



The Holy See

JOHN PAUL II

GENERAL AUDIENCE

Wednesday 1 May 2002

Pray the Rosary daily for the gift of peace

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

1. Today, on the first of May, we observe *Labour Day*. We Christians place the celebration under the patronage of St Joseph the Worker. We observe such an important day with initiatives that tend to emphasize the importance and value of the work by which the human person, transforming nature and adapting it to his needs, *realizes himself as a human being*.

The Lord's invitation to *subdue the earth* (cf. Gn 2,28), that we find at the beginning of the history of salvation, holds a definitive and contemporary importance. Creation is a gift that God entrusts to the human being so that by carefully cultivating and safeguarding it, it can supply his needs. From our work comes the "*daily bread*" that we pray for in the Our Father.

One can say that through his work the *human person becomes more human*. This is why industriousness is a virtue. For industriousness effectively to permit the person to *become more human*, it must always be joined with the social disposition of work. Only in this way will we protect the inalienable dignity of the person and the human and social value of the work that is done. To the watchful protection of St Joseph the Worker we entrust those who belong to the great family of work in every place in the world.

2. Today we begin *the month dedicated to Our Lady* a favourite of popular devotion. In accord with a longstanding tradition of devotion, parishes and families continue to make the month of May a "Marian" month, celebrating it with many devout liturgical, catechetical and pastoral initiatives!

May it really be a month of *intense prayer with Mary!* This is the wish I wholeheartedly formulate for each of you, Brothers and Sisters, recommending to you once again the daily *prayer of the Rosary*. It is a simple and repetitive prayer but very profitable for drawing us into the mysteries of Christ and of his and our Mother. It is also a way of praying that the Church knows is pleasing to Our Lady. We are invited to make use of it, especially in the more difficult moments of our earthly pilgrimage.

3. Beginning the month of Mary, I invite all of you to join with me in praying *for workers*, especially those who experience difficulties in the workplace. We also need to intensify our confident and unceasing prayer *for peace in the Holy Land* where we hope that the Israeli and Palestinian peoples, who are so dear to me, will come to live in security and serenity. May the intercession of Our Lady and of St Joseph, her Spouse and the Guardian of the Redeemer, obtain it for us.

The Pope mentioned several of the English-speaking groups who were present.

I am pleased to greet the delegation from the Nagasaki Prefecture in Japan. I also greet the Norwegian students from Adger University College. I thank the Wartburg College Choir for their praise of God in song. Upon all the English-speaking pilgrims and visitors present at today's Audience, I cordially invoke God's blessings of grace and peace.

Finally the Holy Father addressed the young people, the sick and newly-weds.

Dear young people, today at the beginning of the month of May, dedicated in a special way to the Mother of the Lord, I invite you to place yourselves in the school of Mary to learn how to love God above all things and to be ever ready and willing to do his will. May you *sick persons* be helped by the contemplation of Our Lady of Sorrows to look with faith at the mystery of suffering and be able to find the hidden salvific value of every cross. I entrust you *newly-weds* to the protection of Our Lady and St Joseph so that you can live in your family the spirit of prayer and love that were present in the house of Nazareth.