

# The Little Flower Messenger

Year A TWENTY-NINTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME 18<sup>th</sup> October 2020

*Welcome to our Parish Community of St. Theresa of Lisieux*

The Presbytery, High Lane, Stansted Mountfitchet, CM24 8LQ

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(Please note that the Parish Office will be closed from 23<sup>rd</sup> October until 3<sup>rd</sup> November. Thank you).

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## Gospel: Matthew 22:15-21

*'Give back to Caesar what belongs to Caesar – and to God what belongs to God'*

<b>1st Reading:</b>	<i>Isaiah 45:1,4-6</i>
<b>Psalm 95:1, 3-5, 7-10:</b>	<i>Give the Lord glory and power.</i>
<b>2nd Reading:</b>	<i>1 Thessalonians 1:1-5</i>
<b>Gospel Acclamation:</b>	<i>Alleluia, alleluia! Your word is truth, O Lord, consecrate us in the truth. Alleluia!</i>
<b>Communion Antiphon:</b>	<i>Behold, the eyes of the Lord are on those who fear him, who hope in his merciful love, to rescue their souls from death, to keep them alive in famine.</i>

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## This Week's Good News

Dear Friends,

Today's Gospel passage deals with a question that has concerned societies throughout the ages. How do we balance our duties as citizens to the State and our duties as Christians to God?

In 1st Century Palestine, the Jews were forced to pay three types of tax to the Roman Emperor: the ground tax, the income tax and the census tax or poll tax. As ground tax, a man was required to pay to the government one tenth of the grain and one fifth of the oil and wine he produced. This tax was paid partly in kind and partly in money equivalent. There was income tax which was 1% of a man's income. There was a census, or poll tax. This tax, which amounted to one denarius, was paid yearly for every male person from the age of fourteen to the age of sixty-five and for every female person from the age of twelve to sixty-five. Today's question concerned the census/poll tax. A census tax implied that, if one were a citizen, one owed the money to the Emperor. The Jews believed that they had only one Lord and Ruler and that was their God and so taxes, or any form of submission, should be made to Yahweh alone. Hence, the question which the Pharisees asked Jesus, was intended to create a very real dilemma for him. If he were to say that it was unlawful to pay the tax, the Herodians and their allies would report him to the Roman officials, who would then arrest him as a revolutionary. If he were to say that it was lawful to pay the tax, the insurgents and their supporters would turn against him and he would be discredited in the eyes of the people who were against paying taxes to a pagan emperor. In other words, to declare that tax should be paid would have made Jesus appear a traitor to his country, while a denial would have left him behind bars as an enemy of Rome.

Jesus defeated their scheme by asking his challengers to show him "the coin of tribute" – the coin they would give to the tax-gatherer. By having a Roman coin in their possession, complete with Caesar's image and Caesar's inscription, the challengers had already shown where their loyalties lay. They had, in effect,



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answered their own question. Jesus, rather than answering their question directly, asked them a question, thus turning their trap inside out and upside down: “Whose image (eikon in Greek) and inscription are these?” (The census tax was paid with a denarius coin, which contained the image of the Emperor on one side with the inscription “Tiberius Caesar, Son of the Divine Augustus”—and on the other his title “Pontifex Maximus” (high priest). Thus, Caesar claimed not only political sovereignty but also Divine attributes. Therefore, the Jews considered the image idolatrous and the inscription blasphemous). “Caesar’s,” they said. Jesus then said, “Give back to Caesar what belongs to Caesar — and to God what belongs to God.” In other words, we give to the Emperor the coin because his image is on it, and we give to God our own selves because we are created in the image of God (Gn 1:26). Jesus’ answer acknowledges our obligation as citizens to the State but affirms our larger obligation to God. Both the State and God require certain loyalties from us, but we owe God our very lives. The question Jesus was asked could have been phrased, “Whose side are you on? Israel’s or Rome’s?” Jesus’ answer was “On God’s side,” in other words, taxes are Caesar’s, so pay them; but your heart and your soul are Yahweh’s; give those to God!

