



CENTER FOR CATHOLIC STUDIES

TO: IBC AND MICAH PARTICIPANTS
FROM: MONSIGNOR RICHARD LIDDY
SUBJECT: THE COST AND DIGNITY OF PHYSICAL WORK
DATE: MAY 2018

- **Welcome and Self-Introductions**
- **Ignatian Business Chapters Mission Statement**
 - The Mission of the Ignatian Business Chapters is to establish and lead a national and international network of business executives to explore their respective religious traditions in order to help the individual executives:
 - To integrate faith, family, and professional life,
 - To develop a corporate culture that is reflective of their religious faith and values
 - To exercise a beneficial influence upon society at large.
 - The conference, grounded in the Roman Catholic tradition, welcomes believers who are open to and respectful of one another's religious tradition. It is committed to the conviction that ethics and values grow out of one's religious heritage.

- **Scripture Reading: Ecclesiastes 3: 9-13, on work**

What does a man gain from the efforts he makes? I contemplate the task that God gives mankind to labor at. All that he does is apt for its time; but though he has permitted man to consider time in its wholeness, man cannot comprehend the work of God from the beginning to the end.

I know there is no happiness for man except in pleasure and enjoyment while he lives. And when man eats and drinks and finds happiness in his work, this is a gift from God.

- **Quiet Reflection: 5 minutes followed by sharing insights**
- **Article: Commonweal: “How to Fell a Tree. The Cost & Dignity of Physical Work” by Mark Phillips**

Mark Phillips made his career as a teacher, but he has been formed by punishing hard work—that of his forebears and his own. In this article he explores the implications of the question, “Don’t they teach this in the Ivy League?”

Link: <http://www.commonwealmagazine.org/how-fell-tree>

- **Questions to initiate discussion:**
 - **Be Attentive:** As you read this article, what memories, thoughts, and feelings did it evoke?
 - **Be Intelligent:** What generational words or whispers reached you about work? How did you pursue work? What do you notice about members of the next generation and their work? What have been your words or whispers, or your example, to your children, nieces, and nephews?
 - **Be Reasonable:** Has work been a gift from God for you? Has it been a burden? What role does physical labor play in your life?
 - **Be Responsible:** The *Catholic Worker* was founded on May 1, and may of Peter Maurin’s “Easy Essays,” published in that newspaper speak to the dignity of work and the worker. Notice this month those who are engaged in physical work, and acknowledge them through a smile, a thank you, a more generous tip. How will this conversation today impact you as you move into your work, family, and community?
- **Closing Prayer: Suscipe, St. Ignatius**

Take Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and my entire will, all I have and call my own. To you Lord, I return it. Everything is yours; do with it what you will. Give me only your love and your grace that is enough for me. Glory be to the

Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen

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