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Tools To Succeed in Our Spiritual Work

By T J Burdick

Work is an essential part of our lives. We cannot avoid it, nor should we, for even before the Fall God called Adam to work – till the fields, name the animals, be fruitful and multiply. We give our worldly work great importance– we pledge 40+ hours to it per week, we train ourselves mentally and physically for it, we wrap a lot of our feelings of self-worth into it, and we earn the money we need to survive through it.

So, what about our *spiritual* work? Do we dedicate time to philosophical musings or theological study? Do we train ourselves through prayer and fasting? Is our self-worth tied into our holy longing? Through our perseverance of spiritual goals, are we being made worthy of the priceless gift of eternal life?

On a recent episode of the Word on Fire podcast, Bishop Robert Barron spoke about his “Intellectual work bench,” a place akin to a carpenter’s shop, but for the knowledge worker. There he, like many Saints before him, grapple with the mind-bending process of knowing God.

How do we work spiritually?

The first step is simply showing up to work. Many people, unfortunately, spend the majority of their awake hours trapped in the physical world of work and entertainment. They spend their daylight hours toiling for a paycheck and spend it almost immediately on pleasure and sustenance. We can’t blame them, after all, it is human nature to satisfy our biological needs and achieve emotional highs. But it’s never enough.

Discovering the Why

When people approach the intellectual workbench for the first time, they wrestle with Catholic truth much like a woodworker’s apprentice. They cut improper angles by rationalizing their sin. They get blisters in their hands as God’s will rubs against their own. But where human nature falls, Divine nature rises. We continue to show up to the intellectual workbench because we know that nothing else satisfies– we know we are to make something more of ourselves.

Utilizing the Tools

There are drawers in the intellectual workbench, each one filled with several tools. With every project we voluntarily take on or have given to us by fate, the tools become necessary components to getting the job done. There are your trusty “always-needed” tools like the tape measure of conscience, the rosary rope that binds you to Our Lady’s advice, the instruction manuals of the Bible and the Catechism, and the hammer and nails of the simple prayers you learned as a kid.

But then there are those “use-them-when-I-need-them” tools.

The jigsaw of retreat that cuts out of your day-to-day norms.

The crowbar of confession.

The paint brush that covers you with grace after every Mass.

The wrench of novenas that you twist so the bolts of faith are air tight.

As you get older, you add more tools to your shop. And, if you’re wise, you keep them clean and orderly, easily discoverable for the next time when the job calls for their use.

Building Your Life

Work’s effect on the soul is profound. What we do defines us with a power just short of the sacraments. God provides us with talents– some innate, some learned– then calls us to use them to serve the needs of our world. In return, we receive our daily bread, our economic stability, and if you’re lucky, peace of mind. In the end, what we do for work roughly equates *who we are*. In this world, we are defined by what we *do*. In the spiritual world, we are defined by who we *are*. Both are necessary for the salvation of souls... especially your own. And both require hard work.



November 19, 2023
 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP PARISH

Looking Ahead to the Season of Advent

Dear Parishioners,

Don’t you just love it when there are carols in the air? Even the silly ones put a little skip in our step as we go about our day-to-day activities at this time of the year. Mind you, we need to take care not to skip over an entire liturgical season as we rush headlong into Christmas. I’m talking about the season of Advent.

The Church sets aside this very special liturgical season for us to do some serious interior preparation before the birth of Jesus. In the old days, Advent was quite an austere time, almost a mini-Lent. Christians would devote themselves to much prayer and fasting before Christmas. For most people today, Advent tends to be a time of spiritual reflection and prayer. Simple acts of self-giving can also do a lot to feed the spirit.

One opportunity to do this is to participate in the Food Bank drive we’re starting at our parish. It begins in Advent and will continue all year-round. It’s a wonderful act of love and caring for those who have less than us. It’s also a good way to encourage children to save a few dimes each week to buy a can of tuna or a packet of spaghetti for the poor. Donations of these non-perishable items can be dropped into the collection bins we’ll have at the church entrance each week at Mass times. Regular delivery runs will be made to the Food Bank to drop off your donations.

