

THOUGHTS FOR THE WEEK

OUT OF MANY, ONE

September 2, 2022

The American summer ends with perhaps the most American of holidays. Celebrations of labor are not unique to America, but the American Labor Day celebrates a defining American trait – its harnessing of the power of labor to create economic prosperity the world had never before seen. America is no one uniform body. No single culture. It's a union of many – of many bodies, many cultures – forged from separate parts.

Walt Whitman once wrote, "The United States themselves are essentially the greatest poem." Poetry stitches together disparate words and phrases into something beautiful. So, too does America build something beautiful out of its separate parts. We may be a mess politically. And our economy may be teetering for now. But there's no place I'd rather be.

Enjoy the Labor Day weekend, whatever your adventure, whatever the weather brings, whichever way the wind blows. It's a privilege to enjoy the time here. We'll leave you with lines from Whitman's poem, *I Hear America Singing...*

I hear America singing, the varied carols I hear,
Those of mechanics, each one singing his as it should be blithe and strong,
The carpenter singing his as he measures his plank or beam,
The mason singing his as he makes ready for work, or leaves off work,
The boatman singing what belongs to him in his boat, the deck-hand singing on the steamboat deck ...
The delicious singing of the mother, or of the young wife at work, or of the girl sewing or washing,
Each singing what belongs to him or her and to none else

Thoughts will take an end of summer break and return on September 16th.

All the best,

Mike, Cate, Scott, Willis, Suzy, Oscar, and Westley

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Reference:

Many thanks to an article in the Atlantic, "Why Walt Whitman Called America the Greatest Poem", December 25, 2016, by Karen Swallow Prior. The Whitman poem and the ideas behind this piece were influenced by her writing...

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