaching frame it, and how simple practices like the morning offering can transform your daily routine. They discuss real-world struggles like distraction, burnout, and the temptation to see work as “just drudgery,” and offer practical ways to see your labor as a way to glorify God. If you've ever wondered How should Catholics approach work? or How can I find purpose in my daily job? — this episode is for you.

Use Cases

Note: select discussion questions ahead of time to maximize time for conversation

Half-Day Retreat

9:00 AM	Arrival, coffee, opening prayer to St. Joseph the Worker
9:10 AM	Introductions and an icebreaker question from page 4 of the guide
9:20 AM	Episode 1, then 9:35 - 9:55 AM discussion, 2 questions
9:55 AM	Episode 2, then 10:10 - 10:30 AM discussion, 2 questions
10:30 AM	Break
10:45 AM	Episode 3, then 11:00 - 11:20 AM discussion, 2 questions
11:20 AM	Episode 4, then 11:35 - 11:55 AM discussion, 2 questions
11:55 AM	Episode 5, then 12:10 - 12:30 PM discussion, 2 questions
12:30 PM	Call to Battle. One challenge from the series, committed to as a group.
12:50 PM	Prayer intentions and the St. Michael Prayer

5-Week Small Group

7:00 PM	Opening prayer to St. Joseph the Worker and silent recollection
7:05 PM	Introductions and an icebreaker question from page 4 of the guide
7:15 PM	Watch the episode
7:30 PM	Understanding the Breach. Pick 3 of the 5 or 6 questions.
7:48 PM	Call to Battle. Review last week's commitment, then pick this week's.
7:57 PM	Prayer intentions and the St. Michael Prayer

Use Cases (Continued)

5-Week Short Gathering Before Work

Note: send discussion questions ahead of time to maximize time for conversation

6:30 AM	Opening prayer to St. Joseph the Worker
6:33 AM	One sentence each, what stayed with you. 60-second recap for anyone who missed it.
6:38 AM	The 2 Understanding the Breach questions the leader sent ahead, 7 minutes each
6:52 AM	Call to Battle. Each man names one challenge out loud.
6:57 AM	Prayer intentions and the St. Michael Prayer
7:00 AM	Mass



See all materials on the **Formed Resource Center**

Discover comprehensive resources and training designed to help your ministry flourish

www.parish.formed.org

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