

# Dear Padre,

## What is the Catholic Church's position on grace versus works?

"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not from you; it is the gift of God; it is not from works" (Ephesians 2:8-9). The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* attests that we have merit in God's sight only because "God has freely chosen to associate man with the work of his grace" (CCC 2008). After God acted first on his own initiative, it then follows that we're free to act through his collaboration, "so that the merit of good works is to be attributed in the first place to the grace of God, then to the faithful" (CCC 2008). In other words, it's only through God's empowering Spirit in



each of us that makes our good works for salvation pleasing to the Lord!

Moreover, Catholics believe these good works "contribute to growth in grace, so that the righteousness that comes from God is preserved and communion with Christ is deepened. When Catholics affirm the 'meritorious' character of good works, they wish to say that...a reward in heaven is promised to these works. Their intention is to emphasize the responsibility of persons for their actions, not to contest the character of those works as gifts, or far less to deny that justification always remains the unmerited gift of grace" (*Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*, Lutheran World Federation and the Catholic Church, 38).

Christian prayer provides us with the grace that's needed for meritorious actions (CCC 2010).

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### A WORD FROM *Pope Francis*

*Do good works, don't just say words that are gone with the wind...Through the good works that we carry out with love and joy towards others, our faith emerges and bears fruit. Let us ask ourselves...Is our faith fruitful? Does our faith produce good works? Or is it sterile instead, and therefore more dead than alive?*

—ANGELUS, JULY 10, 2016

## Calendar

### Monday

OCTOBER 12

Weekday

Gal 4:22-24, 26-27,  
31-5:1

Lk 11:29-32

### Tuesday

OCTOBER 13

Weekday

Gal 5:1-6

Lk 11:37-41

### Wednesday

OCTOBER 14

Weekday

Gal 5:18-25

Lk 11:42-46

### Thursday

OCTOBER 15

St. Teresa of Jesus,  
Virgin and Doctor of  
the Church

Eph 1:1-10

Lk 11:47-54

### Friday

OCTOBER 16

Weekday

Eph 1:11-14

Lk 12:1-7

### Saturday

OCTOBER 17

St. Ignatius of Antioch,  
Bishop and Martyr

Eph 1:15-23

Lk 12:8-12

### Sunday

OCTOBER 18

Twenty-ninth Sunday in

Ordinary Time

Is 45:1, 4-6

1 Thes 1:1-5b

Mt 22:15-21