

Repay to God What Belongs to God



The Pharisees wanted to entrap Jesus, so they asked Him, "Is it lawful to pay the census tax to Caesar or not?" If Jesus had simply answered yes, then He would lose favor with the Jewish people. If Jesus had simply answered no, then the Pharisees and Herodians would accuse Him of sedition against the Roman authorities. Jesus did not answer with a simple yes or no; rather, He answered it according to the cultural context of His time. At the time of Jesus in ancient

Judea, it was quite common to prove ownership, authority, and authenticity using stamped images or seals. Merchants relied heavily on seals to prove ownership, to prevent tampering, and to authenticate business transactions. The coin used to pay the Roman census tax was the denarius. The Roman emperor's image was minted directly into the denarius, and according to Roman law, the coin legally belonged to the imperial treasury. That was common knowledge at the time, so Jesus said to them, "Then repay to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God." (Mt 22:21) The first part of Jesus' response put to rest the question of paying the Roman census tax, but Jesus did not stop there. The second part of Jesus' response carried with it a teaching which the people have very well forgotten: Repay to God what belongs to God.

Does man belong to God because man is created in the image of God? Yes, in the biblical corpus, human beings belong to God because He created us and gave us life. Where in the bible does it say that man belongs to God? In the Old Testament, Psalm 100:3 says, "Know that the LORD is God. It is He who made us, and we are His; we are His people, the sheep of His pasture." However, creation is not the only reason why humanity belongs to God. Scriptural tradition teaches that because of human free will and the rebellion of sin, humanity was cut off from God's direct fellowship. But through the redemption of man brought about by the Suffering, Death and Resurrection of Christ, the relationship has been restored. Therefore, human beings belong to God first by creation, and second by the grace of redemption. In the New Testament, St. Paul writes: "Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price." (1 Corinthians 6:19–20) and "If we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord." (Romans 14:8)

Belonging to God does not mean that God treats human beings as disposable property. In Judeo-Christian theology, God formed humanity in His own image, so that humanity belongs to Him as His sacred charge; i.e., humanity belongs to God as a cherished, divine responsibility that He personally watches over and treasures. Humans are given a unique role as God's stewards and caretakers of the rest of creation. In the Book of Genesis, God said, "Let us make human beings in our image, after our likeness. Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, the tame animals, all the wild animals, and all the creatures that crawl on the earth." (Gen 1:26)

Let us now think about this: If man belongs to God, then what does God expect of man? Here are the main expectations for all people: (1) To do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God (Micah 6:8).

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That means to treat others justly, to show compassion to others, and to live in humble dependence on God. (2) To fear the Lord your God, to follow in all His ways, to love and serve Him with your whole heart and with your whole being, to keep His commandments and statutes (Dt 10:12-13). (3) As Peter said to the crowds: to repent and be baptized (Acts 2:38). The New Testament emphasizes having faith in Jesus Christ and turning away from a lifestyle of sin. (4) To be holy because God is holy (1Peter 1:16). Believers are called to moral purity and to be set apart for God's purposes. (5) For those who are married, to love your spouse, even as Christ loved the Church and handed Himself over for her (Eph 5:25). Married couples are commanded to love their spouses sacrificially, in the same way that Christ loved the Church. (6) Those with children are instructed to raise their children with godly discipline (Eph 6:4). (7) To live with self-control and integrity (Titus 2:1-8). Believers should be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, strong in faith and courageous in action.

PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

OCIA has begun: If you know anyone who has an interest in becoming Catholic, please contact Fr. Bill.

Chinese language classes for the Spring Semester begin on January 9 and 10, 2027. We are offering classes for both children and adults. Schedule and registration can be downloaded from our church website.

Today English Language class has been suspended, the teacher is temporarily unavailable.

There will be no Sunday School class today due to Fall Break.

Today is potluck Sunday! Lunch begins after the 10:30am Mass. Please bring your favorite dish to share. If you are celebrating your birthday in the month of October, we have ordered a birthday cake for you.

We have a volunteer opportunity at the Atlanta Food Bank on December 5, 2026. If you would like to volunteer, please sign up with Angela Ooi and Daisy Tsui.

Prayer List: Bian Cheng Zhang, Michael Tan, Bian Meiyi, Chen Shupeng, Chen Jianxin, Liang Chenjing and Xu Taicheng.

Mass Schedule	Confessions	Bible Study
Sundays 10:30 AM (Chinese)	By Appointment	Wednesdays 10:00 AM (Chinese)
Sundays 2:00 PM (English)		
	Anointing of the Sick	Eucharistic Adoration
Mondays 12:00 PM (English)	First Sundays after 10:30 AM Mass	Sundays 9:00 to 10:00 AM
Tuesdays 12:00 PM (English)	First Fridays after 6:30 PM Mass	
Wednesdays 12:00 PM (Chinese)		
Fridays 12:00 PM (English)		
First Friday 6:30 PM (English)		