



I wonder if you know what Our Blessed Lord talks about the most in the Gospels. Love? Forgiveness? Eternal life? Well, you may be surprised that the subject he most talks about is money. Jesus knew only too well that money can be a useful servant, but a terrible master. In essence Jesus is telling us to get our priorities right and he says to us today in the Gospel -

Render unto Caesar what is Caesar's, work with those who rule you, pay your taxes, pray for kings and those in high position, but remember your ultimate loyalty is to the King of Kings. We are citizens of 2 kingdoms as the great St. Augustine wrote in his book - The City of God. Augustine says we are citizens of two kingdoms – one earthly, the other, a heavenly Kingdom.

King Louis 9th of France used to sign his documents not “Louis of France” but “Louis of Poissy”. Someone asked him why. He answered - “Poissy is where I was baptised. I think more of the place where I was baptised than even of my realm. It is a greater thing he said to be a child of God than to be a ruler of a Kingdom: this last I shall lose at death, but the other will be my passport to everlasting glory.” When I hold a child in my arms and baptise them – I ask myself “What image does this child now bear?” And the answer is they possess the image of God. Every child, every person is made in the image of God. They carry with them the image of God. And so do we.

I have a weakness which I would share with you. I love browsing around charity shops – and I look along the row and just once in a while I hit the jackpot – I pull out a shirt made in Saville Row or Jermyn Street – and I say to myself - it could do with a wash and an iron – but look at the maker's mark! That's you and me – getting a bit frayed here and there – but, - and this is the incredible thing, the beautiful thing which faith brings - still made in the image of God!

St. Gregory once said that each of us is like a wall painting. Over the years the painting has been covered over and defaced but the restorer knows that underneath, waiting to be revealed is the original image. Some of us have been through very dark parts in our lives – others may feel that our canvas has become muddied and distorted through the knocks of life. But hear this! Under all the mess and dirt you are the child of God, made in God's image – never forget it - each person here today bears the image of the King of Kings. Let us thank God that we are made in his image and that God loves us. Remember that you are a child of God. And then let us hear our Lord say to us: “I see imprinted in your heart the maker's mark – the image of your creator – You are God's creation – you are marked by God – You are His child – so now in your life, render unto God that which is God's.” Render to him your worship, render to him your adoration, render to him your service to your neighbour, render to him the love of your heart and then come follow me says the Lord.