

# Back to school and back to work, but Christ is our classmate



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Summer vacation is over and it's back-to-school and back-to-work time. The time has come to go back to the factory, the office, or the classroom. It is difficult not to mourn the holidays. Is there a Christian way of living the back-to-school season? Let's look in our faith for the resources we need to get through this return to "normal" life in the best possible way.

## **Back to the reality principle**

The back-to-school season reminds the Christian that though he already lives in Christ, he is still no less subject, like his fellow men, to the contingency of things on earth. The “already here” of God’s Kingdom, which came on the day of the Resurrection, has not yet abolished the “not yet” of a hope that has yet to be fulfilled. Between the two, the disciple of Jesus must work, study, and struggle. He certainly does not live in a separate world away from unbelievers; we all share the same reality.

The end of summer vacation reminds us that Christ has not exempted his believers from the realities of daily life. Work and effort, the constraints of life in community, punctuality, colleagues that we did not choose: Life in Christ does not let us skip over all of this, even if the disciple can make it the source of a renewed quest for holiness.

## **Christ, our main work colleague**

However, let us make sure we remember that God will not abandon us to our own devices after the enchanted parenthesis of holidays. When we go back to our places of work or study, no thought is more consoling than the conviction that God remains our first ally and our main support in the middle of our activities. God is not only the partner of our relaxed moments. He is also present with us on the scene of our daily labors. And now is the perfect time to remember this truth.

Christ’s humanity was not absorbed by His divinity; the example of the synergy of the divine and human natures in Jesus Christ is for us the model of what life in the world should be. God does not take up all the space in my existence to the point of making my human affections count for nothing. But on the other hand, it would be ruinous not to ask Him for help in our active everyday life. If we approach this season with apprehension, let us remember that our main colleague and classmate is ... Jesus Christ!

## **The promises of our baptism**

The Kingdom is also built with our worldly activities, not just our worship. Christ reigns through the effort we make in our work or our studies. Here too, there is a perfect confluence between human affairs and God's service... to the point that we can say that it is the back-to-school season also for the Kingdom!

Work is indeed the place par excellence where we fulfill the promises of our baptism. By the first sacrament of Christian initiation, we became priests, prophets, and kings. Priests: our work allows us to offer God the fruits of our labors. Prophets: by manifesting, even with subtlety, the spiritual added value that our faith brings to our duties, we announce the power of the Gospel. Kings: our work leads to the fulfillment of the Creation that God left to our care.

## **An added meaning**

Thus, for a Christian, the back-to-work and back-to-school season is much more than a return to the "necessities of life." In Christ, it makes us feel the responsibilities that God has given us. At first, perhaps these considerations will not automatically make it easier to return to school/work after the vacation period. However, over time, there is no doubt that faith will give our work, as well as our studies, a greater meaning that will make it easier and more rewarding to fulfill. Happy back-to-school time!