

Year A

Twenty-Ninth Sunday of the Year

Give to God what belongs to God

INTRODUCTION

Everything we have was given to us by God, who gives us love with unending generosity. How often do we remember to say "thank you" or to return just a little of what we have been given?

SIGN OF THE CROSS

LIGHT THE CANDLES

Light the candles and read this prayer to the children:

If we keep our eyes on the light,
we need never feel afraid.
Jesus will walk before us,
guiding us through life
towards the kingdom of heaven.

SORRY

Lord Jesus, we want to love others
and live as you did,
but it is not easy
and often we make mistakes.

Help us to choose
to do what pleases God,
and to put things right
if we have done wrong.

Allow the children a few moments to talk to God quietly themselves.

GLORIA

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia.
Lord, help us to listen carefully
to your word today.
Open our ears and hearts
so that we will hear
and understand your message.
Alleluia, alleluia.

GOSPEL (MATTHEW 22:15–21)

The Pharisees wanted to trick Jesus into saying something which would get him into trouble. So they went to him and said, "We know that you are

honest and are not afraid to speak the truth. Tell us then, should we give our money to the Romans or to God?"

Jesus answered, "Why do you want to trick me? Show me your money." They gave him a Roman denarius and he asked them, "Who is the person on this coin?" "Caesar," they answered.

Then Jesus said, "Give back to Caesar what belongs to him, and give to God what is God's."

DISCUSSION

The Pharisees were jealous of Jesus because he was so popular with the people, and he often criticized the Pharisees. They were expecting him to tell the people to give their money to God and not to the Romans. The Pharisees knew that anyone who did not pay their taxes was immediately arrested and punished.

Did Jesus tell the people to stop giving their money in taxes to the Romans? Jesus answered this trick question wisely. He told the people to give back to Caesar what belonged to him, but at the same time, to give back to God what belonged to God.

If not money, what do you think Jesus wanted the people to give to God? He wanted them to return the love which God gave to them. We, too, can share everything with our heavenly father by giving him the gift of ourselves: all that we are and all that we have.

ACTIVITY

Ask the children to think of one everyday thing which they could offer to God as a sign of their love for him. It could be tidying a room, spending time with someone, making someone smile, or saying a prayer. Ask them to draw a picture of whatever they choose and pin it on the board with the caption "We offer our lives to God."

CREED

CLOSING PRAYER

Father in heaven, I give you today,
all that I think and do and say.
Fill me with grace and make me strong;
with you at my side I won't go wrong.

