

# Link to Liturgy



## Repay to Caesar, what belongs to Caesar 29th Sunday of Ordinary Time

### Lessons and Discussions

#### Page 4 – Personal Finances

*“repay to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God”*

#### Page 7 - Hypocrisy

*“Why are you testing me, you hypocrites?”*

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*“they might entrap him in speech”*

#### Page 12 – Life, Liberty and the pursuit of happiness

*“Whose image is this?”*

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**Communion Antiphon (Ps. 8:2) – Simple English Propers**

*This should be chanted so that the time of prayer, study and discussion can be made sacred. Another song can be substituted, but should have the same theme.*

*Domine, Dominus noster*

*Ps 8: 2ab*

II

Lord our governor, how admira-ble is your  
name in all the earth!

**Source:** <http://www.ccwatershed.org>

**Alternate options:**

All Creatures of Our God and King

Faith of Our Fathers

Holy God, We Praise Thy Name

Now Thank We All Our God

Lord I Life Your Name on High (Rick Founds)

**Collect – Roman Missal**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.  
Amen

Almighty ever-living God  
grant that we may always conform our will to yours  
and serve your majesty in sincerity of heart.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.  
Amen

**Gospel Reading – Matthew 22:15-21 – Roman Missal**

*NOTE: In the Roman Catholic Tridentine Lectionary this Gospel is read on the Twenty-second Sunday after Pentecost*

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

### **“The End” Notes**

- [1] St. Ambrose
- [2] The Church’s Year pg. 455
- [3] In Conversation with God 5, 46.1
- [4] In Conversation with God 5, 46.1
- [5] In conversation with God 5, 46.3
- [6] A. Luciani, Illustrissimi, pg. 179
- [7] CCC 2043
- [8] Modern Catholic Dictionary pg. 261
- [9] The Church’s Year pg. 453
- [10] Modern Catholic Dictionary pg. 262
- [11] The Church’s Year pg. 454-455
- [12] In Conversation with God 5, 46.1
- [13] The Divine Liturgy; The Great Litany and the Antiphons
- [14] The Divine Liturgy; Litany of Perverent Supplication
- [15] The Church’s Year pg. 453
- [16] Abbot Gueranger, OSB; The Liturgical Year; Vol. 11
- [17] Saint John Paul II, Homily Philadelphia, 3 October 1979
- [18] CCC 27

- Glory to you O Lord

The Pharisees went off and plotted how they might entrap Jesus in speech. They sent their disciples to him, with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that you are 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, you 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."

The Gospel of the Lord.

- Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

### **Spiritual Reading**

*From Saint John Paul II*

The Declaration of Independence [contains] a solemn attestation of the equality of all human beings, endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights: life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, expressing a “firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence.” These are sound moral principles formulated by your Founding Fathers and enshrined forever in your history. In the human and civil values that are contained in the spirit of this Declaration there are easily recognized strong connections with basic religious and Christian values...As citizens, you must strive to preserve these human values, to understand them better and to define their consequences for the whole community, and as a worthy contribution to the world. As Christians, you must strengthen these human values and complement them by confronting them with the Gospel message, so that you may discover their deeper meaning, and thus assume more fully your duties and obligations toward your fellow human beings, with whom you are bound in a common destiny. In a way, for us, who know Jesus Christ, human and Christian values are but two aspects of the same reality: the reality of man, redeemed by Christ and called to the fullness of eternal life...It is then in Jesus Christ that every man, woman and child is called to find the answer to the questions regarding

the values that will inspire his or her personal and social relations...These values are strengthened: when power and authority are exercised in full respect for all the fundamental rights of the human person, whose dignity is the dignity of one created in the image and likeness of God (cf. Gn 1:26); when freedom is accepted, not as an absolute end in itself, but as a gift that enables self-giving and service; when the family is protected and strengthened, when its unity is preserved, and when its role as the basic cell of society is recognized and honored. Human-Christian values triumph when the system is reformed that authorizes the exploitation of any human being; when upright service and honesty in public servants is promoted; when the dispensing of justice is fair and the same for all; when responsible use is made of the material and energy resources of the world – resources that are meant for the benefit of all; when the environment is preserved intact for the future generations. Human-Christian values triumph by subjecting political and economic considerations to human dignity, by making them serve the cause of man – every person created by God, every brother and sister redeemed by Christ.

