

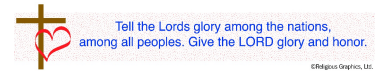
PARISH CALENDAR

Twenty-ninth Sunday
in Ordinary Time

October 22, 2023

O God; turn your ear to me;
hear my words!

Saturday, October 21	..... 5:00 p.m.	Mass
Sunday, October 22	..... 7:00 a.m.	Mass
	..... 9:00 a.m.	Mass (Live Stream)
	..... 5:00 p.m.	Mass
Monday, October 23	..... 7:30 a.m.	Liturgy of Hours/Rosary
	..... 8:00 a.m.	Communion Service
	..... 9:30-11:00 a.m.	Food Pantry Open
Tuesday, October 24	..... 7:30 a.m.	Liturgy of Hours/Rosary
	..... 8:00 a.m.	Communion Service
Wednesday, October 25	..... 7:30 a.m.	Liturgy of Hours/Rosary
	..... 8:00 a.m.	Communion Service
	..... 9:30-11:00 a.m.	Food Pantry Open
Thursday, October 26	..... 7:30 a.m.	Liturgy of Hours/Rosary
	..... 8:00 a.m.	Communion Service
Friday, October 27	..... 7:30 a.m.	Liturgy of Hours/Rosary
	..... 8:00 a.m.	Mass
Saturday, October 28	..... 4:00-4:30 p.m.	Confession - Church
	..... 5:00 p.m.	Mass



NEXT SUNDAY READINGS:

Ex:22:20-26: The faithful and gracious Lord said, "You shall not wrong any widow or orphan. . . If you take your neighbor's cloak. . . return it to him before sunset..

1 Thes:1:5c-10: Paul commended the Christians of Thessalonica: You became imitators of us and of the Lord, receiving he word in great affliction, with joy from the Holy Spirit.

Mt:22:34-40: In response to a question from some Pharisees who wanted to trip him up, Jesus said, "you shall love the Lord, your god, with all your heart. . . soul. . . And [mind]. . . You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

RESOLVING CONFLICT

The Pharisees went off and plotted how they might entrap him 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?" Matthew 22:15-17

It has been said that "the enemy of my enemy is my friend." In other words, two people who are enemies with each other will often join together if they see an opportunity to jointly attack an even greater enemy. This is what was happening in today's Gospel. Jesus was considered the greatest enemy of the Pharisees and the Herodians, and both of these groups joined together in a plot to trap Jesus even though they greatly disliked each other.

The Pharisees were very nationalistic and were strict observers of the Law of Moses. It was their view that the people should not have to pay taxes to the Romans, and many of the people agreed. The Herodians supported the Romans and, therefore, were supporters of Herod, the Jewish ruler appointed by the Roman Emperor. One of Herod's responsibilities was to obtain taxes from the Jews for use by the Roman government. Those who opposed the paying of taxes to the Romans could even be put to death.

This joint questioning of Jesus had one goal: to get Him in trouble. If Jesus said it was unlawful to pay taxes to Caesar, Herod's soldiers could arrest Him. If Jesus said that the people should pay taxes to Caesar, the Pharisees could turn the people against Him. It appeared to be a lose-lose question posed to Jesus. Of course, Jesus' answer was perfect. Without violating the Law of God, He also refrained from violating the civil law. Upon hearing His answer, all who heard Him "were amazed, and leaving him they went away."

The lesson learned from this passage is an especially important lesson to apply to family life. It is very common for conflicts to arise from time to time among those who are close to each other. When that happens, we can often take the approach of trying to trap the other person and trip them up with our deceptive reasoning. When this happens between two people, the conversation often turns into a shouting match with each party seeking only to find fault with the other. The solution to such situations is simple. Every conflict must be resolved by the truth. Jesus did this perfectly. He did not attack when He was attacked. He did not defend Himself irrationally. He did not shy away from the confrontation. He did not manipulate the truth to His own advantage. Instead, He spoke openly and honestly the full truth and refused to engage his opponents in their trickery.

Consider this question. What if you were in Jesus' position and the Pharisees came to you, asking you this question? What would you be tempted to answer? Most likely, you would try to answer them in such a way that appeased them. You might whisper, "We shouldn't pay the taxes but don't tell that to the Herodians." And if the Herodians were to ask you that question, you might be tempted to give a different answer that appeased them.

Oftentimes, when we feel as though another person is trying to trap us, condemn us, or challenge us, we become more concerned about our defense than with the honest truth. We can become afraid to say anything that will give them reason to attack us. We will be tempted to twist our answers rather than speak forthrightly with sincerity and honesty. This will never resolve a conflict. The only way to resolve anything is with the truth.

Reflect, today, upon how you work to resolve conflict when it arises. Are you more like the Pharisees and Herodians whose only goal was to trick, trap and win? Do you see the other as an enemy in those moments? Or do you strive to be like Jesus who didn't shy away from the conversation, answering honestly and directly? Of course, the truth was easy for Jesus since He was without any fault. In our lives, the truth may require that we admit our sin and apologize when confronted. However, if the truth, the full truth and nothing but the truth is our goal, then our conversations will imitate Jesus and, most often, a peaceful resolution will ensue.

