

Religious Education Department
Twenty-Ninth Sunday of the Year A
Week Beginning 18th October 2026

First Reading: *Exodus 17:8-13*

Joshua and the Israelites defeat Amalek with the help of God and his servant, Moses.

Responsorial Psalm: *Psalm 121:1-2,3-4,5-6,7-8*

The Lord is the Guardian of Israel.

Second Reading: *2 Timothy 3:14—4:2*

Paul exhorts Timothy to continue to preach the word Timothy received from his teachers.

Gospel Reading: *Luke 18:1-8*

Jesus urges his disciples to pray and not lose heart, for God hears and answers prayers.

Introduction:

Everything we have was given to us by God, who pours out his love for us with unending generosity. How often do we remember to say “Thank you” or to return just a little of what we have been given?

Sorry:

Lord Jesus, we want to love others and to live as you did, but it is not easy and often we make mistakes. Help us to choose to do what pleases, and to put things right if we have done wrong.

Gospel Reading: (Matthew 22:15-21) The Pharisees went off and plotted how to entrap Jesus in speech. They sent their disciples to him, with the Herodians, saying, 'Teacher, we know that you are a truthful man and that you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. And you are not concerned with anyone's opinion, for you do not regard a person's status. Tell us, then, what is your opinion: Is it lawful to pay the census tax to Caesar or not?'

Knowing their malice, Jesus said, 'Why are you testing me, you hypocrites? Show me the coin that pays the census tax.'

Then they handed him the Roman coin. He said to them, 'Whose image is this and whose inscription?'

They replied, 'Caesar's.'

At that he said to them, 'Then repay to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God.'"

Gospel Reflection: “Give to God what belongs to God”

Matthew 22:15–21 is a powerful Gospel for a school setting because Jesus invites us to think about **what we owe to the world around us and what we owe to God**.

In today’s Gospel, Jesus is placed in a difficult situation. The Pharisees try to trap him by asking whether it is right to pay taxes to Caesar. If Jesus says yes, some people will be angry with him; if he says no, he could be accused of opposing the authorities. But Jesus refuses to be drawn into their trap. He asks them to look at the coin and says:

“Give back to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and to God what belongs to God.”

At first, this seems to be a simple answer about money. But Jesus is asking us to think about something much deeper: **What belongs to God?**

The coin bears Caesar's image. But each one of us bears the image of God. We are created in God's image and likeness. Therefore, if the coin belongs to Caesar because it carries his image, then our lives belong to God because **we carry God's image**.

That means our faith cannot simply be something we think about on Sundays or during prayer. Giving ourselves to God means allowing our faith to shape the way we live every day.

In school, we have responsibilities. We have lessons to teach or learn, deadlines to meet, rules to follow and people who depend upon us. These things matter. Jesus does not tell us to withdraw from the ordinary responsibilities of life.

But he reminds us that there is something deeper. We belong to God.

So perhaps today we might ask ourselves:

- **Do people see something of God in the way I treat them?**
- **Do my words reflect kindness and compassion?**
- **Do I act with honesty, even when nobody is watching?**
- **Do I recognise the image of God in the person who is difficult to love?**
- **Am I giving God only a small part of my life, or am I allowing him into everything?**

We may not always get this right. There will be moments when we become impatient, distracted or concerned only with ourselves. But God continues to call us back. The challenge Jesus gives us today is simple but profound:

Give the world what you rightly owe it, but never forget that your heart belongs to God.

And if every person around us is also made in God's image, then the way we treat one another really matters. Every small act of patience, forgiveness, generosity and compassion becomes a way of honouring God.

Prayer:

Loving God, you created each one of us in your image and called us to belong to you. Help us to recognise your presence in the people we meet each day.

Give us wisdom in the choices we make, kindness in the words we speak, and courage to do what is right, even when it is difficult.
Help us to fulfil our responsibilities faithfully,
but above all, remind us that our lives belong to you.
May everything, we say and do reflect your love to others.
Amen.

The God Who Speaks:

“And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.” **(Psalm 1:3).**

“He answered and said, ‘Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not; one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.’” **(John 9:25)**

“Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.” **(John 3:16).**

World Mission Sunday – Sunday 18th October 2026:

This Sunday, 18th October, the Church celebrates **World Mission Sunday**, a special opportunity for Catholics around the world to come together in prayer and solidarity with the Church’s mission.

World Mission Sunday reminds us that, through our Baptism, we are all called to be missionary disciples, sharing the love, hope and compassion of Christ with others. Mission does not always mean travelling to another country.

It begins in our own homes, school and communities through the way we treat others, care for those in need, stand alongside the vulnerable and live out our faith each day.

As a Catholic school community, we encourage our families to remember missionaries and communities throughout the world in their prayers this weekend and to reflect on how each of us can be a sign of Christ's love to others.

Prayer for World Mission Sunday:

Loving God, bless all those who share the Good News of your love throughout the world. Give courage to missionaries, hope to communities in need, and generous hearts to all who support them.

Help us to recognise that we too are called to be your disciples, sharing your love through our words and actions each day.

Amen.

Please Pray for Pope Leo XIV

We keep **Pope Leo XIV** especially in our prayers following his recent operation at Rome's Gemelli Hospital. On Tuesday 13th October, the Holy Father underwent surgery to remove the lower lobe of his right lung after doctors discovered a small, localised nodule. The Vatican reported that the operation was successful and there were no complications. Tests confirmed that the nodule was cancerous. [[vaticannews.va](https://www.vaticannews.va)], [[usccb.org](https://www.usccb.org)]

As a school community, we pray for Pope Leo, asking God to give him strength, peace and healing during his recovery.

Prayer for Pope Leo:

Loving God, we place Pope Leo into your loving care.

Give him strength and comfort as he recovers from his operation.

Bless the doctors, nurses and all those caring for him.

Surround him with your peace and grant him healing and renewed strength.

May he continue to lead your Church with faith, courage and hope.

Amen.