



Week 2. 22nd – 28th October

29th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Matthew 22: 15-21 – Paying Taxes to Caesar

"... give back to Caesar what belongs to Caesar – and to God what belongs to God."

PATHWAYS TO THE FUTURE

In 1959, Pope Saint John XXIII called for an ecumenical council with the purpose of bringing the Church "up to date". The Council, Vatican II, concluded its work in 1965 having produced 16 documents, one of which was on the role and participation of the laity in the life of the Church. It said "As sharers in the role of Christ the Priest, the Prophet, and the King, the laity have an active part to play in the life and activity of the Church" and that "as far as possible, the laity ought to collaborate energetically in every apostolic and missionary undertaking sponsored by their local parish". It continues "For it is a duty and honour for Christians to return to God a part of the good things they receive from Him." (Decree on the Laity, Chapter III, section 10)

There is a strong resonance in these statements with our Gospel passage today, where Jesus challenges us to give back "to God what belongs to God". Through our baptism, we are citizens of God's Kingdom and we have been given the gifts of the Holy Spirit to serve our King and our fellow citizens. This is Mission Sunday, when we are called to give financial and spiritual support to our brothers and sisters overseas who share our faith, and to missionaries who spread the Good News and provide life-giving support to those in need. Our missionary duty is not, however, limited to one Sunday in the Church's year and to the work of others in distant lands only. Our missionary role continues day by day in our parishes and communities using the gifts that God has given us and that His spirit sustains in our service to others and working with our clergy.

We find ourselves again at a moment of bringing the Church "up to date". As we plan for the renewal of our Church in Down and Connor through *Pathways to the Future*, and as the Church worldwide journeys together in the Synod, let us ask ourselves what part we play in the life and activity of the Church. Today's Gospel challenges us to consider how we are paying our dues to our King in our daily lives and within our communities of faith. May the Holy Spirit guide and encourage us, and may God arm us "*that men may know from the rising to the setting of the sun that, apart from Me, all is nothing*" (Isaiah 45:6)

"you have shown your faith in action, worked for love and persevered through hope, in our Lord Jesus Christ"

1 Thessalonians 1:1-5



To find out more go to www.pathwaystothefuture.org

Prayer of the Faithful

Let us pray for the Synod and for the work of *Pathways to the Future* in Down and Connor, that the Holy Spirit may light, guide, and ignite the renewal of the Church and her people.

That the Holy Spirit will guide the Holy Father in the choice of a new Bishop of the Diocese to shepherd and pastor us in the pilgrimage of faith and hope.

That we may respond to the call of the Holy Spirit to play an active part in the life and activity of the Church and parishes.

That we may give thanks for the many people who give of their gifts, talents, and their time to serve God and help build His Kingdom in Down and Connor.

Pathways to the Future Prayer

God of Love,

You are with us in every transition and change.

As we enter into this new era with excitement and even some anxiety,
we recall your deep compassion, presence, and abounding love.

We thank you for the gifts, talents, and skills with which you have blessed us.

We thank you for the work of others that gives breadth and depth to our own work.

Be with us as we move forward, rejoicing with you and supporting one another.

We ask this in your Holy Name. Amen.