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October 18, 2026

Twenty-ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Written by THE FAITHFUL DISCIPLE

Is 45:1, 4-6 | 1 Thes 1:1-5b | Mt 22:15-21

GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

A mentor once told me that there is no sweeter sound than that of one's own name. It communicates that one is seen, known, and cared for. We read in Isaiah today that God has chosen Cyrus and has called him by name. In the Letter to the Thessalonians, Paul and his followers "give thanks to God always" for all in the community, knowing that each brother and sister is "loved by God" and "chosen." And although these words are written about Cyrus and the Thessalonians, we trust that God speaks these words to us as well. We have each been chosen. Our Father calls each of us by name. It is sometimes difficult to believe that God desires *me* and chooses *me* individually. It is a love that I often fail to reciprocate, despite my desire to do so. But that does not diminish the love God has for me. I am not lost in the crowd of history and humanity. Each of us was created with love and rejoiced over by our heavenly Father.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

When Jesus is asked in today's Gospel about the taxes due to Caesar, he does not falter with his response. We must live the truth of our faith in the world, but ultimately, what the world asks of us is not the same as what our Creator desires. Taxes are paid out of obligation, but God asks for our love. In using the talents God has given us in caring for our brothers and sisters, we acknowledge the fullness of the majesty and wonder of our Creator. We do not have to isolate ourselves from this world, but we must remember that we were not created for this world. We have already been chosen and claimed by our loving Father. And it is to him that we offer the gift of our heart, which is infinitely more valuable than coins.

REFLECT

In the Gospel of Matthew, Christ also says, "For where your treasure is, there also will your heart be." (6:21) In light of today's Gospel, we must also consider whether our participation in society in any way prevents us from offering ourselves totally to God. Spend some time reflecting on what it is that you truly treasure. Do you reserve the offering of your heart for God? Or are you giving to the world what should be reserved for God?