#### **Responsory – Office of Readings – 29<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time**

You will seek me, and when you seek with your whole heart, you will find me.

– You will pray to me, and I will listen to you.

I know the plans I have in mind for you, plans for your welfare and not for misfortune, plans that will give you a future full of hope.

– You will pray to me, and I will listen to you.

#### **Personal Finances - Lesson and Discussion**

*“...repay to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God”*

There is a saying that we should never bring up religion, politics, or money when speaking to strangers, friends or family that may have differing opinions. The Gospel reading today touches on all three of these. Jesus gives a response to their twisted questions so profoundly that they must relent their hypocrisy at that time.

**What does the Church teach about taxes?** The Church

Oremus. Omnipotens sempiternus Deus, qui gloriosae Virginis Matris Mariae corpus et animam, ut dignum Filii tui habitaculum effici mereretur, Spiritu Sancto cooperante, praeparasti, da, ut cuius commemoratione laetamur; eius pia intercessione, ab instantibus malis et a morte perpetua liberemur. Per eundem Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

#### **Slave Regina (English Translation)**

Hail, holy Queen, Mother of mercy, our life, our sweetness and our hope. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve. To thee to we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn, then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us, and after this, our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray. Almighty and everlasting God, Who by the working of the Holy Spirit didst prepare both body and soul of the glorious Virgin Mother, Mary, that she might deserve to be made a worthy dwelling for Thy Son, grant that we who rejoice in her memory, may, by her loving intercession, be delivered from present evils and from lasting death, through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Marian Antiphon – Salve Regina**

V  
S

Alve Re-gí-na, \* ma-ter mi-se-ri-córdi-æ, Vi-ta, dul-  
cé-do, et spes nostra, salve. Ad te clamá-mus, éx-su-  
les, fí-li-i Hevæ. Ad te suspi-rá-mus, geméntes et flen-  
tes in hac lacrimá-rum valle. E-ia ergo, Advo-cá-ta  
nostra, illos tu-os mi-se-ri-córdes ó-cu-los ad nos con-  
vér-te. Et Je-sum, be-ne-díctum fructum ventris tu-i,  
no-bis post hoc exsí-li-um osténde. O cle-mens:  
O pi-a: O dulcis Virgo Ma-rí-a.

V. Ora pro nobis, sancta Dei Genitrix.

R. Ut digni efficamur promissionibus Christi.

teaches what the Scriptures teach. “This is why you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, devoting themselves to this very thing. Pay to all their dues, taxes to whom taxes are due, toll to whom toll is due, respect to whom respect is due, honor to whom honor is due.” (Romans 13:6-7) This is all in the context of a lawful government.

**Why should I pay taxes?** Jesus Christ paid taxes. “If the Son of God Himself paid duty and tax,” says St. Ambrose, “Who art thou, O man, that thou wouldst free thyself from it?” In other words, if Jesus Christ paid taxes, what makes you so special that you would not? The government must protect peace and property. St. Ambrose goes on to speak of how the government is responsible for roads, crime, disasters and temporal welfare, and we must be able and willing to help through our taxes. “If you oppose these laws, you oppose God, for ‘by Him princes rule, and the mighty decree justice’ (Proverbs 8:16)”[1] “Let the payment of duties be done willingly, because you pay them for love of God, and resigned to His holy will as the early Christians did, who even served their heathenish government with pleasure, in all that was not contrary to God’s will, and cheerfully paid the duties.”[2] We see God using a pagan king, Cyrus, to bring his people back from exile in the first reading. (Is 45:1; 4-6) “The Lord uses political authority to do good. There is nothing in the universe that lies outside his paternal dominion.”[3]

**MUSIC – I So Hate Consequences (Acoustic) by Relient K – POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 4:11**

<http://youtu.be/NTDJM3Jxds>

In the opening, they sing of life after death and consequences. Both spiritually and monetarily, we sometimes want to run from our consequences and responsibilities, but we cannot run from these things. We have to face them head-on.

As for the government, they are to work towards the common good of the people they are serving and not for personal gain. “They have to legislate and govern with the greatest respect for the natural law and the rights of people. This includes the protection of life from the moment of conception, defense of the family, religious liberty, the rights of parents regarding the education of their children.”[4]

**Who was Caesar?** The Caesar of Rome was Tiberius (14-37 A.D.). (Matt. 22:21 footnotes) Jesus’ answer about repaying

Caesar was not a response about politics but about whether we serve the emperor or God. No man can serve two masters. (Matt. 6:24) Those who willingly use the coin that is Caesar's should repay him in kind.

