

Reflections on the Gospel

The case of the Persian king Cyrus in today's first reading should be a warning against being too quick to attach labels and make judgments. Cyrus was the king of a pagan nation and therefore one of Israel's enemies. He would be the last person we might consider as a Messiah, but that is exactly what he is called by God in Isaiah's text. At this stage in Israel's history, the term merely means "anointed one" and does not imply a savior.

King Cyrus is seen as the instrument of God, for he defeated the Babylonians and instituted a rather benign and tolerant rule by the standards of that age. Eventually he would even allow many of the Jewish exiles to return home to rebuild their nation. Cyrus would probably have been very surprised to discover that he had been chosen and anointed by the Jewish God. Indeed, the voice of God addresses Cyrus as one who does not even know him. But by way of introduction, God reveals himself as the source of light and darkness, well-being and disaster.

God can and does use many different individuals and groups of people to accomplish his will. God's spirit can run what we would consider an erratic path, coming to rest in some shocking places. Some of God's choices might make us uncomfortable, even outraged. We might also be in disagreement on many things.

God has in mind only the accomplishment of his plan for humanity and will use whatever means necessary. Everyone on this earth has his or her particular part to play in the drama of human redemption and the preservation of the planet. Our part may be small or substantial, but most definitely has direction. Saints and sinners, political leaders and activists, soldiers and peacemakers can serve God's purposes even when unaware. We each have a role to play in our exciting and mysterious world.

The question put to Jesus: "Is it lawful to pay tax to the emperor or not?" sounds like a no-win situation. There is trouble in store no matter how the question is answered. This question concerning the propriety of paying taxes to the emperor has nothing to do with good citizenship, regardless of later interpretations and uses of the text. It is a loaded question, for it concerns cooperation or non-cooperation with an oppressive, occupying power.

If Jesus answers in the affirmative, he is a traitor. If he says no, then he is a rebel against Rome. One can only admire the deft way he slips from the trap laid for him. His discovery that the image of the emperor is on the coin that his questioners are carrying highlights their hypocrisy.

But Jesus' puzzling declaration that they should give to Caesar what rightfully belongs to him can only be understood in the context of the entire gospel. The arrival of Jesus is seen as an apocalyptic world event, one that involved a climactic encounter between God and the world. Jesus proclaimed the kingdom or reign of God, who was intervening in human history and re-conquering a wayward and rebellious world.

The world was created by and belonged to God. People like Caesar had taken on divine titles and usurped the powers and honors that rightfully belonged only to God. Those in the know understood exactly what Jesus meant when he said to give to Caesar what was his and give to God what belonged to God. When all of the accounting is finished, Caesar was left with nothing and God with everything.



Stewardship Report:



Revenue

October 12:	7,261.97
Faith Direct:	1,609.25
Total Offertory:	8,871.22
Last Year:	12,565.82
Poor Box:	149.00
Every Penny Counts Box:	50.43

Number of Adult Envelopes: 274
Number of Children's Envelopes: 14
Number of Faith Direct donors: 36
Number of Registered Households: 630



Second Collection: Our **second** collection **this** weekend is for **World Mission Sunday: Propagation of the Faith**. As Catholics around the world gather at the Eucharist, we are to pray for the Church's worldwide missionary work. We pray for those waiting to hear the "Good News" of our Lord's great love for us and for the missionaries who the

offer poor and suffering the light of Christ. We are also to offer our financial help through the Society for the Propagation of the Faith for more than 1,150 dioceses in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Pacific Islands. Just as our young church here in the US received support in the 19th century from Catholics in Europe, so too the growing churches in the Developing World today also require financial help. Your generosity will make a faith-filled difference around the world!

Children & Teen Offertory Envelopes: Parents are reminded to note that there are special offertory envelopes for young children and teens at the top of each pamphlet rack. The Patron Saint envelopes are appropriate for teens and the others are appropriate for the younger children. *Help us teach the importance of returning a portion of our blessings to God each week.*



Thank You!

Dear parishioners of St. Matthias the Apostle Church, your warm welcome to Fr. Sam and me was very much appreciated. You are indeed blessed to have a wonderful pastor. Your parish is very lively and the music for the mass was really great. I encourage you to continue to be true to the faith and most importantly make sure your children grow up in this beautiful faith of ours. May the peace of Christ remain with you always.

Most Reverend Charles G. PALMER-BUCKLE
Metropolitan Archbishop of Accra,
Vice President of the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference

Faith Formation:

Faith Formation: Those parents who missed the General Parent Meeting on October 6 should pick up the calendar for the year as well as the Planning Charts for their child's grade level. Calendars can be picked up during Faith Formation classes or by appointment at the rectory.

Confirmation Candidate/ Parent Meeting: The first Confirmation Parent/Candidate meeting will be held on **Monday, November 3, 2007 at 6:45 pm in Friendship Hall.** All candidates from Saint Matthias School and the Faith Formation program are required to attend this meeting and be accompanied by at least one parent. No make-up meeting will be held so please plan to attend.

