

**SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR THE TWENTY-NINTH WEEK IN ORDINARY TIME**  
Our commitment to daily prayer using the weekday Mass readings as our guide

**MONDAY 10/17**

Romans 4:20-25  
Luke 12:13-21

**TUESDAY 10/18**

Second Timothy 4:9-17  
Luke 10:1-9

**WEDNESDAY 10/19**

Romans 6:12-18  
Luke 12:39-48

**THURSDAY 10/20**

Romans 6:19-23  
Luke 12:49-53

**FRIDAY 10/21**

Romans 7:18-25  
Luke 12:54-59

**SATURDAY 10/22**

Romans 8:1-11  
Luke 13:1-9

**Feasts, Solemnities, and Memorials This Week:**

Monday, Ignatius of Antioch; Tuesday, Luke;  
Wednesday, Isaac Jogues and John de Brébeuf; Thursday, Paul of the Cross

**WORLD MISSION SUNDAY**

Whenever we discover something wonderful in our lives, whether it is a thought, an experience, somebody new, or even something we picked up at the store, we want to share it with somebody else. There just seems to be something within us to do so. The same is true with the Good News, the gospel of Jesus Christ. The proclamation of God's invitation to the fullness of life, through words and actions, has been the missionary activity of the Church since the beginning when Jesus commanded, "Go out to all the world and tell the good news." (Mark 16:15) Next Sunday, October 23, is World Mission Sunday. Money will be collected in every church in America to support the Society for the Propagation of the Faith in its missionary activity. In solidarity with all the churches, we will take a second collection after Holy Communion next Sunday so that everyone will have the opportunity to assist in the Church's mission. Please make your checks payable to St. Joseph Church. Our bank in town is very fussy about that.

**PRAYERS**

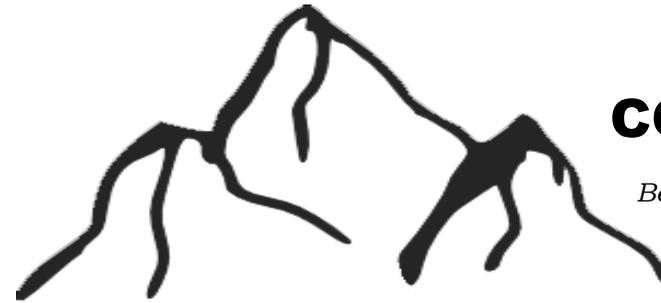
Our prayers are requested for Bonnie Zwart, Mark & Mary Anne Bewsher, Tina Quan, James Zvetina, Barbara Head, Mark Kirkner, Pat Glynn, Bobbie Engstrom, Ed Power, Diane Evans, Raquel Rodriguez, John Gracey, Bob Tomko, Jr., Virginia Reyes, Elizabeth Cauzza, Kay Reilly, Mary Jo Ferreira, Julie Rogers, and Josefina Flores.

**DAILY MASS**

Weekday Mass is celebrated Monday through Saturday in St. Joseph's Rectory in Mammoth Lakes beginning at 7 AM. The door is open; just come in; don't ring the bell.  
Everyone is welcome to stay after for coffee and fellowship.

**FIRST FRIDAY DEVOTIONS**

Mass is celebrated followed by Eucharistic adoration and benediction every First Friday of the month beginning at 7:00 PM at St. Joseph Church in Mammoth Lakes.

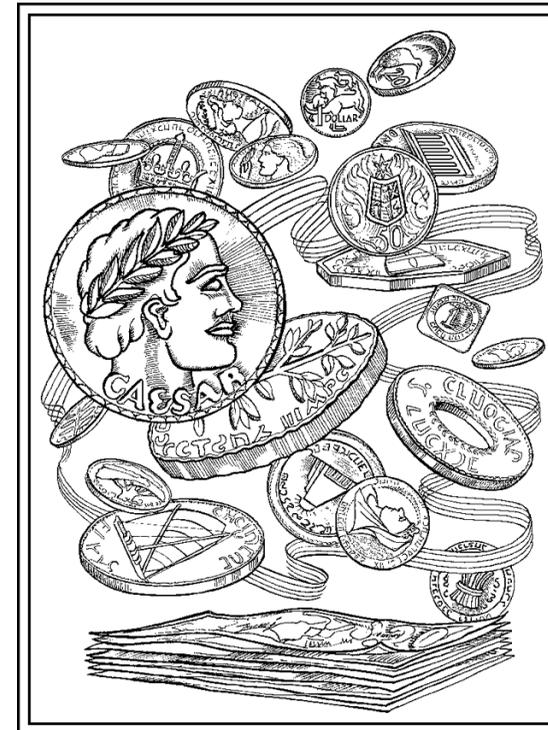


# THE MONO COUNTY CATHOLIC

*Before the mountains were born, the earth and the world brought forth, from eternity to eternity you are God. Psalm 90:2*

October 16, 2011

Twenty-eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time



*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."*

Matthew 22:19-21

## SAINT JOSEPH PARISH, MONO COUNTY

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Phone: 760-934-6276

Rev. Paul Boudreau, Pastor

**CONFESSIONS**

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is celebrated at St. Joseph Church from 5:30 to 5:45 PM on Saturdays, 7:30 to 7:45 on Sunday mornings, y en español a las tardes del domingo de 5:00 a 5:15; and upon request before mass at Our Savior of the Mountains and Infant of Prague missions.