**What about serving God?** We must remember that we owe everything to God. "The Lord is the life of every person from the moment of conception... Our entire life is for the Lord, and everything in it. How is it possible that we could reserve some area of it for our sole personal domain? Let us ask Our Lady to give us the joy of knowing that we are children of God. She will help us to realize our personal responsibilities in society at large." [5]

**What does the Church say about earning wealth?** The Church has always seen money as a tool and resource within cultures. As Christians, money is just a resource to purchase items that are necessities. It also can be used to achieve good works in the world. The distinction here is whether we in the world or of the world. To live *in* this world, we must have currency to make exchanges, but living *of* this world brews selfishness and the desire to amass the wealth to purchase elaborate things. This is something God does not want for us. God blesses people with great wealth, but asks for much in return. He asks them to look beyond the huge amount of money and continue to love and serve Him. God looks for them to do great things with the wealth they have been able to acquire.

**What is a good personal finance strategy for a Christian?**

Financial strategy for us is simple; do good works. Pope John Paul I wrote, "Today all seem frantically directed toward material conquests: make money, invest, surround oneself with new comforts, live the 'good life'. Few think also of 'doing good'." As mentioned earlier, there is nothing wrong with amassing wealth as long as we are directing our life to God and choosing to do good with the money. Is it used to pay off loans and debt, or to buy a PlayStation 3? Are we saving to purchase a bigger home that we do not need or putting money aside to give to a charity or Catholic organization? We must strive to do good in the world. This starts with stewardship in our parishes. "God, who should fill our life, has on the contrary, become a very distant star, to which people look only at certain moments. People believe they are religious because they go to church; but outside of church they want to lead the same life as many other, marked by small or big deceits, acts of injustice, sins against charity; and thus

to the ideas of freedom and justice  
and brotherhood for all who make it great.

Guard us from war,  
from fire and wind,  
from compromise, fear, confusion.

Be close to our president and our statesmen;  
give them vision and courage,  
as they ponder decisions affecting peace  
and the future of the world.

Make me more deeply aware of my heritage;  
realizing not only my rights  
but also my duties  
and responsibilities as a citizen.

Make this great land  
and all its people  
know clearly Your will,  
that they may fulfill  
the destiny ordained for us  
in the salvation of the nations,  
and the restoring of all things in Christ.

Amen

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.  
Amen

IR7c5J1Qe4 - Volición en Español

**What is the reality of man?** First, Christ redeems man. Second, man is called to the fullness of eternal life. “In a way, for us, who know Jesus Christ, human and Christian values are but two aspects of the same reality: the reality of man, redeemed by Christ and called to the fullness of eternal life...”[17]

**What does it mean that Christ redeems man?** One thing it means is that man is fallen, every man. Every man is equal in at least one thing, and that is that they are fallen. A second thing that this means is Christ offers redemption to all men with no exception. God redeems the world by redeeming each individual. Each person is worth redeeming, no one is disposable and no one is unnecessary.

**What does it mean that man is called to the fullness of eternal life?** Man is called to live life to the full, a fullness that does not consist only in a temporal life, but an eternal life as well. The material goods we have, the ideas and agendas that we hold should help man live life to the full, now and later. Ideas and goods should be at the service of both the temporal and the eternal. Most of all ideas and goods should not be an end in themselves but a means to the most important end, “fullness of eternal life.”

**In the Short Film, Volition, what are the three groups and how do they view the reality of man? What do they believe is the call or purpose of man? How do they feel about the dignity of each person?**

**How do we know that man is called to the fullness of eternal life?** “The desire of God is written in the human heart, because man is created by God and for God; and God never ceases to draw man to himself. Only in God will he find the truth and happiness he never stops searching for.”[18]

**Profession of Faith or Popular Devotion – Prayer for our Country**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

Almighty God,  
bless our nation  
and make it true

they totally lack coherence.”[6]

