

# The Home Sunday Worship Supplement

## Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost, 18<sup>th</sup> October 2020

**Dear Parishioners,**

What a joy it was to again worship in person with you last Sunday. And what a joy it was to have our Bishop with us for our first Sunday service after

the shut-down. Bishop Murray enjoyed his time with us, including a very useful chat with our LLMs afterwards.

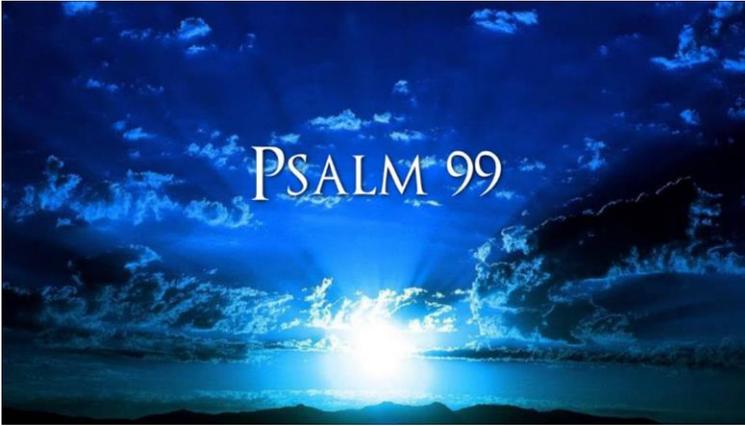


Another blessing this week is that Bishop-in-Council has generously agreed to extend the Diocesan financial assistance for parishes until 31 January 2021. During this period, they will only charge parishes 60% of our share of payroll expenses. We are most grateful for this assistance.

I have spoken with the LLMs about the need for us to begin to move into the Team Ministry Model required for our restructure. We need to do this to prove the feasibility of the concept and also, so that we can attract and retain a Ministry Area Leader (Rector).

This means that I will be giving greater authority and involvement to our LLMs in the ministry at Holy Trinity (within the terms of their licences of course). It is essential that the Ministry Area Leader is released from some responsibilities by other members of the team (Community Minister, LLMs, Parish Administrator, Pioneer ministry / minister/s). This will become clearer as we begin to explore the implications. Please support the LLMs in their efforts, learning, and growth.

**May you be encouraged and blessed, Rev Clyde**



- <sup>1</sup> The Lord is king, let the nations tremble:  
he is enthroned upon the cherubim; let the earth quake.
- <sup>2</sup> The Lord is great in Zion:  
he is high above all nations.
- <sup>3</sup> Let them praise your great and terrible name:  
for holy is the Lord.
- <sup>4</sup> The Mighty One is king and loves justice:  
you have established equity,  
you have dealt righteousness and justice in Jacob.
- <sup>5</sup> O exalt the Lord our God:  
and bow down before his footstool, for he is holy.
- <sup>6</sup> Moses and Aaron among his priests,  
and Samuel among those who call upon his name:  
they called to the Lord and he answered.
- <sup>7</sup> He spoke to them from the pillar of cloud:  
they kept to his teachings and the law that he gave them.
- <sup>8</sup> You answered them, O Lord our God:  
you were a forgiving God to them,  
and pardoned their wrongdoing.
- <sup>9</sup> O exalt the Lord our God:  
and bow down towards his holy hill,  
for the Lord our God is holy.

## Matthew 22: 15-22

<sup>15</sup> Then the Pharisees went out and laid plans to trap him in his words. <sup>16</sup> They sent their disciples to him along with the Herodians. ‘Teacher,’ they said, ‘we know that you are a man of integrity and that you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. You aren’t swayed by others, because you pay no attention to who they are. <sup>17</sup> Tell us then, what is your opinion? Is it right to pay the poll-tax to Caesar or not?’ <sup>18</sup> But Jesus, knowing their evil intent, said, ‘You hypocrites, why are you trying to trap me? <sup>19</sup> Show me the coin used for paying the tax.’ They brought him a denarius, <sup>20</sup> and he asked them, ‘Whose image is this? And whose inscription?’ <sup>21</sup> ‘Caesar’s,’ they replied. Then he said to them, ‘So give back to Caesar what is Caesar’s, and to God what is God’s.’ <sup>22</sup> When they heard this, they were amazed. So they left him and went away.