The Catechism of the Catholic Church clarifies it: If that authority serves the common good of the people, then the choice of the type of political regime is left up to the citizenry (CCC #1901). When the demands of an authority violate the upright conscience of the people, (e.g. when that authority “legalises” immorality (i.e., abortion, euthanasia, cloning, etc.) the refusal of obedience is acceptable (CCC #2242). (CCC 1897-1917: participation in the social sphere; CCC 2238-2244: duties of citizens).

Throughout the centuries this issue of separation of Church and State, has been a bone of contention right up until the present day. In the First World War, there were many instances of soldiers refusing to take up arms due to religious and ethical beliefs who were then executed for cowardice. Duty to King and Country overrode any duty to God. In the current presidential election campaign in the United States, we see professed Catholics running for State office who support policies contrary to the teaching of the Church. They deny the inalienable right to life of unborn children and declare that abortion should be a matter of individual choice.

Perhaps the best example we can use to illustrate this is in the person of St. Thomas More the English martyr who was councillor to King Henry VIII and Lord High Chancellor of England. Robert Bolt dramatized More’s conflict – regarding what is Caesar’s and what is God’s – in the drama, ‘A Man for All Seasons’. Recall the story. King Henry VIII of England was, by Papal dispensation, validly married to Catherine of Aragon, his elder brother’s widow. Seeking a male heir and attracted to Anne Boleyn, Henry appealed to Rome again to have his marriage to Catherine annulled – which would mean that the Papal dispensation had been sinful! Rome refused. Henry took matters into his own hands, declared himself Head of the Church in England and “married” Anne. He then ordered his friends and officials to sign a document declaring that they agreed he had acted rightly in the matter. Many of More’s friends signed, but More refused. Henry demanded that he sign or face arrest, trial for treason, and execution by the state. More refused: he knew he had two obligations, one to God and one to his country. When they conflicted, More knew he had no choice but to remain faithful to his obligation to God. On his way to public execution in 1534, More encouraged the people to remain steadfast in the Faith. His last recorded words were: “I die the King’s good servant, but God’s first.” Today’s Gospel reminds us of our dual citizenship. We are citizens of the world and citizens of Heaven. We have an allegiance and an obligation to each. We hope the obligations will never clash. But if they ever do, we must resolve them as Thomas More did, without compromise to our God or to our conscience.

Deacon Des

## **Making an Act of Spiritual Communion**

**My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the most Blessed Sacrament. I love You above all things and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.**



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## Parish News

**18<sup>th</sup> October is World Mission Sunday:** World Mission Sunday supports missionaries who work alongside communities that are poor or in need, regardless of their background or belief. By supporting Missio, the Pope's charity for world mission, you will help missionaries like Sr. Nilcéia share the love of Christ with those most in need. Please pray for the mission of the Church throughout the world and give what you can to this very important collection which will sustain the future of our Church. Please call 020 7821 9755 (office hours) or visit Missio's website to give a single gift, set up a Direct Debit and Gift Aid your donation, if possible [www.missio.org.uk](http://www.missio.org.uk) Thank you.

**Fr John Garrett Memorial Card:** Fr John's sister has printed memorial prayer cards for the parish in memory of her brother. As they are laminated in plastic, they will be placed at the exit of the church for you to take home. Please remember to wipe them clean once you get home. Thank you.

**Weekday Masses:** Please note that from Monday 26<sup>th</sup> October no weekday Masses will be held whilst Fr. Lee has a break. Weekday masses will recommence on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> November. Weekend Masses will continue as normal during this time. Thank you.

**Sunday Coffee morning:** We are now able to attend Mass in person, however, we are not yet able to hold our coffee mornings in person. If you would like to socialise virtually then why not join us for a chat and a short fun quiz from the comfort of your own home? Held every Sunday at 11.10 a.m. via the following Zoom details: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83024819984> Meeting ID: 830 2481 9984 Password: CM24Thrsx - All are welcome.

**Annual Shoe Box Appeal 2020 - [www.teams4u.com](http://www.teams4u.com):** Every year in recent times our Parish has supported the annual Christmas shoebox appeal and this year is especially important as the world reels from the impact of Covid-19. Many children have benefited from the generous benefactors of our parish who have provided either finance or shoeboxes full of gifts as well as time covering and packing shoeboxes. We are very grateful to you all. Children need great joy and love now more than ever and this is a wonderful giving opportunity we would like to continue and for our Parish to still be a part of that joy and love giving.