One strategy is to have a 10/80/10 plan; ten percent would go to savings, eighty percent goes to paying bills and ten percent goes to tithing. We should all try to save in order to avoid falling into debt. “Be not one of those who give their hand in pledge, of those who become surety for debts; for if you have not the means to pay, your bed will be taken from under you.” (Proverbs 22:26-27) By putting a little money aside, we are able to avoid debt and pay for things when our expenses may be more than eighty percent of our budget. Ten percent for tithing is a common number and is seen in the Old Testament (cf. Deut. 14:22-29), but the specific number of ten percent is not a requirement. However, we are obligated to help the Church under the fifth precept of the Church, “You shall help to provide for the needs of the Church.” “The faithful also have the duty of providing for the material needs of the Church, each according to his own abilities.”[7] We should look to help the church in any way we can. Scripture says, “He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must do as he has made up his mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.” (2 Cor. 9:6–7) The 10/80/10 strategy is just a strategy and not the sole option for financial planning. If we are able to give more, we should, out of the love of God and neighbor.

Lastly, we must remember that whether we only have one dollar to our name or a billion dollars, Christ is free of charge. He does not hold a debt over us; in fact, He paid our debts on the cross. The God of everything comes down in the Eucharist free of charge. We too must open ourselves to the generosity of God and others.

**A question to ask ourselves is, whose image are we working for: A president’s image on our currency or God’s image?**

**Hypocrisy - Lesson and Discussion**

*“Why are you testing me, you hypocrites”*

**What is a hypocrite?** A hypocrite is someone who “pretends to have virtues or moral qualities that are not possessed. Its motive is pride.”[8] St. Jerome writes, “Pretended holiness is double malice,” because not only is someone not being holy, the person is faking it.

**Why were the Pharisees hypocrites?** The word “hypocrite” is Greek for “actor.” The disciples of the Pharisees were playing as actors. The words they used came out sincerely and they posed the question to Jesus as piously as possible, but their intentions were not seeking truth, rather seeking to destroy Jesus.

St. Gregory the Great wrote movingly about hypocrisy: “The devil silently possesses the hearts of hypocrites and quietly sleeps in them, whilst he gives them no peace.” “Those who in order to cheat their neighbor, appear outwardly pious and holy, whilst inwardly they are full of malice; those who have honey on the tongue, but gall in the heart, and sting like scorpions, when we least expect it ... therefore Christ has denounced no sin more emphatically than this one.”[9]

**Are we all hypocrites?** No. “It is not hypocrisy, however, to be on one’s best behavior with those whom one justly wishes to impress favorably. Nor is it hypocrisy when a person, because of human weakness, fails to live up to his or her own principles or profession of faith.”[10]

**How can we strive to not be hypocritical?** We must strive for holiness. This begins with respect for all. Every person was created in God’s image and likeness, and we must show respect to them. This does not mean pleasing everyone, because as we see in this week’s Gospel, Jesus is not looking to please the Pharisees or the Herodians, but to give them the truth that they seek. Because we are in the image and likeness of God, we must show respect and dignity to every soul we come in contact with. When Christ asks, “Whose image is this?” (Mat. 22:20), He desires that due respect be given to the person whose image it is. The image of God is Jesus. We are asked to give to God what belongs to Him, which is our whole self. “Is it not the likeness of God, a likeness painted with the blood of Jesus, an image for which the Savior gave His life? Should I defile and deform this by sin and voluptuousness? God forbid!”[11]

#### **TV AD – Carville & Frist Coke Ad – POP CULTURE**

##### **CONNECTION – 0:59**

<http://youtu.be/k3hz5lbUFP>

The ad shows a scenario where the commentators are portrayed as friends despite their differences.

As mentioned earlier, it is not hypocritical for us to strive for holiness, but fall short out of our weakness. If we continue to

#### **CONNECTION – 0:51**

<http://youtu.be/X0wkR9goqJ>

In the early 1990’s, Cannon had the slogan “Image is everything”. Jesus’s teaching is centered on image. **What image are we serving? Are we concerned about our image and preserving and promoting our image? Are we concerned about the images on our material things, the endorsements and icons of popular culture? Are we concerned with the image of God, imprinted on each individual?** We have to wonder if politicians are more concerned with serving their own image, rather than the image of God found in each individual. In campaign ads, the image of the candidate is highlighted and the image of the opposing candidate is trashed, while the image of God in each person is completely ignored.

