

TWENTY-NINTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

October 22, 2023

Gospel: (Matthew 22:15-21)

The Pharisees went off and plotted how they might entrap Jesus in speech. They sent their disciples to him saying, “Teacher, we know that you a truthful man and that you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. And you are not concerned with anyone’s opinion, for you do not regard a person’s status. Tell us, then, what is your opinion: Is it lawful to pay the census tax to Caesar or not?” Knowing their malice, Jesus said, “*Why are you testing me, your hypocrites? Show me the coin that pays the census tax.*” Then they handed him the Roman coin. He said to them, “*Whose image is this and whose inscription?*” They replied, “Caesar’s.” At that he said to them, “*Then repay to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God.*”

Reflection:

Jesus’ answer puts things into perspective. There are different spheres of rule, and our loyalties are not either/or, but there are appropriate behavior belonging to both spheres. Christian living is being comfortable in all spheres, all having their just due, without compromising God’s sovereignty. When God is truly the center of our lives there is no problem with giving others their due. Conversely, giving others their due doesn’t necessarily compromise God as the center of our lives. Jesus shows that single-mindedness about God is even better expressed when we know clearly God’s place and everyone else’s place. (Living Liturgy, p.256)

Vincentian Meditation:

“Ah! My dear friend, what a troublous, but what an instructive time it is, through which we are passing! We may perish, but we must not regret having lived in it. Let us learn from it. Let us learn, first of all, to defend our belief without hating our adversaries, to appreciate those who do not think as we do, to recognize that there are Christians in every camp, and that God can be served now as always! Let us complain less of our times and more of ourselves. Let us not be discouraged, let us be better.” –Bl. Frederic Ozanam- (Ramson, Praying with Frederic, p.51)

Discussion: (*Share your thoughts after a moment of silence*)

As in Frederic’s day, we also are living in a “troublous but an instructive time.” What are we learning...?

Closing Prayer:

Christ died to bring peace to the world. And so we pray:

-Lord Jesus, grant us peace.

For an end to bitterness and hatred, we pray,

-Lord Jesus, grant us peace.

For an end to divisions among races and religions, we pray,

-Lord Jesus, grant us peace.

For an end to hostility between nations, we pray,

-Lord Jesus, grant us peace. Amen

I am the LORD, and there is no other.



Is 45:6