

29TH SUNDAY YEAR A

There are certain boundaries in our lives. We are free to do certain things, but others are not. The constitution of a country gives rights and duties to its citizens. We are bound by rules, laws, morality, values, norms, etc. Some are written, and others are not. Some are enforceable by law, and others are not. All these elements have come into being in our society through past experiences. It could be one way of maturing in our society. The liturgical readings on this 29th Sunday in Ordinary Time give us very fascinating episodes of how, even in the past, people struggled with questions of following something. Even though we might not like to follow something, that is the way it is.

1. Called to live our responsibility

In the Gospel of [Matthew 22:15-21](#), the Pharisees try to trap Jesus with a politically sensitive question: “Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?” The question came not with sincerity, but with malice. Based on the answer, the Pharisees wanted to trap Jesus. However, Jesus knew their thoughts, their hypocrisy, their malicious intent. With a simple coin that was found in the mouth of a fish, Jesus makes a straight but profound statement: “Repay to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God.”

All of us have our responsibilities as good citizens, our relationship with God, and the values that must guide our lives. Jesus invites us to live responsibly in society while remaining faithful to God, who is the source and foundation of our existence.

2. Called to be honest in our intentions

The world that we live in is full of malice, and wickedness is everywhere. All evil thoughts begin in the mind of the human person. The evil intentions come before the evil action. Jesus sees the evil intentions of the people who asked him ill-intentioned questions. Asking questions with ill intentions is not good at all. The people around Jesus are not there for clarification or to know something new or to clear the doubts. Their intention was simple: to find fault in him.

How often do we behave in a similar way? We may speak words of appreciation while secretly harbouring jealousy. We may pretend to be sincere while pursuing our own interests. Perhaps this might happen in our prayers to God, seeking something bad for others instead of transformation for someone.

3. Called to integrate faith in daily life

As good citizens of this world, we have legitimate obligations as members of a community. Whether it is paying taxes, respecting just laws, contributing to the common good, working for the welfare of others, joining hands with others for the betterment of all are part and parcel of our lives.

Faith is not confined to places of worship or religious celebrations. It must be integrated into active life. It means living with integrity and honesty, being respectful and kind, being joyful and helping others in need, and being compassionate and nice to others; this must be part of one's life. In other words, living lives pleasing to God with sincerity, justice and peace.

Questions for Personal Reflections

1. Is there a difference between the faith I profess and the way I live each day?
2. How responsibly do I fulfil my duties as a citizen, professional, family member, parishioner, and member of society?
3. What occupies the most important place in my life: God, money, power, success, or public recognition?

Concluding Prayer

Loving and gracious God, you have created me in your image and called me to live in truth, justice, and love. Give me the wisdom to fulfil my responsibilities towards society and the courage to remain faithful to your will. Keep me from hypocrisy, selfish ambition, and the temptation to compromise my conscience. May my life reflect your goodness, my actions promote justice, and my heart remain centred on you. Teach me to offer you not merely in my words and prayers, but my whole self in loving service to others. I make this prayer in Jesus' Holy Name. Amen.

- Fr. Olvin Veigas, SJ

=====

For more Homilies and Reflections, [click here](#)

=====