**What does image mean to the world? What does image mean to God?** Image is so important to the world that billions of dollars are spent each year on advertisement, logos, trademarks, etc. The name “LEGO” is so important to the company that every piece and even the smallest piece has “LEGO” printed on it. If companies care this much about their name, how much more so does God care about His name and image? Man is created in the image and likeness of God and therefore, God is written on the hearts of each person. (Romans 2:15)

#### **Which of the inalienable rights should be the top priority?**

A youth asked a bishop this question in a catechesis session during World Youth Day 2008. The bishop, similar to Jesus in the Gospel, answered the question by asking a question. He asked the crowd what inalienable rights human beings were endowed with. The crowd said, “Life, Liberty and Happiness.” The bishop went on to explain that the priorities need to be in that order: Life, Liberty, and Happiness. He also explained that in our modern society many people vote based first on what will bring them happiness, issues like the economy, taxes, jobs and other self-interests. Second, people vote on what will bring them security, issues like border security, military, etc. Lastly, people vote on life issues, the dignity of the human person. The bishop said these priorities should be reversed and people should consider first life, then liberty and lastly the pursuit of happiness.

#### **SHORT FILM – "Volition" - by T Jara Morgan – POP CULTURE**

##### **CONNECTION – 15:01**

<http://youtu.be/CcPpeHJX3I> - In English - <http://youtu.be/>

**How can we avoid being entrapped by our speech?** We must be in complete connection with Christ through prayer. We must listen to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit to keep us faithful. If we are in communion with God, He will give us the answers we need. We must be willing to listen intently to the person who is asking the question. When we answer, as mentioned before, it is okay to say that we do not know something, but always offer to look it up together or take it upon yourself to look it up. If we do know the answer, we should imitate Christ in this week's Gospel reading when He is simple and poignant in His answer. We should never try to confuse or deceive people. "He who guards his mouth and his tongue keeps himself from trouble." (Proverbs 21:23)

### **Life, Liberty and the pursuit of happiness – Lesson and Discussion**

*"Whose image is this?"*

*This lesson should begin with a slow, reflective reading of the spiritual reading in this packet and watching the PCC in the lesson.*

**Does government exist to serve the people or do people exist to serve the government?** We would think that the government exists to serve the people. The government like any institution consists of individuals. Each individual is responsible not to serve "the people" but "the person." When people are served rather than the person, the dignity of the human person can be lost. In the life of Mother Teresa we see an individual not serving "the people" but "the individual person." Blessed Mother Teresa was known to hold out her hand and pointing to each finger would say, "You did it to me." Each finger reminded her of each word. When Mother Teresa saw a person she had no question as to, "Whose image is this." She knew that when she encountered each individual Jesus was saying, "You did it to me." Mother Teresa lived out the words of Saint John Paul II. "Human-Christian values triumph by subjecting political and economic considerations to human dignity, by making them serve the cause of man – every person created by God, every brother and sister redeemed by Christ." Government should not serve the cause of "the people" but rather "the person," keeping in mind the dignity of the individual and the image they are made in.

### **VIDEO – Leaked Obama 2012 Ad – POP CULTURE**

strive to do God's will, we are not hypocrites. If we are lazy and/or wanting to sin, then we need to run to reconciliation to strengthen our resolve and not be like the Pharisees.

Lastly, as mentioned in a previous lesson about government and whether they perform well or poorly in our eyes, we must remember to always continue praying for them. Let us be generous, not hypocritical, and be the hands and feet to bring about a common good in our world. Our relationship with the civil authorities should become "a path to sanctity: the payment of taxes, the power to vote, our involvement in association for public welfare, active participation in political life should that be our calling...Let us examine ourselves today to see if we are truly being good examples to others of fostering the common good." [12] **Am I praying that the government serves the greater good of the city, state, and country, or am I hoping they fail? What else can I be doing to help serve my community?**

In the Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostomos we pray, "For our country, the president, and all those in public service, let us pray to the Lord." [13] Later in the Divine Liturgy the leader is prayed for by name. "Furthermore we pray for this country, its ruler, (*title and name of the ruler*), its people, civil authorities and armed forces." [14]

[See also [Link to Liturgy Lesson: "Casting Out the Net"](#)

### **Entrapment of Words – Lesson and Discussion**

*"They might entrap him in speech."*

**What is entrapment?** Entrapment means catching someone by deceiving them usually by their own words or actions. In this case, the Pharisees were trying to trap Jesus with His answer about money.