Covid-19 (coronavirus), has forced us to modify how we approach our annual appeal. For example, we will not be able to hold our usual wrapping and packing gatherings in the Parish Centre. However, we would still ask you in your generosity to either contribute from the list below which we will use to fill boxes on your behalf. Please **do not** bring these to Church. To arrange collection the details can be found in the October Link magazine which you can find on Page 29 at <http://stanstedlink.org.uk/On%20line%20editions/2020/Oct%202020.pdf> .

If you are making up a box please enclose a slip of paper with the age group and whether it is for a boy or girl. We would really welcome more items for the older boys, as we never have enough for them. The age groups are 3-5,6-11,12+. Items can include:

- Toiletries: soap, flannel, toothbrush, toothpaste, Hairbrush, comb, hairbands
- Stationery items: paper, pens, pencils, crayons, ruler, geometry set, craft pack
- Gloves, hats, scarves, small handbags, small items of jewellery
- Soft toy or puppet, games, puzzles, bubbles (well wrapped)
- Small musical instruments
- Sweets and chocolate
- A Christmas card and photo of yourself

As we are unable to use the Parish Centre due to the COVID restrictions, we would be happy to collect the boxes from you or you can drop them on our doorsteps. If you need a shoe box, just let us know. We look forward to making this one of our best years. Thank you.

Brian and Eileen Quinn and Helen Baker.



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## Mass Times and Intentions

<b>TWENTY-NINTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME - Year A</b>		
<b>Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Confessions: <b>5:15 p.m. – 5:45 p.m.</b> Mass: <b>6:00 p.m.</b> <i>Livestreamed on our YouTube channel</i>	<b>Holy Souls (Novena)</b> (P. Zawadzki)
<b>Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> October</b> <i>World Mission Day</i>	Mass: <b>8:30 a.m.</b> Live-streamed on our YouTube channel  Confessions: <b>9:15 a.m. – 9:45 a.m.</b> Mass: <b>10:00 a.m.</b> Live-streamed on our YouTube channel	<b>Bill Blythe RIP</b> (H. Bennett)  <b>People of the Parish</b>
<b>Monday 19<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Confessions: <b>9:00 a.m.</b> Mass: <b>9:30 a.m.</b> <i>Livestreamed on our YouTube channel</i>	<b>Holy Souls (Novena)</b> (P. Zawadzki)
<b>Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> October</b> <i>St John Cantius</i>	Confessions: <b>7:15 p.m.</b> Mass (EF) (Latin): <b>8:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Holy Souls (Novena)</b> (P. Zawadzki)
<b>Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> October</b>	Confessions: <b>12:00 p.m.</b> Mass: <b>12:30 p.m.</b> <i>Livestreamed on our YouTube channel</i>	<b>Holy Souls (Novena)</b> (P. Zawadzki)
<b>Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> October</b>	Confessions: <b>9:00 a.m.</b> Mass: <b>9:30 a.m.</b> <i>Livestreamed on our YouTube channel</i>	<b>Tommaso Mastrandrea</b> <b>RIP</b>
<b>Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> October</b>	Confessions: <b>9:00 a.m.</b> Mass: <b>9:30 a.m.</b> <i>Livestreamed on our YouTube channel</i>	<b>Ted Clarke RIP</b> (K. Clarke)
<b>THIRTIETH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME - Year A</b>		
<b>Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Confessions: <b>5:15 p.m. – 5:45 p.m.</b> Mass: <b>6:00 p.m.</b> <i>Live-streamed on our YouTube channel</i>	<b>Laurence McCreanor RIP</b> (S. Wood)
<b>Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> October</b> <i>St Cedd</i> <i>1st Reading: Exodus 22: 20-26</i> <i>Psalm: 17: 2-4, 47, 51</i> <i>2nd Reading: 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10</i> <i>Gospel: Matthew 22:34-40</i>	Mass: <b>8:30 a.m.</b> Live-streamed on our YouTube channel  Confessions: <b>9:15 a.m. – 9:45 a.m.</b> Mass: <b>10:00 a.m.</b> Live-streamed on our YouTube channel	<b>People of the Parish</b>

**PLEASE TAKE THIS NEWSLETTER HOME WITH YOU AND DISPOSE OF IT RESPONSIBLY. THANK YOU.**



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