

Fr Terry writes:

The state of the world rarely brings peace of mind. In our own times we find ourselves grappling with new issues, many of them to do with the world's economy. There seem to be many questions, few answers.

At times like this it is important to remember that God is our Creator. Our Creator not just in the sense of calling everything that is into life, but in also the sense of being an ongoing Creator. God creates still through the presence of the Holy Spirit brooding over our world, working with human frailties, inspiring and challenging, judging and confronting. This does not guarantee that our world will be free from disaster brought on by human arrogance, nor does it mean that hatred will always be thwarted. It does mean that God's hand will always bring us back from the brink. God can work surprising reversals, even when the world least expects it.

Take the example of Cyrus in today's first reading (Isa. 45.1,4-6). The people of Judah were in exile. Jerusalem had been in ruins for 60 years. The Babylonians seem to have an iron grip on everyone, everywhere. Then in 539 the Persian King Cyrus defeated the Babylonians. They listened to the Jews he found in Babylon and heard of their longing to return. It served his purposes to agree. Not only did he encourage them to go back and rebuild Jerusalem: he even restored to them the sacred vessels which had been taken from the Temple. No wonder the prophet saw the hand of God in this.

Yet we are not to assume too casually that the ruler, or in our days the state, does the will of God. Today the state can often fail to protect the vulnerable, especially at the beginning of life and as life nears its end. In Jesus' day there was a sharp debate about the extent to which an observant Jew could obey the Roman Empire, with its pagan cult of the emperor. To pay taxes, even to carry their coins, seemed to some Jews to betray their own faith. The question asked of Jesus is intended to trap him. His reply points to recognition that the ruler can make demands for the common good. Taxes build roads, hospitals, schools. Yet in our own day the power of the state reaches into virtually every area of life, far more than in Jesus's day. We need to keep our conscience alive and alert. Only in a living relationship with God can we do this, in which we give to God what belongs to God. We respect the state: but only God is to be worshipped.

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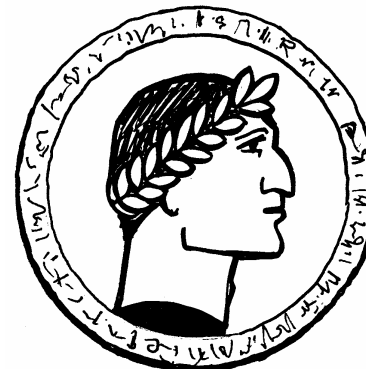
Parish Team: Fr Terry Tastard (Parish Priest); Fr James Neal;
Sister Jenefer Glencross OSU (Catechetics Co-ordinator); Fr Nizar Semaan (in residence).

Parish Secretary: Mrs Ann McCarthy

29th SUNDAY OF THE YEAR (Year A)

19th October 2008

Today's Readings pp 335-338 St. Paul Sunday Missal



SERVICE TIMES

Saturday Vigil Mass 6 pm;

**Sunday at 8.30 am, 10 am, 11.30 and 6 pm
1 pm (Syriac Rite, in Arabic and Aramaic)**

Weekdays: Mass daily 9.30 am & 6 pm

Benediction: Sat. 7-7.30 pm

Confession: Saturday 10-10.30 am and 5.15-5.30 pm

OFFICE HOURS

**Monday-Friday (except Wednesdays)
10.30 to 3.30 pm (Thursday 3pm)**