Stewardship of Work

“Whatever you do work at it with all your heart as working for the Lord, not for men,”
Colossians 3:23
Saint Phocas was a gardener and Saint Euphrosinos was a cook. They are not known as “Phocas the Great” or “Euphrosinos the Theologian.” Known instead by the work they did, they became saints of the Church.
But is it possible for our work to be sacred?

Can we be Christian stewards of our work?
According to Saint Porphyrios,

“At your work, whatever it may be, you can become a saint through meekness, patience, and love.”
In the Book of Genesis we read, “The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it” (Genesis 2:15). God put man in the garden to work.

It is part of God’s plan for us that we work.
We are created and called by God to work, and we can serve him through our work.

“Wherever God has put you, that is your vocation. It is not what we do, but how much love we put into it.”

Mother Theresa
Saint Paul instructs us, “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men....” (Colossians 3:23). When we see our work in this way, we are able to become Christian stewards of our work.
Stewardship of work teaches us that we don’t own our work, our position, our title. We are only stewards of a position for a period of time.
We are responsible to those with whom we work and those that may be served by our work. We are called to reflect the light of Christ in their lives, encourage them, support them and even love them.
Saint Phocas the Gardener lived in the late 3rd Century, in the ancient region of Paphlagonia. He lived humbly on the sale of fruits and vegetables he would grow in his garden. Phocas fed the hungry and gave shelter to those in need, and became a Christian example to others. By his Christ-like manner, many were drawn to the Christian Faith.
Saint Euphrosynos worked as cook in a monastery in Palestine, serving the brother monks humbly and faithfully. The others were not aware of the depth of his spiritual growth until it was revealed in a dream to a priest-monk of the monastery and then related to the brother monks. Euphrosynos is known to us by his humble work – Saint Euphrosynos the Cook.
When we achieve some measure of worldly success, it is easy to say to ourselves as we read in the Old Testament Book of Deuteronomy (8:17), “My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.” But the next verse quickly reminds us, “Remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth.”
As Christian Stewards we are called to give back to God from the “first fruits” of our labor. We support our parish and her ministries in an intentional way and not with only what it left after everything else has been taken care of.
In whatever work we do, we are called to give glory to God for the abilities and opportunities he provides. We do our best and give the glory to God.