August 12, 2019

Scripture

Matthew 17: 22-27
As Jesus and his disciples were gathering in Galilee, Jesus said to them, “The Son of Man is to be handed over to men, and they will kill him, and he will be raised on the third day.” And they were overwhelmed with grief. When they came to Capernaum, the collectors of the temple tax approached Peter and said, “Does not your teacher pay the temple tax?” “Yes,” he said. When he came into the house, before he had time to speak, Jesus asked him, “What is your opinion, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth take tolls or census tax? From their subjects or from foreigners?” When he said, “From foreigners,” Jesus said to him, “Then the subjects are exempt. But that we may not offend them, go to the sea, drop in a hook, and take the first fish that comes up. Open its mouth and you will find a coin worth twice the temple tax. Give that to them for me and for you.”

Our Scripture Reflection
Taxes are a part of life as a citizen in this country and we have a duty to pay them. But what are we doing with regard to our citizenship in God’s Kingdom? In other words, we give to Caesar, but do we give to God? The irony of that question is that God needs nothing of what we have, does He? Giving to God, to support His purposes in this life, is a way of showing our loyalty to Him.

Food for your Journey
It seems a woman in Columbus, Ohio, erroneously received bills from the IRS saying she owed $270 billion in back taxes. They informed her that she could pay in three easy installments of $90 billion each. Sweet of them, yes?

A recent New Yorker cartoon showed St. Peter standing behind his desk at the Pearly Gates with an open ledger and a quill pen. He begins addressing those before him with these words: "Welcome aboard. You are now exempt from federal, state and local taxes."

A Prayer from the Heart

Dear God, I thank You and praise You for the many blessings You give me in this life. Give me a generous heart, Lord. May I use a portion of what I have to serve the needs of the least in Your Kingdom. Amen