

OCTOBER 16, 2011

TWENTY-NINTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

MATTHEW 22:15-21

What belongs to God?

When I read this Gospel, I immediately thought of "things." The disciples of the Pharisees were trying to trap Jesus but it was I who fell into the trap.

Right away, I thought of "things": money, possessions, etc., and I was going to focus this reflection on the reality that ALL **things** belong to God. I wanted to focus on the **things** and Jesus was going beyond the **things**. Our Lord instead focused on the *relationship with God* ... "Give to God what belongs to God."

Belonging is a *relationship*.

Perhaps Fr. John Martin Moyer understood the centrality of the reign of God being a *relationship*. In the "Act of Abandonment to Divine Providence," Fr. Moyer writes: *Providence of my God, I adore you in all your designs. Confiding to you all that I have, all that I am, and all that I am to become.... I rely entirely upon you and expect all from your goodness.*

Yes, Fr. Moyer is writing about **things**, but he is also inviting us to see beyond the **things** to the ultimate truth that *Providence is the relationship between God and us*. **Things** are simply a medium for this relationship.

I struggle with this because my first tendency is to see the "things" and not the One who created all "things." This Sunday's Gospel comes from a section in Matthew where Jesus is explaining about the reign of God. Fr. Moyer delighted in living in the reign of God. Our founder shared with us his way of living in the reign of God.

Poverty, Simplicity, Charity, and Abandonment to Divine Providence are about living our *relationship with God*—all about living in the reign of God.

Your turn:

▲ Contemplate our Four Fundamental Virtues from this "relationship" perspective.

--Sr. Elsa Garcia, CDP