**Mammoth Lakes: St. Joseph Church –  
Mass: Sat 6:00 PM, Sun 8:00 AM  
La Misa en Español: Dom 5:30 PM**

**Lee Vining:  
Our Savior of the Mountains Mission -  
Mass: Sun 10 AM  
Bridgeport: Infant of Prague Mission -  
Mass: Sun 12 Noon**

**FIRST READING: Isaiah 45:1, 4–6**

*Thus says the LORD to his anointed, Cyrus, whose right hand I grasp, subduing nations before him, and making kings run in his service, Opening doors before him and leaving the gates unbarred: For the sake of Jacob, my servant, of Israel my chosen one, I have called you by your name, giving you a title, though you knew me not.*

What role does God play in world events? Certainly this passage about King Cyrus of Babylon, a pagan and an enemy of the Judeans acting on God's behalf, gives the illusion that God is involved in a game of chess with the nations. Does God use the force of one nation to punish another? Or on a more personal note, does God bless the fortunes of those who obey the divine law, and wilt the prospects of those who turn away?

The idea that the universe is a puppet show with God pulling all the strings is repugnant to thoughtful people. It would make a mockery of free will and cast a shadow across all of salvation history to believe that God stages world events, including the crucifixion, to satisfy a divine sense of balance or retribution. The worst of atonement theology presented God as "pleased" to make Jesus suffer and die for the sake of sinners.

As Christians, we are invited to see God's face in the face of Jesus, who introduced divine justice as forged in the fires of God's mercy. How does the God that Jesus reveals teach us to understand how history works?

God moves through time and history tangibly yet gently, much as Jesus walked among the people of his day and made his presence felt. Healing, wisdom, hope, and joy are signs left in the wake of God's touch.

Whether world events are benevolent or violent, God makes available the promise of a better future and holds out the opportunity for us to remake ourselves, here and now, into vessels of life, light, and peace. If Cyrus of Babylon could fulfill that mission, how much better might we?

**SECOND READING:  
1 Thessalonians 1:1–5b**

*Our gospel did not come to you in word alone, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with much conviction.*

All too often, the practice of religion is just "words, words, words," to steal a line from Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. Our liturgies, proclamations, and catechisms can become so top-heavy with words that it puts the vitality of faith to sleep – sometimes literally! When Paul writes to the Thessalonians about their evangelization, he notes that they were clearly chosen by God for the gospel they received. Their election is proved not by the fact that Paul, Silvanus and Timothy wandered in their direction, but by the sheer display of divine presence in their midst upon hearing the gospel proclaimed. Paul's triple use of images – power, Spirit, and conviction (literally, "force") – all point to the one reality of the Holy Spirit unleashed in the community. The Spirit of God embraced the community even as the fledgling church came into consciousness.

How does that measure with our expression of church? Do we believe in and experience the vitality of God's power at work among us? Do we embrace the full force of conviction that God has chosen us for the mission of being the signs or "sacraments" of God's presence in the world? Are we aware of the movement of the Holy Spirit in our individual lives and in the life of our parish, our diocese, our whole Catholic Church? If the answer to any of these questions is no, then we

have to ask whether the problem is that the Spirit of God does *not* dwell in us, or simply that we do not bring ourselves to conscious and deliberate involvement with that presence of God we celebrate in the Eucharist. It's possible that we are frightened of the possibility of acknowledging and welcoming the true and dynamic force of God within us, for to do so would open the way for the power of God to radically transform us and redirect our lives in every conceivable way.

**GOSPEL: Matthew 22:15–21**

*"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?"*

It was, as we might call it today, a maneuver of entrapment. The Pharisees are obviously not looking to Jesus for legal advice. They want him to inadvertently reveal his loyalty: for the despised state or against it? Either way, Jesus would place himself in grave danger with some authority. So how does Jesus feel about the authority of the state?

Biblical tradition wavers on the business of government. Israel began as a theocracy: God alone led the people, generally through some prophetic figure like Moses or Samuel. When the people insisted on having a king as other nations did, in order to take their place among them, God resists but in the end relents, giving them first Saul and then David. Nationhood turns out to be a disaster ever in the process of happening. The rulers they have are mostly greedy, disloyal to God, swayed by bad advice. The nation falls into the hands of other nations as well:

Assyria, Babylon, Rome. Clearly the track record of human rule is bleak.

But by the first century, Christian writings are already full of codes regarding good citizenship and giving respect to the state. Rabbinic writings of the Hillel school also advise: "Pray for the peace of the ruling power, since but for fear of it men would have swallowed up each other alive." It's not exactly a ringing endorsement of patriotism, but state-as-necessary-evil seems to be the general idea. Jesus tosses the matter back to the Pharisees in the same vein, less concerned with governments than with the human heart before God.

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The "Render unto Caesar" line has sometimes been used to justify unquestioned obedience and compliance with the actions of our government. While Catholics do have a moral obligation to live in peace with one another through solidarity with society, it is also true that Catholics have an obligation to protest when the government takes a wrong turn, even if that turn is dictated by the democratic will of the people.

Such is the case with the attempt by the legislature of Georgia and Alabama to pass immigration laws that would impose unjust burdens on the neediest of people and prevent the Church from fulfilling its mission among the poor. In response the Catholic bishops of these states have registered strong protests and have pledge non-compliance if these statutes are upheld.

Our own state of California still executes criminals found guilty of capital crimes, a clear violation of Catholic teaching regarding the sacred dignity of human life, as is the practice of abortion. The highest moral authority in the life of a Catholic is the dictates of his or her conscience informed by Scripture and Church teaching. When the action of any other authority violates a person's informed conscience, it is time to act.