

ALL THAT WE ARE AND HAVE BELONGS TO GOD

The Pharisees could have been the best disciples of Jesus, the best witnesses of his anointed power that healed and raised the dead, because they knew that Jesus came from God (John 3:2) and spoke the Truth (Matthew 22:16).

But they were jealous of his popularity. His words and his life revealed their hypocrisy and their inner thoughts. Instead of repenting and change their ways, their pride made them blind, and they hated Jesus to the point of seeking any excuse and opportunity to entrap him, so they could accuse him and have him arrested.

That is why in today's Gospel of Matthew 22:15-21 the Pharisees ask him if it is lawful to pay taxes to the emperor or not. Jesus' response makes it clear to them that God's kingdom is not of this world, it does not take political sides, because all governments belong to God. Political leaders of the world rule because God permits them to do so, and even if they do not know him nor worship him, God can use them for his own purpose, as he did with King Cyrus in today's first Reading (Isaiah 45:1, 4-6).

"Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and to God what belongs to God" was Jesus' response to the Pharisees. Christians ought to respect and obey civil authorities and laws, as long as these are in conformity with God's Laws. In his letter (1Peter 2:13-17) the apostle reminds Christians that they should set an example as good citizens who "fear God and honour the emperor."

AS CHILDREN OF THE FATHER-GOD, DO WE GIVE HIM WHAT BELONGS TO HIM, THAT IS GIVE HIM FIRST PLACE IN EVERYTHING, AS WELL AS HONOUR, WORSHIP, ADORATION AND THANKSGIVING?

Let us remember that God is in charge and therefore there is nothing to fear: all that we are and all that we have belongs to the Lord.