Another parish highlight for Advent is the Concert and Light-up on the evening of Saturday Dec 2. The program features a selection of readings on the theme of light with music performed by the parish choirs, school children, soloists and instrumentalists. The light-up of the church and church grounds will take place from the grotto after the concert and hot chocolate and Christmas cookies will be served after.

One more means of deeper reflection this year is attending the Advent Retreat led by Allan Forsberg. Allan is a trained spiritual director and retreat leader from Grande Prairie. Allan and his wife, Mindy, have two grown children, and are members of St. Joseph Parish. He has an abiding interest in spirituality, the sacraments and Christian theology and is an active member of the Peace Retreats team. We are blessed to have him come our way. I encourage all of you to attend.

Please note the Christmas Mass schedule is on the calendar of Upcoming Events.

Peace with gratitude,
 Fr Leo

Pope Francis’ Prayer for Peace

Mary, look at us! We stand here before you. You are our Mother, and you know our struggles and our hurts. Queen of Peace, you suffer with us and for us, as you see so many of your children suffering from the conflicts and wars that are tearing our world apart.

This is a dark hour, Mother. In this dark hour, we look to you, and in the light of your countenance we entrust ourselves and our problems to your maternal Heart, which knows our anxieties and fears.

Prayed on Oct 27, 2023
 at the Conclusion of
 Pacem in Terris
 Holy Hour



NEWS & NOTICES

October 2023 Collection

Sunday Offerings received in the month of October totalled \$37,508.05. Thank you for your faith-filled contribution.

Project Advance Update

Dear friends, we are drawing close to the end of this year's Project Advance appeal. Our pledges are currently at \$104,529. All we need is \$25,500 to hit our parish target. To all who've given thus far, thank you! If you have not donated yet, please pray about how you can support this year's appeal. Please submit your donation by 11am Friday Dec 29 to allow processing time for a 2023 tax receipt. Please submit online donations by Sat Dec 30.

Applications to Our Lady of Perpetual Help School

We are now accepting applications to our parish school for the 2024 - 2025 school year. Please visit the school website at www.olphbc.ca for the link to complete the application form. We are looking forward to welcoming many new families next year!

Home Missions Second Collection

The second collection on the weekend of November 18/19 is to support home missions. This appeal supports parishes and dioceses which cannot provide basic pastoral services to Catholics without outside help. Basic pastoral services include Mass and sacraments, religious education, and ministry training for priests, deacons, religious sisters and lay people.

Canadians for a Synodal Church

Join us for a virtual conversation with voting delegates from the synod in Room. The speakers are:

- Most Reverend Michael Miller, CSB, Archbishop of Vancouver
- Sr. Elizabeth Davis, RSM, Sisters of Mercy, Newfoundland
- Ms. Catherine Clifford, Theologian, St. Paul University, Ottawa

Join us online on Wednesday, November 22, at 3:30 p.m. Learn more and register at beholdvancouver.org/events.

Applications to Little Flower Academy

Little Flower Academy is accepting applications from prospective Grade Eight candidates for the 2024 - 2025 school year. All students wishing to apply must sit the ENTRANCE EXAM on Saturday, December 2, 2023. For more information and online application, please visit our website (www.lfabc.org) or contact Kathi Wilson, Registrar, at silsonk@lfabc.org or call (604)738-9015, ext. 114.

MASSES & SERVICES

Saturday Anticipated Mass: 5pm
 Sunday Masses: 9am, 11am, 5pm
 Mon - Fri Masses: 8am
 Thurs OLPH Novena: After 8am Mass
 Sat & Holidays: 9am Mass
 Sat Adoration: 9:30am - 10am
 Reconciliation
 Sat 4pm - 4:45pm
 By Appointment: 604-224-4344

OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Thursday 9:30am-4pm
 Friday 9:30am - 1:30pm

