

# The Living Word

Twenty-ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A

18 October 2020

## First Reading Is 45:1.4-6

*I have taken the hand of Cyrus to subdue nations before his countenance.*

Thus says the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus,  
whom he has taken by his right hand to subdue nations before him and strip the loins of kings, to force gateways before him that their gates be closed no more:

It is for the sake of my servant Jacob, of Israel my chosen one, that I have called you by your name, conferring a title though you do not know me.

I am the Lord, unrivalled;  
there is no other God besides me. Though you do not know me, I arm you that men may know from the rising to the setting of the sun that, apart from me, all is nothing.

## Responsorial Psalm

**Ps 95:1. 3-5. 7-10. R. v.7**

**(R.) Give the Lord glory and honour.**

- 1 O sing a new song to the Lord, sing to the Lord all the earth. Tell among the nations his glory and his wonders among all the peoples. (R.)
- 2 The Lord is great and worthy of praise, to be feared above all gods; the gods of the heathens are naught. It was the Lord who made the heavens. (R.)
- 3 Give the Lord, you families of peoples, give the Lord glory and power, give the Lord the glory of his name. Bring an offering and enter his courts. (R.)
- 4 Worship the Lord in his temple. O earth, tremble before him. Proclaim to the nations: 'God is king.' He will judge the peoples in fairness. (R.)

## Second Reading 1 Thes 1:1-5

*We are mindful of your faith, hope, and love.*

From Paul, Silvanus and Timothy, to the Church in Thessalonika which is in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ; wishing

you grace and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

We always mention you in our prayers and thank God for you all, and constantly remember before God our Father how you have shown your faith in action, worked for love and persevered through hope, in our Lord Jesus Christ.

We know, brothers, that God loves you and that you have been chosen, because when we brought the Good News to you, it came to you not only as words, but as power and as the Holy Spirit and as utter conviction.

## Gospel Acclamation Phil 2:15. 16

**Alleluia, alleluia!**

**Shine on the world like bright stars; you are offering it the word of life.**

**Alleluia!**

## Gospel Mt 22:15-21

*Give to Caesar the things that belong to Caesar and to God the things that are God's.*

The Pharisees went away to work out between them how to trap Jesus in what he said. And they sent their disciples to him, together with the Herodians, to say, 'Master, we know that you are an honest man and teach the way of God in an honest way, and that you are not afraid of anyone, because a man's rank means nothing to you. Tell us your opinion, then. Is it permissible to pay taxes to Caesar or not?' But Jesus was aware of their malice and replied, 'You hypocrites! Why do you set this trap for me? Let me see the money you pay the tax with.' They handed him a denarius, and he said, 'Whose head is this? Whose name?' 'Caesar's' they replied. He then said to them, 'Very well, give back to Caesar what belongs to Caesar – and to God what belongs to God.'



## Reflection by Greg Sunter

The gospel writer presents this episode as a deliberate attempt by the Pharisees to trap Jesus and turn the people against him. Their plan was a good one, with no apparent 'safe' answer: is it permissible (within Jewish tradition) to pay taxes to Caesar or not? If Jesus were to answer that it is not permissible to pay taxes then he would be identified as a rebel and a threat to Roman authority – leaving himself open to severe punishment. If he were to answer that it was permissible to pay the taxes he would have alienated a lot of his audience who resented the taxes imposed by Rome.

Instead of falling into the trap set by the Pharisees, Jesus approaches the question in a completely different way. He asks them to show him the money with which they pay the tax. Immediately, he has turned the tables on them. He doesn't appear to carry any of the coin in question and yet the Pharisees' disciples carry them as a matter of habit. They are asking if it is permissible to pay the tax and yet freely carry the coin with which the tax is paid. Jesus shows up the hypocrisy of their question by forcing them to reveal their own position in the simple action of producing one of the Roman coins. Jesus then closes the dispute by instructing them to render (give) to Caesar what belongs to Caesar but, more importantly, render to God what belongs to God. In a very simple way Jesus has shown up the Pharisees' disciples as being collaborators with the Roman authority and placing that authority above the authority of God. He reminds the listeners that regardless of earthly authority, the first duty is owed to God.

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# Wordsearch

Try to find these words:

- |         |           |         |
|---------|-----------|---------|
| belongs | Pharisees | teacher |
| coins   | respect   | test    |
| Emperor | silver    | trick   |
| honest  | taxes     | truth   |

P Z A R X U S W H P E W V Q V Y I  
 O Y F E F X P R N M T Z E E S M E  
 Q O E V U A H V P T E H U M I T B  
 A L V L X P A E I R A P Z G C F A  
 E D H I V E R W R I C H O N E S T  
 Q Q K S R O I E G C H O B E E S T  
 A N K B R B S G M K E K T X E G B  
 J A D T J R E H V M R Q A T P E E  
 Q T F N C L E C K B G T G V A D L  
 D S L B E S S O G E V O R M G F O  
 M P I M H Z D I N M J G W Y K B N  
 V U W W C G X N S F T E A Q Y Y G  
 J F Y M B W Y S Z V F R G H C O S  
 K B N A D C Y P D X T R T E M N W  
 P N X L S H X R N O R U T J G X K  
 F Q L I T C E P S E R D D E I Y O  
 X W H N W Z N X C T E Z Y B R Z D

**S**t Paul of the Cross was born Paolo Francesco Danei in 1694 in the Northern Italian town of Ovada. He came from a wealthy merchant family and at the age of 19 he experienced a conversion to a life of prayer. He came to the conclusion that the Passion of Christ was the greatest sign of God's love and a means by which people can come to a greater union with God. He devoted his life to spreading this message and at the age of 26 he founded the religious order "the Poor of Jesus"; later to become known as "the Congregation of the Passion of Jesus Christ". Passionists live a life of solitude and contemplation, devoting at least three hours a day to prayer. They are easily recognised through the labeled emblem of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, surmounted by a cross, which is usually sewn into their clothing.

Colour in the shapes that contain dots to reveal something that Jesus wants us to show others.

