

**The Reflection from Pastor Fr. John  
Carlos, Holy Cross Church, Harrison, NJ,  
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**WHY POLITICS**

In this Sunday's Gospel Jesus looks at a Roman coin with an image of the emperor and then answers, "Repay to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God."

That statement which is quoted to this very day seems to imply that Christians have certain obligations to the state and certain obligations to God.

The obligation to the state involves the payment of taxes, while the obligation to God involves far more. It involves love of God, love of neighbor, and living according to the teachings and example of Jesus.

But we might consider that rendering to Caesar means more than paying taxes. It may mean also giving of our time and talent; it may mean getting involved in political life.

As Christians we pray that God's kingdom of love, justice, and peace will come into our troubled world. As we say in the Lord's Prayer, "thy kingdom come."

God's kingdom will become a reality not only because of our prayers but also because of our actions. As we know, praying for the hungry is not enough, we also need to feed them. Praying for a better world is not enough, we also need to get involved in helping to bring that about - and that involves more than paying taxes.

As Pope Francis put it, "A good Catholic meddles in politics, offering the best of himself .... Politics, according to the Social Doctrine of the Church, is one of the highest forms of charity, because it serves the common good" (*Pope Francis, Daily Homily of September 16, 2013*).

Let us not forget to pray for each other,

Father John Carlos