



When we think of our work, it is easy to quickly recall all of the small tasks we tend to each day, while sometimes forgetting the true essence of our collective labor. I'm grateful for the president's themes that remind us each year of one aspect of this University's enduring legacy. As you rest this coming Monday and celebrate the joys of work on Labor Day, please join me in praying for the individual and communal freedom we seek to promote through our work at Pepperdine.

*Loving and gracious God,*

*Thank you for the gift of work and for the invitation to join you as co-creators. We are thankful for the role of Pepperdine University to help bring about the flourishing of all people across the globe for your glory. As we reflect upon another dimension of our collective work this academic year, help us to promote freedom for ourselves and one another in our daily lives.*

*We recognize your love is at the heart of freedom. You freely loved us into being, and you gave us the freedom to love you in return and to choose that which is good. We ask for your help in the perseverance that freedom requires of us, and that we may enjoy the fullness of freedom found in you. Considering the education we provide and the shared life we enjoy, we thank you for freedom from*

*Meaninglessness, such that we may find purpose and fulfillment in the work you have placed before us*

*Consumption by which the world judges beauty and success, such that we may find our identity in you*

*Fear, such that we may love you and all people with abandon*

*Worry, such that we may rest in your faithful provision*

*Suspicion of those who are not like us, such that we may see you in all of your children*

*Ourselves, such that we may lose our life only to find it*

*Self-indulgence, such that we may use our freedom to serve one another*

*Blindly conforming to the beliefs of others, such that we may engage our own critical thinking and conscience to contribute to your peace and justice in this world*

*Control, such that we may learn the true power of humility*

*Ideas that preclude the flourishing of all people, such that we may help everyone live into life abundant*

*Certainty, such that we may be open to the mysterious and surprising movements of the Holy Spirit*

*Division, such that we may seek your primary intention of divine unity*

*Thank you for the wide variety of gifts, talents, perspectives, and approaches within our community, the richness and depth of which allow us to further our work in meaningful ways. We ask for an overflowing measure of your blessing on the faculty and staff of Pepperdine, in their personal, professional, and spiritual lives. We commend into your hands, gracious God, our anxieties, fears, hopes, and dreams, trusting in your abundant mercy. We pray all of this in your name, amen.*

**Sean Michael Phillips**

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