My truthful Lord, Your wisdom is perfect and Your words are truth. Please give me the gifts of wisdom and all truth, especially when conflicts arise. In those moments, please keep me from reacting in an angry and defensive way so that I can always be an instrument of the unity You desire. Jesus, I trust in You.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WORLD MISSION SUNDAY: Embrace the Popes's Missions with: **"Hearts on fire, feet on the move."** this World Mission Sunday! Today, Pope Francis echoes the universal call of our Baptism - to be Christ's witnesses to the World. As we gather with global Catholics on this World Mission Sunday, our prayers and contributions to the Society for the Propagation of the Faith will bolster the Pope's missions, enabling:

- Over 844,000 catechists to share the faith
- 258,540 Religious Sisters to tend to families and children
- 38,140 seminarians to journey towards the priesthood
- Education for 26 million children
- Medical assistance in 12,000 clinics
- Comfort in 8,750 homes for the orphaned and elderly

By supporting this cause, we truly live our the call to be the spark that transform lives. May your prayers and gifts create ripples of love and transformation. Thank you for your missionary zeal!

WORD OF LIFE: "I would now like to say a special word to women who have had an abortion. The Church is aware of the many factors which may have influenced your decision, and she does not doubt that in many cases it was a painful and even shattering decision. The wound in your heart may not yet have healed. . . But do not give in to discouragement men and do not lose hope. . . The Father of mercies is ready to give you his forgiveness and his peace in the Sacrament of Reconciliation."

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WEEKLY READINGS

Oct 22 Sun: 29th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Is:45:1, 4-6; Ps:96; 1 The:1:1-5b; Mt:22:15-21

Oct 23 Mon: Ordinary Weekday

Rm:4:20-25; Lk:1: 69-70, 71-72, 73-75; Lk:12:13-21

Oct 24 Tue: Ordinary Weekday

Rm:5:12, 15b, 17-19, 20b-21; Ps:40:7-8a, 8b-9, 10, 17; Lk:12:35-38

Oct 25 Wed: Ordinary Weekday

Rm:6:12-18; Ps:124:1b-3, 4-6, 7-8; Lk:12:39-48

Oct 26 Thur: Ordinary Weekday

Rm:6:19-23; Ps:1:1-2, 3, 4, & 6; Lk:12:49-53

Oct 27 Fri: Ordinary Weekday

Rm:7:18-25a; Ps:119:66, 68, 76, 77, 93, 94; Lk:12:54-59

Oct 28 Sat: Saints Simon and Jude, Apostles

Ep:2:19-22; Ps:19:2-3, 4-5; Lk:6:12-16

NOTES ON STEWARDSHIP

Jesus offers us a profound teaching on stewardship in this weekend's reading: *What belongs to Caesar? What belongs to God? Christian stewards recognize that everything they have belongs to God. God created them, and God has claims on every part of their existence. They also realize that the sovereign is an institution whose nature and purpose is to promote the common good and protect the welfare of its citizenry. As long as it accomplishes this mission while treating every single person with deep respect, justice and compassion, it merits the steward's support and cooperation. Christian stewards know what belongs to the Lord, and they are better citizens when they live their lives according to his Gospel.* **International Catholic Stewardship Council**

STAYING ALIVE

Faith, hope, and love are signs of a community alive. They show human activity inspired by God.

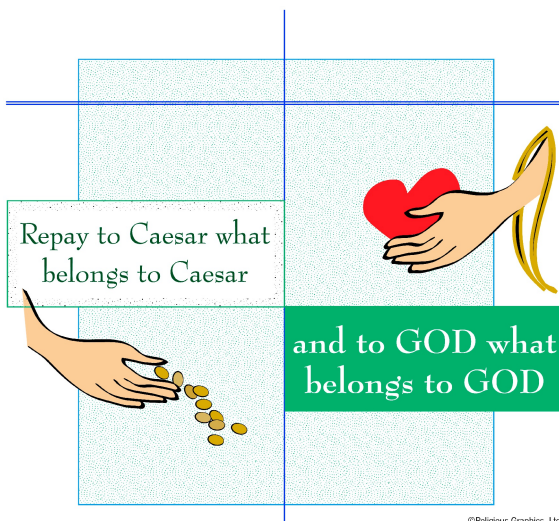
The first letter to the Thessalonians describes such a community. The letter was written by Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy to a church founded by word and power. The missionaries had preached the good news by their words, but the Holy Spirit had added power to their preaching. The success of this venture was evident in three ways: faith, hope, and love. The writers of the letter give thanks to God, "unceasingly calling to mind your work of faith and labor of love and endurance in hope of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Even today, a good Christian community—whether a family or a parish—is noted by faith, hope, and love. Christians have faith in God and demonstrate that faith by their worship together and prayer in private. Faith prompts believers to work for the sake of the Gospel, spreading the good news of Jesus Christ.

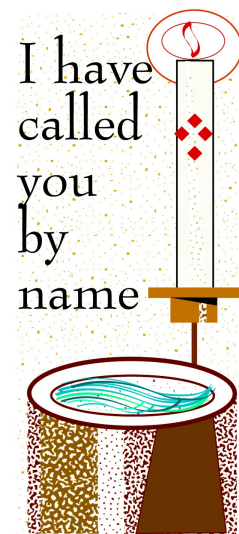
For Christian communities, love is a labor. It brings happiness and it starts from feelings of joy, but it demands hard work and patience. Communities thrive when the members are willing to do the hard work of love.

Hope permits endurance. Waiting for the coming of Christ, we hope in his word. That hope helps us continue when the struggle gets hard. Faith, hope, and love keep communities alive.

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