Youth Bibles: We have a limited number of copies available for purchase at a cost of \$25.00. These Bibles are uniquely suited for teenagers and will help your child develop a love for Scripture. Bibles may be purchased during Faith Formation hours on Mondays or at the rectory during normal business hours.



RCIA: The Rites for Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) is already in session. We meet on Tuesdays at 7:00 pm in the Faculty lounge of the School. If you or a family member or friend is interested in the Catholic faith or has questions, this is the place to be. Come and find out more about the Catholic faith. For further information contact Dorothy Aggrey at 301-459-4814 x 205.

Other Items of Note:

CYO News: St. Matthias is now registering children in kindergarten through 8th grade for basketball. Please see our website at www.stmatthiascyo.org for more information or to sign up!



Leisure Club Road Trip: The St. Matthias Leisure Club is sponsoring a bus trip to Midway Slots in Harrington, Delaware on **October 30th.** The bus will leave the church parking lot at 9:30am and return by 5:00pm. The cost is \$24 per person and the casino gives a \$15 play credit upon arrival. For more information or to reserve your place for the trip, please call Duke Sczuka at 301-577-3916.

Welcome New Choir Members! Please join us for one of 4 choirs offered here at St. Matthias. We have the Youth Choir, Traditional Choir, African Choir & Filipino Choir to join! Please contact the Parish Music Director, Regina Loffredo, at 301-464-9193 for additional information. If you have an instrumental talent to share, please let us know!



Volunteers Wanted! Our parish school is seeking adult volunteers to work with teacher and children in the classroom and to assist with light administrative work. Child protection compliance is required. If you have a few hours each week to help our school provide a quality Catholic education to our students, please contact Pat Wilson at 301-577-9412.

Votive Lights: at the Shrine of the Sacred Heart and the Blessed Mother will be available only through November. If you would like a candle burned in honor of, in memory of, for the intentions of, or happy repose of someone, please schedule your request in the rectory.

Current Parishioners: Do you have a new member in your family? Have you changed addresses? If so, please send your updates to the rectory. You may use the Parish Registration Form for your convenience. We have had a noticeable increase in the amount of returned mail. We need your current information for our Parish Census reports and be sure you receive important parish mailings!



Mass Intentions for the Twenty-Ninth Week in Ordinary Time

Monday, October 20: Paul of the Cross, priest

8:30 am Bob & Ann Florimbio (Living, Anniversary)

Tuesday, October 21:

8:30 am Rufina M. Prieto

Wednesday, October 22:

8:30 am Alphonse T. Migneco

Thursday, October 23: John of Capistrano, priest

8:30 am Esperanza Tiamson (Living)

Friday, October 24: Anthony Mary Claret, bishop

8:30 am Cynthia Amanyeiwe (Living)

Sat., Oct 25: Vigil – Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

3:30 pm to 4:30pm—Confessions

5:00 pm Leticia Buan

Sunday, Oct 26: Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

8:00 am Joe Rubenstahl (Living)

9:30 am Helen Jacik

11:30am Peter Fonju

Please Pray for: †The Sick and Homebound In Our Parish:

Phil Ates; Virgie Azarcon; Barbara Brink; Audrey Brown; Linda Bryans; Fidel dela Cuesta; Eleanor DeMarco; Rosita Dietrich; Jerry Edwards; Lisa Farland; Don Falls; Karen Fisher; Francis Greenfield; Leslie Hand; Joseph Harrison; Charles Henry; Lena Jacobs; Anne Mbimi Ifouini; Charles Jones; Rev. Patrick Keeny; Paula Kelly; Robyn Kirby; Laura Elaine Kiessling; Nancy Maimone; Joe Makowski; Albertine Mandzo; Luke Martellotti; Bob Martin; Willie (Bill) Moore; Bernadette Murphy; Larry Murphy; Rosemarie Nardozzi; David Obi; Peter O'Neill; Thomas Opalski; Joseph Otero; Alice Parker; Dawn Pearson; Evelyn Pierce; Jose Ocasio Rodriguez; Joe Sico; Walter Stewart; Jean Zanin; Ryan Zawada

†For Our Military Serving in Afghanistan or Iraq: Spc. Michael J. Chiddo

†For Our Deceased: Luzelle Schwartz
Names will be placed on our prayer list for three weeks. To add a name or to request continuing prayers, call Tara Guevara at 301-459-4814 or email tguevara@stmatthias.org.

Votive Lights

Sunday, October 19th through Saturday, October 25th:

Shrine of the Sacred Heart

For the Special Intentions of:

The Ferrara Family
Lawrence Chisefsky
Joan & Bo George on the occasion of their 52nd Wedding Anniversary

For the Happy Repose of:

Rufino M. Prieto

Shrine of the Madonna & Child:

For the Special Intentions of:

Ann Benson
Christopher Kin
Dennis George

For the Happy Repose of:

Michael Nardozzi

