

# SUNDAY GOSPEL BIBLE SHARING



**Wednesday October 18<sup>th</sup> for the 29<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time**

**OPENING PRAYER:** Lord of the Universe, we gather in your name to share your Word. Open us that we might believe in you more fully. Mold us that we might place our hope in you even in difficult times. Melt our hearts that we might love all that you have created. In the name of Jesus who has redeemed us, we pray. Amen.

## **READING OF THE ASSIGNED GOSPEL**

- In the words of Saint Benedict, “Listen with the ears of your heart.”
- Please note a word, phrase, or verse that seemed to really catch your notice.
- A volunteer slowly read aloud today’s passage Afterwards, we have a few minutes of silent reflection.

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew

### **Matthew 22:15-21**

**15 The Pharisees went off**

**and plotted how they might entrap Jesus in speech.**

**16 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.**

**17 Tell us, then, what is your opinion:**

**Is it lawful to pay the census tax to Caesar or not?"**

**18 Knowing their malice, Jesus said,**

**"Why are you testing me, you hypocrites?**

**19 Show me the coin that pays the census tax."**

**Then they handed him the Roman coin.**

**20 He said to them, "Whose image is this and whose**

**inscription?"**

**21 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."**

22 When they heard this they were amazed, and leaving him they went away.

\* [22:15–22] The series of controversies between Jesus and the representatives of Judaism (see note on Mt 21:23–27) is resumed. As in the first (Mt 21:23–27), here and in the following disputes Matthew follows his Marcan source with few modifications.

\* [22:15] The Pharisees: while Matthew retains the Marcan union of Pharisees and Herodians in this account, he clearly emphasizes the Pharisees' part. They alone are mentioned here, and the Herodians are joined with them only in a prepositional phrase of Mt 22:16. Entrap him in speech: 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.

\* [22:16] Herodians: see note on Mk 3:6. They would favor payment of the tax; the Pharisees did not.

\* [22:17] Is it lawful: the law to which they refer is the law of God.

\* [22:19] They handed him the Roman coin: their readiness in producing the money implies their use of it and their acceptance of the financial advantages of the Roman administration in Palestine.

\* [22:21] Caesar's: the emperor Tiberius (A.D. 14–37). Repay to Caesar what belongs to Caesar: those who willingly use the coin that is Caesar's should repay him in kind. The answer avoids taking sides in the question of the lawfulness of the tax. To God what belongs to God: Jesus raises the debate to a new level. Those who have hypocritically asked about tax in respect to its relation to the law of God should be concerned rather with repaying God with the good deeds that are his due; cf. Mt 21:41, 43.

d. [22:15–22] Mk 12:13–17; Lk 20:20–26.

e. [22:21] Rom 13:7.

## **Thoughts and reflection on the Gospel Passage**

### **QUESTIONS FOR SHARING**

1. When you vote in the upcoming election, what issues take center stage for you? How does your Catholic faith inform your vote? (No need to get into a political debate. Just share the issues that are important to you and why.)
2. When it comes to political and some religious issues, our country is very divided. What if anything can be done to bring us together for the sake of the common good?
3. Name one thing today's Gospel says to us that we disciples of Jesus need to heed and act on.

### **Commentary**

Today's Gospel is the first of four clashes (often called 'entrapment' stories) between Jesus and various representatives of Judaism. In today's Gospel or entrapment story, the Pharisees and the Herodians ask Jesus, "Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor or not?" The question is put to Jesus to see whether he would declare himself on the side of the Pharisees who oppose paying taxes to the Romans, or on the side of the Herodians who collaborate with the Romans. If Jesus conceded to the payment of taxes to Caesar, he would lose the esteem of ordinary Jews who very much resent the payment of taxes to the Romans. On the other hand, if he opposed it, he could be accused of instigating rebellion against the Romans. Jesus, aware of the malicious intent of the Pharisees and the Herodians to trick him, and knowing full well that they are not really interested in God or in taxes, asks for a coin: "Show me the coin that pays the census tax." The fact that there is such a coin shows that they have accepted Roman rule, revealing their hypocrisy. Jesus duly declares that if the coin has Caesar's image on it, then it belongs to Caesar and they should give it to Caesar.

But Jesus adds something they did not expect. While they (and we) are obliged to pay taxes, Jesus tells them (and us) that they (and we) are to "give to God what belongs to God." In essence, Jesus is telling them (and us) that there is a kingdom much greater and more important than Caesar's. Since God made all things (which bear his image), everything belongs to God.

**IS THERE A CAUSE FOR GRATITUDE THIS WEEK?**

**IS THERE A PRAYER REQUEST YOU HAVE?**

**CLOSING PRAYER - The Lord's Prayer**

Bible Sharing Room 5 and Zoom  
Starting Oct 18 from 6:30 – 7:30 pm EST Weekly on Wednesday  
notes

Description: Blessed Sacrament is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Blessed Sacrament's Zoom Meeting  
Time: Oct 18, 2023 06:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Please download and import the following iCalendar (.ics) files to your calendar system.

Weekly: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/tZIkD-qgrj8qG9Rt4LoXWaku9w9Mo6AzLDCs/ics?icsToken=98tyKuGupzspEtSRsBiHRpwAHYigbzziClfjfpviEvJDBhkYwjjbUbH7opMcL8>

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86903804010?pwd=MGJydS9qSW9LSzNGblZSM2xZcWpGZz09>

Meeting ID: 869 0380 4010  
Passcode: 086586 One tap mobile  
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