



Twenty-ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time

October 22, 2017

GOSPEL [MT 22:15-21](#)

The Pharisees went off and plotted how they might entrap Jesus 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?"

Knowing their malice, Jesus said, "Why are you testing me, you hypocrites? Show me the coin that pays the census tax."

Then they handed him the Roman coin.

He said to them, "Whose image is this and whose inscription?" 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."

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GOSPEL MT 22:15-21

From RCSpirituality.org, RETREAT GUIDE Who You Are: A Retreat Guide on the Sacrament of Baptism

In ancient times, emperors put their own image on the coins used in their empire. This symbolized their authority over the lives of their subjects, who used the coins for all the activities necessary for survival and prosperity.

In this exchange with the Pharisees, Jesus uses that example to remind his listeners of the image that we, as human beings, find emblazoned on our souls: the image of God himself. This is how the Book of Genesis describes it:

“God created mankind in his image; in the image of God he created them... —Genesis 1:27

Being created in his image means we belong to God in a special way; he cares about us and is interested in us and calls us into a personal relationship of mutual love with him and with each other. As the Catechism puts it:

“Being in the image of God the human individual possesses the dignity of a person, who is not just something, but someone. He is capable of self-knowledge, of self-possession and of freely giving himself and entering into communion with other persons. And he is called by grace to a covenant with his Creator, to offer him a response of faith and love that no other creature can give in his stead.” —Catechism of the Catholic Church 357

This is who we are and where we come from: we are created by God, in the image of God; his own identity is stamped on our very souls. This separates us from every other creature in the visible universe—only we were created in God’s image.

1. How often do I reflect on my true human and Christian identity? What kind of impact does this identity have on my daily life? What kind of impact do I think it should have?
2. Practically speaking, what do I tend to base my identity on: My achievements? My possessions and physical qualities? Fitting in with other people? Some kind of worldly “success”? My level of holiness?
3. If I habitually thought about myself the way that God thinks of me—as his especially gifted creature, his beloved child, and his intimate friend—how would that affect my attitudes and actions?



**Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time
October 29, 2017**

GOSPEL MT 22:34-40

When the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, and one of them, a scholar of the law tested him by asking,

"Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?"

He said to him,

"You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

The whole law and the prophets depend on these two commandments."

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GOSPEL [MT 22:34-40](#)

From Study Questions for the Ignatius Catholic Bible: The Gospel of St. Matthew

1. What does it mean to you to love God with your whole heart, soul, and mind?
What do you do to demonstrate that love?

2. What are the things that your heart loves? Take an inventory of the things we allow into our hearts...i.e, vacations, leisure time, family time, money, entertainment, new clothes, new technology...etc... Is there something more we should add to this list?

3. What does it mean to love your neighbor as your do yourself?

4. How do you love yourself?

5. How does that apply to the way you love your neighbor?