

Theme: Belonging To God

Scripture 1:

Then the Pharisees left the place where Jesus was teaching. They made plans to trap Jesus with a question. They sent some of their own followers and some men from the group called Herodians. These men said, "Teacher, we know that you are an honest man. We know that you teach the truth about God's way. You are not afraid of what other people think about you. All men are the same to you. So tell us what you think. Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not?"

But Jesus knew that these men were trying to trick him. So he said, "You hypocrites! Why are you trying to trap me? Show me a coin used for paying the tax." The men showed him a silver coin. Then Jesus asked, "Whose picture is on the coin? And whose name is written on the coin?"

The men answered, "Caesar's."

Then Jesus said to them, "Give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's. And give to God the things that are God's."

Scripture 2:

This is what the Lord says to Cyrus, his appointed king:

"I hold your right hand. I will help you defeat nations. I will help you take other kings' power away. I will open doors for you so city gates will not stop you. I do these things for my servants, the people of Jacob. I do these things for my chosen people, the Israelites.

Cyrus, I call you by name. I give you a title of honour even though you don't know me. I am the Lord. There is no other God. I am the only God. I will make you strong even though you don't know me.

I do these things so everyone will know there is no other God. From the east to the west they will know I alone am the Lord.

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Reflections on Scripture:

How were the Herodians trying to trick Jesus? Why would they do this?

Do we ever try and place others in difficult or awkward situations?

To what extent do we put God first before all other things?
How can we show God that He is important in our daily lives?
How much of our lives belong to God?
Do we focus on things in life that simply are not that important? Why?

Why is it good to belong to a Christian community like HTA?
How can we contribute to the HTA Christian community?
Why is a 'sense of belonging' a good thing?

Saint of the Week: St John Paul II



How did he live out the theme of this week?
How does what he said about the importance of God relate to this week's theme?
His final words before his death are reported to be 'Totus tuus' [Latin] ... what does this mean? Why do you think he said this? And what does it teach us?

you are
LOVED
called
CHOSEN
by GOD
FOR GOD

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Prayer:

Lord Jesus, one of my deepest fears is being rejected, of not belonging. At times, my desire to belong has led me to compromise myself and my authenticity.

Lord, help me to experience the kinds of deep connections and community for which I was made.

Strengthen me in the truth that no matter who on this earth might reject or accept me, You will always stay by my side.

Thank You that I always have a home in Your sacred Heart. Thank You for inviting me into an eternal life of being wanted, desired, known, loved, celebrated.

I rejoice in the assurance that I belong to You!
Alleluia! Amen!

The World Today:



Belonging to God also carries responsibilities as well as benefits. What are our responsibilities? How does our world in which we live reflect these responsibilities?

Pope Francis:

'Since many of you do not belong to the Catholic Church and others are non-believers, from the bottom of my heart I give this silent blessing to each and every one of you, respecting the conscience of each one of you but knowing that each one of you is a child of God.'



Hymn: Be Still My Soul



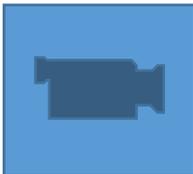
Black History Month:

‘So Jesus said to the Jews who believed in him, “If you continue to obey my teaching, you are truly my followers. Then you will know the truth. And the truth will make you free.”’ [John 8: 31-32]

‘The Lord is the Spirit. And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.’ [2 Corinthians 3: 17]

Black people belong to God as much as anyone else. And the Spirit of the Lord is with [and in] black people, as He is with all races. There can be no discrimination nor prejudice ... for that is not the way of God.

No matter who you are, you can celebrate BHM because this is the way the kingdom of God is going to be ... it’s people of all different nations, as described in the Gospels and the Book of Revelation.



The Importance of BHM in 2020



BHM Prayers



Desmond Tutu