



## Twenty-Ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time

† Sunday 22nd October 2017 World Mission Day

In England and Wales: Prayer in support of Evangelisation

In England and Wales Cycle of Prayer:

For the spread of the Gospel, the harvest

Keynote: God's chosen

### Prophet Isaiah 45:1, 4-6

The prophet addresses the foreign Babylonian King Cyrus, chosen by the Lord God to restore the People of Israel and to lead them back to Jerusalem: *'It is for the sake of my servant Jacob, of Israel, my chosen one, that I have called you by your name, conferring a title though you do not know me.'* Thus, King Cyrus is empowered by the Lord God *'to subdue nations before him... to force gateways before him.'* God gives King Cyrus this commission for a purpose, *'though you do not know me, I arm you that men may know from the rising to the setting of the sun that, apart from me, all is nothing.'*

**Responsorial Psalm 95** [96] – A song praising God on behalf of all creation

### First Letter of Paul to the Thessalonians 1:1-5

This letter is likely to be the earliest extant Christian document in the New Testament. With its opening greeting, this personal letter is typical of Hellenistic letters of the time. *'From Paul, Silvanus and Timothy, to the Church in Thessalonica,'* writes the apostle, *'(the Church) which is in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ; wishing you grace and peace.'* Then with directness, Paul writes, *'We always mention you in our prayers and thank God for you all... we know brothers, that God loves you and that you have been chosen, because we brought the Good News to you, it came to you not only as words but as power and as the Holy Spirit and as utter conviction.'*

### Gospel according to Matthew 22:15-21

The evangelist presents us today with the first of four debates between Jesus and the Jewish leaders – the Pharisees, the Herodians and the Sadducees. The Jewish leaders, normally argued bitterly among themselves, but here significantly they join together to entrap Jesus. With a lawyer's smooth manner the question is asked, *'Master, we know 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?'* The compliment is a fine one; the words hide the underlying guile. For Jesus is being invited, either to incur the wrath of the occupying Roman Imperial authority, or to distance himself from popular local Jewish nationalistic feelings. *'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... 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."'*

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Note: World Mission Day – Mass may be said for the Evangelisation of Peoples.