### **TV AD – The Mentalist - The best scene...so far! – POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 0:59**

<http://youtu.be/cAxEQYqo7n>

The main character intentionally makes incorrect references to a book to trip up a murder suspect and reveal that his disguise has failed him.

**Why would they try to trap Jesus in His words?** "The question that they will pose is intended to force Jesus to take

either a position contrary to that held by the majority of the people or one that will bring him into conflict with the Roman authorities.” (Matt. 15:16 footnotes ) Another way of thinking of it is, “In order to find some reason to accuse Him before the emperor, or to make Him hated by the Jews; for had He denied tribute to Caesar, treason; had He, on the contrary, made it obligatory to pay tribute, then they would have denounced Him as a destroyer of the liberty of the people, who considered themselves a free nation owing allegiance only to God. Like the Pharisees are all those who, under the appearance of friendship, only cause vexation and misfortune to their neighbor.”[15]

**Who was asking Jesus the question?** Technically, it was the disciples of the Pharisees, but ultimately it was the Pharisees who formulated the question. The other tricky part about the Pharisees was they sent the Herodians. The Herodians were the ones who would have favored payment of the taxes while the Pharisees would not. (Mat. 22:16 footnotes) Both wanted to bring something to their respected courts to put Jesus on trial. This Gospel is one of the last public teachings of Jesus. His enemies (Pharisees and Herodians) have joined forces to destroy him. “It was the last day of Jesus’ public teaching; it was almost the eve of His departure from this earth. His enemies had failed in ever attempt hitherto made to ensnare Him; this last plot was to be unusually deep-laid. The Pharisees, who refused to recognize Caesar’s authority and denied his claim to tribute, joined issue with their adversaries, the partisans of Herod and Rome, to propose this insidious question to Jesus: Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar or not? If our Lord’s answer was negative, He incurred the displeasure of the government; if He took the affirmative side, He would lose the estimation of the people. With His divine prudence, He disconcerted their plans. The two parties, so strangely made friends by partnership in one common intrigue, heard the magnificent answer, which was divine enough to make even Pharisees and Herodians one in the truth. But the truth was not what they were in search of; so they returned to their old party quarrels. The league formed against our Jesus was broken; the effort made by error recoiled on itself, as must ever be the case; and the answer it had elicited, passed from the lips of our Incarnate Lord to those of His bride, the Church, who would be ever repeating it to the world, for it contains the first principle of all governments on earth. “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s and to God the things that are God’s.”[16]

Many times we will be trapped as Jesus was and perhaps many of our enemies will unite to team up against us. When this occurs our weapon is truth. Jesus’ enemies were exposed to the truth, but they did not want the truth and so they left. When we speak and defend the truth, one of two things will occur; One, we will win our enemies over or two, our enemies will be defeated by the truth and will have to flee. Even in the case of martyrdom, when it appears that the enemy has won, in the end the enemy is defeated by the truth. It appeared at the Crucifixion that the enemy, Satan had won, but in the end truth reigned and in the power of the Resurrection the truth that Jesus is the Son of God and that He rose from the dead prevailed.

**[\[See also Link to Liturgy Lesson: “Mission of the Church: Church and State”](#)**

The questions and answers by the disciples of the Pharisees show how far they were from God. First, the surface of their question asks if is it “lawful”, which means the law of God (Mat. 22:17 footnotes ), but in their hearts they do not focus on God, but only focus on Caesar and taxes. This is why Jesus puts the perspective back on God. Secondly, they are quick to answer whose face was on the coin. So many times, we can know so much about our world, our leaders, and culture, but we do not know anything of the nature of God. Jesus’ answer is quick and to the point when He tells them to repay God what belongs to Him.

Jesus’ answer avoids taking sides on the question of the lawfulness of the tax. Jesus raises the debate to a new level. Those who have hypocritically asked about taxes in respect to its relation to the law of God, should be concerned rather with repaying God with the good deeds that are due. (Mat. 22:21 footnotes )

**Why should we be careful about what we say?** Like Jesus, there may be a time in our lives, where forces of evil are looking to ensnare us with what we say. We must remain on guard with our words. When we speak about our faith, it is perfectly fine to say, “I do not know”, rather than making something up and saying the wrong thing. We should always look for the truth and speak correctly when answering any question that comes our way as Jesus did.