

October 22, 2017



**IS IT LAWFUL TO PAY THE CENSUS TAX TO CAESAR OR NOT?** Jesus is asked in today's Gospel. Matthew makes it clear that those who ask this question are interested in one thing only: *how they might entrap Jesus in speech*. If Jesus answered "yes," he might forfeit his popularity with the masses, who resented the payment. If he answered "no," he could be denounced to the authorities for inciting people to break the law.

Jesus does not give either of the answers his questioners were looking for. Jesus' reply, *Repay to Caesar what belongs to Caesar*, rejects the radical position of those who claimed that the Roman government was unlawful and should not be obeyed at all. All the emphasis, however, is on the second part of Jesus' answer: *Pay to God what belongs to God*.

What is God's anyway? The answer is inescapable: everything! From God we receive all that we are and have, except sin. God has given us the gift of life, and has preserved our lives until now in the midst all the dangers to life. God has given us our talents: everything from the five senses, which we share with the animals, to the uniquely human gifts of thought, speech, love and laughter, to the individual talents that make each person unique. How dull life would be if we were all the same!

If paying to God what is God's means putting God *first* in our lives. *Are we putting God first in our lives?* Or does he get the leftovers? Jesus understood, and taught, that we must give God the first fruits – out of gratitude. This grateful giving of first fruits was based on the truth that everything comes from God, and hence everything belongs to God. When we put God first in our lives, we make a beautiful discovery. We find that what is left over for ourselves is always enough, ultimately more than enough! We find that God will never be outdone in generosity.

*Fr. Michael*

## PRIESTHOOD SUNDAY!

October 29<sup>th</sup>

**CELEBRATE OUR PRIESTS** — write a note to Fr. Michael (or any of our pastors from the past!) to let him know he's appreciated. Cards are on the table at the back of church — you can return them by way of the offertory basket, mail, or the drop box by the office door.

### EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION AT MASS

AND TO THE **SICK AND HOMEBOUND**

with **Monsignor Gerard O'Connor**

New Director of the OFFICE OF DIVINE WORSHIP for the Archdiocese of Portland

~ ALL ARE WELCOME! ~



Where: St. Alice (1520 E Street / Spfld.)

When: **October 28<sup>th</sup>** (Saturday)

9:30am Mass + refreshments after

10:20am Presentation

Please RSVP to St. Peter office (541-688-1051) or St. Mark office (541-689-0725)

~ AREA NEWS ~

**IT' TIME FOR TEA!** — Catholic Daughters cordially invites all to enjoy HIGH TEA on Saturday, **October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2-4:00pm** (doors open at 1:00pm), at St. Mary Parish Center (1062 Charnelton) ... tickets: \$20/Adult, \$15/Senior, \$10/child (12 and under). Come enjoy, and help out our local Catholic Daughters in this fundraiser!



**HEALING MASS** — Come experience the Lord's healing love! This Healing Mass is on Friday, **October 27**, at St. Mary Catholic Church (Eugene), at 7:00pm. Celebrants will be: Bishop Peter Smith, Fr. Ron Nelson, Fr. Edgar Rivera, & Fr. Bryce McProud. Sponsored by La Esperanza Ministry and St. Mary Charismatic Prayer Group. For info, contact Jacqui at 541-513-2607, or Dave at 541-689-8070.

**1<sup>ST</sup> WAY** — A crisis pregnancy center, is in need of **new or gently used children's clothing in sizes 4 to 6, both girls and boys**. If you can help, please drop them by their office, located at 1162 "B" Street (Suite 213), Springfield (at Trinity Baptist Church), from **10am—4pm**, Tues.-Wed.-Thursdays...and **many thanks** to Marist HS Pro-Life Student Grp. for the large donation of diapers—it helps so many families!

## UPCOMING RETREATS:

**FOSTERING COMPASSION AND FORGIVENESS IN YOUR MARRIAGE** — Attend a Marriage Encounter Weekend, and learn effective tools to increase compassion and forgiveness of one another ... upcoming weekend is **Nov. 10-12** at Mt. Angel Abbey. For info: 1-503-853-2758, or: [www.rediscoverthepark.org](http://www.rediscoverthepark.org).

## FAITH SERIES: CATECHISM THROUGH THE YEAR

### WHAT IS APOLOGETICS?

"In the beginning ... God." These first words of the bible (Gn 1:1) affirm an essential teaching of the Christian faith: *Before all else, God is*. It's a reality that seems obvious to most Christians, yet many doubt or deny it.

Challenges are often issued to other articles of the Christian faith as well, such as the resurrection of Christ, and to specifically Catholic beliefs, like the unique authority of the pope. For this reason, Christians — and Catholic Christians in particular — often find themselves defending their beliefs.

The Greek word for "defense" is *apologia*. Our English word "apology" is derived from it. In its classical definition, "apology" did not mean an admission of wrong, as the modern English word suggests. Rather, an apology was a defense or justification of a belief. An example that will be familiar to students of Philosophy and the classics is Plato's *Apology*: an account of Socrates' defense of his teaching.

In the present context, then, "apologetics" refers to the reasonable defense of the Christian faith. It is one aspect of what our Lord Jesus talked about when he urged us to love God with all our mind (Lk 10:27). Faith is not opposed to reason; in fact, reason rightly understood, is a support to faith.

The foundations of Christian apologetics were laid by Jesus himself, when he presented 'many proofs' of his resurrection (Acts 1:3), including his appearance to skeptical and hard-nosed 'doubting' Thomas, as well as the other apostles (Jn 20:24-29). The resulting apostolic proclamation of the gospel included eyewitness (legal or scientific) testimony as a central feature (eg Lk 1:1-4; Acts 2:32).

St. Paul, likewise, engaged in apologetics, trying to persuade both Jews and Greeks of the truth of Christianity. His reasoned style of evangelization is demonstrated in his sermon at the Areopagus, in a philosophy-dominated Athens (Acts 17:22-34), and in his determination to "become all things to all, to save at least some" (1 Cor 9:22). This approach to sharing and defending faith should encourage Catholics today to follow Paul's example.

**RECOMMENDED READING:** Excerpt taken from The NEW Catholic Answer Bible

1 Cor 9:19-23 • 1 Pt 3:15 • Acts 7:2,17; 9:29; 18:4,19; 19:8-10; 22:1; 25:16 • Jude 3 • 1 Cor 9:3 • Phil 1:7,16 • Mk 12:28  
& Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) Nos. 31-49 • 156-159