CLERGY & STAFF

Pastor
 Fr. Leo English, CSsR
Associate Pastor
 Fr. Alfredo Medina Ramos, CSsR
In-Residence
 Fr. Mark Miller, CSsR
Pastoral Coordinator
 Bertilla Watanabe, MA PS
 Available Mon - Thurs
Reception
 Kathy Mok
 Available Mon/Wed-Fri
Office Manager
 Virginia Fong
 Available Tue - Thurs
Bookkeeper
 Corinna Siy
 Contact email: csiy.olph@rcav.org

OLPH School Principal

Deirdre O'Callaghan
Jr. Kindergarten Director
 Maria Cortese

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 Facebook: [olphchurchvancouver](https://www.facebook.com/olphchurchvancouver)

OLPH Church, 2465 Crown Street,
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We Know the 'Thou Shall Nots,' but What 'Shall We Do'? The Changing Face of Catholic Moral Teaching

The final Centre for Christian Engagement event for 2023 takes place on December 6 at St. Mark's College at UBC. Join us to hear Fr. Mark Miller, C.Ss.R, the Visiting Scholar in Ethics for St. Mark's College and Providence Health Care for 2023-2024, speak about "We Know the 'Thou Shall Nots,' but What 'Shall We Do'?" The Changing Face of Catholic Moral Theology.

Fr. Miller, who holds a doctorate in moral theology from the University of Notre Dame (1992), says that Catholic moral theology struggled for centuries to identify sins as exactly as possible and entered into numerous controversies about moral norms and laws. As a result, moral living was often directed by the "Thou shalt nots," creating an atmosphere of strict obedience of clear-cut laws. Today the question "Who do we want to be as followers of Christ?" has come to the forefront and Fr. Miller shall explore some of the consequences of this major shift.

The event will be held on Wednesday, Dec, 6, 2023, 7:00PM-9:30PM. St. Mark's College. 5935 Iona Drive, Vancouver, BC. Please join us following this event for St. Nicholas Day Desserts and Fellowship Reception. Register on Eventbrite to attend or email cccconferences@stmarkscollege.ca for questions.

ADVENT RETREAT
 Come as a Child:
 An Advent Retreat
 for Men and
 Women
 9:30am - 3:30pm
 December 16, 2023
 OLPH Parish Hall
 Presenter:
 Allan Forsberg

UPCOMING EVENTS

First Reconciliation Parents Meeting	Monday Nov 20	7:00pm Church
Development & Peace Meeting	Thursday Nov 30	7:00pm Madonna Rm
First Reconciliation & Reception	Saturday Dec 2	10:00am Church/Hall
Advent Concert & Light-Up	Saturday Dec 2	7:00pm - 8:30pm Church/Grotto
Children's Mass & Coffee	Sunday Dec 3	9am Church/Landing
Advent Retreat	Saturday Dec 16	Time TBA Church
4th Sunday of Advent Masses	Saturday Dec 23 Sunday Dec 24	5pm (Anticipated Mass) 9am & 11am
Christmas Eve Masses	Sunday Dec 24	4pm (Children's Mass) 11:45pm Caroling 12am Midnight Mass
Christmas Day Masses	Monday Dec 25	9am, 11am & 4pm
Christmas Week	Tues - Sat Dec 26 - Dec 31	9am Morning Mass
Feast of the Holy Family	Saturday Dec 30 Sunday Dec 31	5pm (Anticipated Mass) 9am, 11am & 5pm
New Year's Day Masses	Monday 1 January	9am & 4pm



Journey through
 this season
 of preparation
 with our two
 new Advent series!

FORMED.ORG... IT'S LIKE CATHOLIC NETFLIX

Formed is a Catholic streaming service free to all OLPH parishioners till Sept next year. It offers over 4000 titles of Catholic content from movies, faith studies, audio books and children's programs. To sign up go to signup.formed.org/ and join the parish account using our parish zip code V6R3V9.



PROJECT ADVANCE

PROJECT ADVANCE 2023

Archdiocesan Goal: \$49,800 | OLPH Parish Target: \$130,000

Proposed church upgrades for 2023

Repositioning of tabernacle with new furnishings | Reflooring |
 New lectern | Cladding of existing pillars | Improved lighting on side aisles |
 Seating for choir | Four stained-glass windows