

Dear Parish Family,

“Repay to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God” (Matthew 22:21).

The Pharisees and Herodians approach Jesus with a question intended to trap Him: Is it lawful to pay the census tax to Caesar or not? Jesus responds with wisdom, reminding them that while we have responsibilities as citizens of this world, our deepest allegiance belongs to God. The image of Caesar on the coin points to the authority of earthly rulers, but the image of God is imprinted on every human person. We belong to God, created in His image and likeness, and our lives are meant to reflect His love, truth, and goodness.

As Christians, we are called to be responsible citizens, contributing to the well-being of our communities and working for justice, peace, and the common good. At the same time, we must never forget that our ultimate identity is found in Christ. Our faith is not something we leave behind when we enter our workplaces, schools, or public life. Rather, it should shape our decisions, guide our relationships, and inspire us to serve others with honesty, compassion, and integrity.

This Gospel also invites us to ask ourselves an important question: What belongs to God in my life? God does not ask merely for a portion of our time or a few moments of prayer. He invites us to offer Him our hearts, our talents, our resources, and our entire lives. Everything we have is ultimately a gift from Him, and we are called to use those gifts generously in the service of His Kingdom.

Here at St. Anthony, we have many opportunities to put this faith into practice through our parish ministries, our service to those in need, and our commitment to the spiritual and educational formation of our children and young people. Every act of generosity, every hour of service, and every prayer offered for our parish family becomes a way of giving back to God what is already His.

As we continue our journey together as a parish community, may we remember that we are made in God’s image and called to make His presence visible in the world. Let us give to our community what is rightfully due, but let us give our hearts entirely to God, who alone is the source of our life, our dignity, and our eternal hope.

May the Lord bless you and your families.

Fr. Rolando