

# Formed in Prayer

Let us be still  
and ask the Holy Spirit to be with us.

Dear Father, be with us as we pray.  
Open our ears to hear your Word in the Gospel.  
Unite us in faith, hope and love  
as we pray together.  
Send your Holy Spirit to inspire  
and sustain us in our mission.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## Gospel

Mt 22:15-21

The Pharisees went away to work out between them how to trap Jesus in what he said. And they sent their disciples to him, together with the Herodians, to say, ‘Master, we know that you are an honest man and teach the way of God in an honest way, and that you are not afraid of anyone, because a man’s rank means nothing to you. Tell us your opinion, then. Is it permissible to pay taxes to Caesar or not?’ But Jesus was aware of their malice and replied, ‘You hypocrites! Why do you set this trap for me? Let me see the money you pay the tax with.’ They handed him a denarius, and he said, ‘Whose head is this? Whose name?’ ‘Caesar’s’ they replied. He then said to them, ‘Very well, give back to Caesar what belongs to Caesar – and to God what belongs to God.’

*What words or phrases struck you in Sunday’s Gospel reading?  
What might God be prompting you to consider or inviting you to do in and through the Gospel?*

## Reflection

There is no end to the number of ethical issues confronting Catholic leaders. Our integrity is tested at each moment. At times, we feel obligated to conform to business practices and legal requirements that challenge the core of our beliefs. We can feel trapped between two worlds of thought. Father Richard Rohr furthers this dualistic thinking, which uses binary language to compare good from evil, pretty from ugly, smart from stupid, not realising there may be a hundred degrees between the two ends of each spectrum. He says, “the dualistic mind cannot process things like infinity, mystery, God, grace, suffering, sexuality, death, or love; this is exactly why most people stumble over these very issues,” and this is precisely how the Pharisee’s attempted to trap Jesus. Rather than buying into the false flattery about his integrity, Jesus responds by enlarging their dualistic understanding of the kingdom of Caesar by demonstrating how it is just one small part of God’s eternal kingdom. It is an important reminder for Catholic Leaders to remember that we are stamped with God’s image and made in His likeness (Genesis 1:26-27). Do you give to God what rightfully belongs to Him? (*Nathan Ahearne, Mission and Life Formation Team at Marist Schools Australia*)

## Prayer

Lord,  
Make me taste by love what I taste by knowledge;  
let me know by love what I know by understanding.  
I owe you more than my whole self, but I have no more,  
and by myself I cannot render the whole of it to you.  
(Prayer of Anselm, 1033-1109).  
Strengthen my integrity and help me draw others to you by my faithful witness of your love.  
Amen.