

# Sunday, October 18, 2020

## Lectionary 29, Year A

### Introduction

In today's first reading God uses the Gentile ruler Cyrus to accomplish divine purposes. When the Pharisees try to trap Jesus, he tells them to give the emperor what belongs to him and to God what belongs to God. To gather for worship reminds us that our ultimate allegiance is to God rather than to any earthly authority. Created in the image of God, we offer our entire selves in the service of God and for the sake of the world.

### Prayer of the Day

Sovereign God, raise your throne in our hearts. Created by you, let us live in your image; created for you, let us act for your glory; redeemed by you, let us give you what is yours, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

### First Reading: Isaiah 45:1-7

*The prophet announces that Cyrus the Persian emperor is the one the LORD has anointed to end Israel's exile. The LORD makes this choice so that the whole world will recognize this LORD as the only God. Persia had a god of light and a god of darkness; the LORD claims sovereignty over both light and darkness.*

<sup>1</sup>Thus says the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus,  
whose right hand I have grasped  
to subdue nations before him  
and strip kings of their robes,  
to open doors before him—  
and the gates shall not be closed:

<sup>2</sup>I will go before you  
and level the mountains,  
I will break in pieces the doors of bronze  
and cut through the bars of iron,

<sup>3</sup>I will give you the treasures of darkness  
and riches hidden in secret places,  
so that you may know that it is I, the LORD,

the God of Israel, who call you by your name.  
<sup>4</sup>For the sake of my servant Jacob,  
and Israel my chosen,  
I call you by your name,  
I surname you, though you do not know me.  
<sup>5</sup>I am the LORD, and there is no other;  
besides me there is no god.  
I arm you, though you do not know me,  
<sup>6</sup>so that they may know, from the rising of the sun  
and from the west, that there is no one besides me;  
I am the LORD, and there is no other.  
<sup>7</sup>I form light and create darkness,  
I make weal and create woe;  
I the LORD do all these things.

### **Psalm: Psalm 96:1-13**

*Ascribe to the LORD honor and power. (Ps. 96:7)*

<sup>1</sup>Sing to the LORD| a new song;  
sing to the LORD, | all the earth.  
<sup>2</sup>**Sing to the LORD, bless the name | of the LORD;**  
**proclaim God's salvation from | day to day.**  
<sup>3</sup>Declare God's glory a- | mong the nations  
and God's wonders a- | mong all peoples.  
<sup>4</sup>**For great is the LORD and greatly | to be praised,**  
**more to be feared | than all gods. R**  
<sup>5</sup>As for all the gods of the nations, they | are but idols;  
but you, O LORD, have | made the heavens.  
<sup>6</sup>**Majesty and magnificence are | in your presence;**  
**power and splendor are in your | sanctuary.**  
<sup>7</sup>Ascribe to the LORD, you families | of the peoples,  
ascribe to the LORD hon- | or and power.  
<sup>8</sup>**Ascribe to the LORD the honor due the | holy name;**  
**bring offerings and enter the courts | of the LORD. R**  
<sup>9</sup>Worship the LORD in the beau- | ty of holiness;  
tremble before the LORD, | all the earth.

<sup>10</sup>**Tell it out among the nations: “The | LORD is king!**

**The one who made the world so firm that it cannot be moved will judge the peo- | ples with equity.”**

<sup>11</sup>Let the heavens rejoice, and let the | earth be glad;

let the sea thunder and all that is in it; let the field be joyful and all that | is therein.

<sup>12</sup>**Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy at your com- | ing, O LORD, for you come to | judge the earth.**

<sup>13</sup>You will judge the | world with righteousness and the peoples | with your truth. **R**

### **Gospel: Matthew 22:15-22**

*After Jesus begins teaching in the temple, religious leaders try to trap him with questions. First they ask if God’s people should pay taxes to an earthly tyrant like Caesar.*

<sup>15</sup>Then the Pharisees went and plotted to entrap [Jesus] in what he said. <sup>16</sup>So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, “Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality. <sup>17</sup>Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?” <sup>18</sup>But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, “Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? <sup>19</sup>Show me the coin used for the tax.” And they brought him a denarius. <sup>20</sup>Then he said to them, “Whose head is this, and whose title?” <sup>21</sup>They answered, “The emperor’s.” Then he said to them, “Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” <sup>22</sup>When they heard this, they were amazed; and they left him and went away.