FR.TK. REFLECTIONS 29th SUNDAY YEAR A-2023.

GIVING GOD HIS DUE:

The Pharisees were primarily religious group but still were political nationalists who resented paying taxes to the emperors.Herodians on the other hand were political group in support of Romans and Herod.Both were opposing camps but this time they set aside their differences and ideologies and conspired to discredit Jesus and if possible to eliminate him.They attempted to trap Jesus with the question of paying taxes.

If the Lord said pay the taxes,the Pharisees would brand him **traitor to the Jewish community**,if he said **don't pay,**the Herodians would label him a **traitor to Rome,**recognizing the trap,Jesus gives an historic famous response that applied not only to that century but **all centuries**

Repay to Caesar what is Caesars and God what belong to God.

In our present day society,in politics and even in the church itself,don't we have such many groups with different opinions some very tricky and malicious things to discredit the gospel,the teaching of the church? Some criticise anything in the church so long as it doesn't Favour or align with one's thinking,others for the sake of arguments.criticizing what they **see and hear,the choir,the music,the priest,the parish council,Catholic women association(CWA),men's club,women guild,the homilies,this reflections too!** Such people move from one parish to another from one political affiliation to another they have no fixed abode they are not satisfied with anything which doesn't come from them.we have all these modern challenges in our churches and in countries how do we address them.

Still the relationship between the church and the state is another volatile issue to handle with care.There is neither complete union **or separation but there should be collaboration between the two.**The church **is and must be voice and conscience of people.**It has the **duty and obligation to question the policies where the gospel values are at the stake.**some policies **can protect,support,burden,weaken,destroy**

protect,support,burden,build,destroy families or even practice of religion. We must distinguish **Caesar's and Gods.**

Caesar can be **too demanding indeed**,the **high taxes**,**escalating high cost of living,unplanned increase of basic commodities in some countries like Kenya without warning and uncalled for demolition of properties witnessed in the same country.**

Obvious we have an obligation torwards the state no doubt in this ***but we too need the accountability and transparency and services by the state.***The Lord is telling us to give to Caesar the lawful taxes that supports the necessary public institutions and services to benefit all in the country not few individual pockets at the cost of common man somewhere who go without the basic necessities!Caesar needs then our **taxes,loyalty,judgement and a lot of prayers but our souls, conscience, and our choice in life belongs to God.**

We too need to distinguish between what is Gods in relationship with our worship,paying priests salary,collection are not exactly paying God the worship that is His due,rather our **praise and prayer are.**God and the church are not identical,we must give God His due.

Clash between Caesars and Gods must be avoided as much as possible,the law of God must take priority and the Caesars law should align with the higher common law.what **is legal may not always be moral.**

Let us not let the politicians and party politics in some countries to use our churches as **platforms to further their policies thus kidding the people.**We must be firm and condemn anything which is against Gods commandments by all means.Malicious damage of properties and misuse of public's funds without accountability is the cause of so many frictions in the world between Caesars and Gods.

In the evening of our life we will be responsible **for what we have done as individuals and as citizens not to Caesar but to God.**

LET CAESAR BE CAESER BUT LET GOD BE GOD!.