### Reflection on Matthew 22: 15-22

Prior to telling today’s parable, Jesus had brought a charge of a lack of integrity against the religious leaders in Israel. This was because they refused to follow him, and thereby rejected God. Not surprisingly, they were not pleased about this. So, they set out to try to trap Jesus with his words. But they failed! And in their failure, we are invited to take a closer look at our own motives and response to Jesus.

The religious leaders started the conversation by pretending to give Jesus respect and compliments (v.16): ‘*Teacher we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with the truth ...*’ But they were two faced - it was all a

calculated attempt to flatter him, so that he would not be on his guard, so that they could trap him and destroy him.

But, Jesus saw right through them and responded, ‘*Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites?*’ (v.18)

So, we learn that Jesus cannot be deceived! He sees right through any pretence that we make. He knows the true state of your and my heart.

We need to ask ourselves whether we may be like the Pharisees and Herodians - outwardly saying and doing all the right things; but, not having truly made Jesus the Lord in our life. Jesus knows whether our own selfish desires rule our hearts or whether he does. He knows the things on which we place value through our time, attention, resources, and energy.

Nevertheless, the Herodians and the Pharisees pushed on in trying to set a trap for Jesus. They put a very craftily thought out question to Jesus about whether it was lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not.

If Jesus had simply replied, “Refuse the tax” he would have been siding with the Pharisees; while if he said, “Pay it” he would have been siding with the Herodians. Also, if Jesus said, “Refuse the tax” he would immediately be liable for arrest on a civil offence. If he said, “Pay it”, he would have lost popular support which was the only thing stopping the religious leaders from moving against him.

So, how could Jesus answer without making himself liable to the displeasure of either the Jewish multitude or the Roman magistrates?

Jesus responded by asking them to bring to him the coin that was used for the paying of taxes. It was stamped with Caesar's image and title, which was the warrant for the public faith in its value.

So, Jesus tells them that they should 'give back' to Caesar what is his – after all Caesar had minted the coins in the first place. By this reply he avoided giving the offence that his enemies were hoping would have resulted.

But Jesus does not stop there. He then says that we should 'give to God what is God's'. Clearly, the religious leaders were not giving to God what was due to God.

We might ask ourselves, "What does it mean for me to give to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God the things that belong to God?"

At one level, Jesus' teaching to, '*Give to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's*', has been formative in developing Christian social and ethical behaviour. It provides the foundation of how a Christian should live, and it is on the basis of this verse that Christians see the need to be law abiding citizens of their country – so long as the laws of the land do not contradict the laws of God.

But there is more to this passage than just ethical guidance. It invites us to examine our hearts to see what parts of our life belong to the culture, versus those that belong to God. Where do we place value through our commitment of time, attention, resources, and energy? Is this appropriate given Jesus' command to give to God What is God's?

I suggest that the appropriate response to Jesus' command is to give our entire being to him. God has created us '*in his image*'. He has stamped his image onto us – just as Caesar's image was stamped on that denarius. And, just as Jesus said therefore the denarius belongs to Caesar, so we belong to God!

Therefore, we should give back to him our lives as 'living sacrifices'. We should give to him our praise and worship, and our love. We should give to him our obedience and our loyalty. We should give to him our hopes, fears, dreams, grief, disappointments, regrets, etc.

We are invited to examine our hearts and ask ourselves, "Am I holding back any part of my life rather than surrendering all to God?" As we do this, we would be wise to acknowledge that Jesus knows our hearts - we cannot fool him. *Amen.*

## **Collect**

Almighty and everlasting God,  
 in Christ you have revealed your glory among the nations:  
 grant that your Church throughout the world  
 may persevere with steadfast faith  
 in proclaiming the cross to be the way that leads to life eternal;  
 through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
 who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
 one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

## Re-opening of Holy Trinity

Holy Trinity has been re-opened to offer a 9:30 am service each Sunday commencing 11<sup>th</sup> October.

These services may not always be services of Holy Communion.

Other options are, Morning Prayer, Communion using Reserved Sacrament, or Praise Prayer & Proclamation.



Special COVIDSafe arrangements for these services including 1.5m physical distancing (except for people from the same household), will apply.

Hand sanitiser must be used before entering the church.

Prayer Books will not be available; however, you may bring a personal copy of APBA if you so desire.

Singing is not permitted. Some DVDs or CDs of reflective music will be played.

Communion in-one-kind (bread only) will be brought to you in your seats.

Gatherings inside the building after the service are discouraged because of difficulty maintaining physical distancing requirements. Therefore, morning tea will not be available.

*May*  
**God Bless You**  
 ON YOUR JOURNEY

