



St Matthew's Holland Park

Weekly Bulletin 22nd October 2023

STOP PRESS: Raffle draw today - don't miss out! Please return Raffle Tickets to Randal or Revd Morris before the draw:)

This week's Revd. Morris' message: *The false dilemma : 'Is it right to pay taxes to the Roman government or not?'*

In this week's Gospel, Jesus uses a Roman coin as a prop to puncture the hypocrisy and tactics of those who sought to trap him by asking a question that, on the face of it, admitted only 2 possible answers .. either of which would be very damaging to his ministry.

If Jesus said 'Yes' ... Jesus would offend the Zealots and others who wanted the end of Roman rule. The tax referred to was the 'poll tax' of a Denarius a year [or one day's wage of a labourer - so not a small amount] solely payable because Israel was ruled by Rome. Many in Israel at that time believed that payment of this tax was a



God dishonouring badge of subservience. Tradition indicates that the relevant coin was a 'Tribute Penny' [Pictured] featuring an image of the Emperor that was blasphemous to the Jews. The Inscription reads 'Caesar Augustus Tiberius, son of the Divine Augustus'. The reverse shows the goddess Pax [Peace] and the Emperor's title as 'Pontifex Maximus' or High Priest .

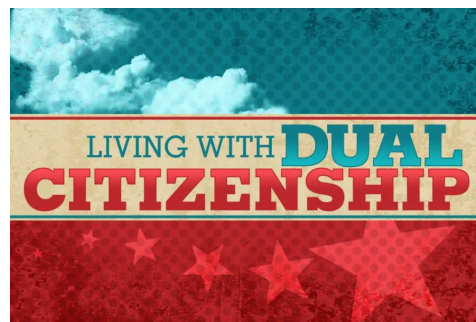
If Jesus said 'No' ... Jesus would be seen as a dangerous rebel stirring unrest against Roman rule, inviting prosecution and he would also offend those who sought accomodation with the Romans [or at least sought to minimise further Roman bloodshed and oppression].

Jesus destroys this false dilemma with his response: ***"Render to Caesar what is his, and give to God the things that are God's."*** Note that Jesus draws a distinction between *rendering* [I.e. due payment for a service or purchased item] and *gifting*.

Without the consent of the governed, Caesar could not take, nor should be given, that which rightfully belongs to God within the hearts and minds of the faithful.

Equally, subjects should bear the equitable burden of the rightful costs of government.

The essence of the issue is how Christians *could be both good citizens of the kingdoms / governments of this world .. but also faithful subjects of the King of Heaven first [the 'Lord of Lords'] ...above all other claims.* So whilst the image of our rulers are indelibly stamped upon coins to reflect their rule .. so the image of God is indelibly stamped upon our very souls. So, how we balance these competing loyalties defines **who we are** ... and **whose we are**.



I wonder what we all may be asked to prioritise this week by our society's day to day demands ahead of God's rightful claims of Lordship of our lives?

Gospel reading: Matthew 22: 1 - 14.

Some resources to dig deeper: <https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/matthew-22/>; <https://www.timelessmyths.com/culture-people/denarii-to-usd/> ; <https://www.bibleref.com/Matthew/22/Matthew-22-15.html> ; <https://fbcbartow.org/sermons/multiple-loyalties-matthew-2215-22/> ; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tribute_penny

Upcoming Parish Activities This Week :

Mid Week Service Wednesday 25th October 2023 10:30 a.m.

Tipper's Treasures Thursday 26th October 2023 9am - Noon

Kiwi Service Sunday 29th October 5 p.m.

Next Week's Readings:

Deuteronomy 34:1-12; Psalm 90: 1-6, 13-17; I Thessalonians 2:1-8; Matthew 22: 34 -46.

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Parish website : **<https://www.stmatthewshollandpark.com/>**

Parish Facebook site : **<https://www.facebook.com/groups/292308270851142>**

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY:

We acknowledge and pay respect to the Turrbal and Jagera Peoples, the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we gather today. We acknowledge their continued spiritual connection to country and surrounding land, sky and water. We pay our respect to their Elders, past present and emerging and pray that we may continue to learn from and nurture one another in the spirit of Reconciliation.

[STOP PRESS .. 2 Boarding opportunities have arisen. Both for a room with ensuite bathroom in secure townhouse close to transport and shops. One at Mt Gravatt East \[call Dorothy on 0402 266 397\] and one at Coorparoo \[call Jacky on 0476 205 674\].](#)