

Prayers and Readings for Private Use

Sunday 18 October 2020 - Nineteenth Sunday in the "Trinity" Season

By using this sheet at home, you are joining other local Christians in the worship of God and sharing in our common prayer at a time of national need. You may like to light a candle as you pray.

Jesus said: 'Give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's,
and give to God the things that are God's.'
All we have and all we are has come from God,
so let us worship him with our offerings.

Approaching God

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.

God the Father forgives us in Christ and heals us by
the Holy Spirit. Let us therefore acknowledge our
sins before God.

Father, you come to meet us when we return to you:
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

Jesus, you died on the cross for our sins:
Christ, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.

Spirit, you give us life and peace:
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

May God who loved the world so much
that he sent his Son to be our Saviour
forgive us our sins
and make us holy to serve him in the world,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

O God, forasmuch as without you
we are not able to please you;
mercifully grant that your Holy Spirit
may in all things direct and rule our hearts;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,

who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God now and for ever. Amen.

Listening for God: Matthew 22: 15-22

Then the Pharisees went and plotted to entrap
him in what he said. So they sent their disciples
to him, along with the Herodians, saying,
"Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and
teach the way of God in accordance with truth,
and show deference to no one; for you do not
regard people with partiality. Tell us, then, what
you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the
emperor, or not?" But Jesus, aware of their
malice, said, "Why are you putting me to the
test, you hypocrites? Show me the coin used for
the tax." And they brought him a denarius. Then
he said to them, "Whose head is this, and
whose title?" They answered, "The emperor's."
Then he said to them, "Give therefore to the
emperor the things that are the emperor's, and
to God the things that are God's." When they
heard this, they were amazed; and they left him
and went away.

Thought for the Day

We are back with Jesus in the Temple in
Jerusalem - where, through his telling of
parables, he has continued to pronounce
judgement on Israel.

And once again, we find the Jewish
establishment trying to trap him. The Pharisees,
rather than going themselves, have sent their
disciples, along with the Herodians - who
primarily politically motivated, were loyal to,
and supportive of, King Herod (hence their
name).

And so it was, that a plan was made - to trick
and trap Jesus, and to ask him just who he
thinks he is!

'Is it right' they asked, 'to pay taxes to the
Emperor or not?' - a question which gave Jesus
two choices:

If he said yes, he would look bad in front of the Jewish crowd. But if he said no, he could be arrested and executed as a traitor to Rome. There is no surprise that Jesus responds to their question with a question of his own in return! Requesting a coin, he asks whose head appears on it (that of Emperor Tiberius). He then delivers his statement that leaves them amazed - and which sends them on their way.

'Give to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's'.

What belongs to God? ... **'everything'**.

In 1 Chronicles (29:14) we find those words, used weekly in many of our churches: *'All things come from you, O God, and of your own do we give to you.'* And in the first verse of Psalm 24: *'The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it'*

Jesus asked those assembled to think about what belongs to God ... and he asks us the same question ... as he invites us to declare our allegiance, our commitment, our faithfulness:

'In your life, what belongs to God?'

Whose image is on **us**? (created as we are in God's own image) ... and what is he calling us to do? How is our answer to Jesus' question reflected in, and through, all that we do in our lives? ...

Response

Heavenly Father, remind us of our identity as your beloved children,
and as agents of your mercy in this world,
and empower us to live that identity every day.
In Jesus' name, Amen.

Prayers

Loving God,
we come before you with thanksgiving,
to express our faith, proclaim praise,
and celebrate your unfailing love and mercy
in the midst of uncertainty.

Heavenly Father,
today we dedicate ourselves again to your service,
to reaffirm our loyalty to Christ and his Church,
whether worshipping together,
or in our own homes.

Speak to us we pray.

Guide and inspire us, in all that you call us to do.
Give us wisdom and courage, and trust in you.
And direct our steps that we may walk in your ways. Amen

God of compassion, be close to those who are ill, afraid or in isolation.
In their loneliness, be their consolation; in their anxiety, be their hope; in their darkness, be their light; through him who suffered alone on the cross, but reigns with you in glory, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever. Amen.

May the Lord bless us and keep us.
May he make his face to shine upon us,
and be gracious to us.
May the Lord lift up his countenance upon us
and give us peace.
May the Lord God almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the holy and undivided Trinity,
guard us, save us, and bring us to that heavenly city, where he lives and reigns for ever and ever.
Amen.

Faithful Lord,
whose steadfast love never ceases
and whose mercies never come to an end:
grant us the grace to trust you
and to receive the gifts of your love,
new every morning,
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

May we go in peace, to love and serve the Lord.
Amen.