

# Parishes of Mater Dei Blakehurst & St Raphael's South Hurstville

Twenty-Ninth Sunday in  
Ordinary time Year A

Bulletin

22nd Oct 2023

**Entrance Antiphon :** Cf Psalm 16:6,8

To you I call; for you will surely heed me, O God; turn your ear to me; hear my words. Guard me as the apple of your eye; in the shadow of your wings protect me.

**First Reading:** Isaiah 45:1.4-6

I have taken the hand of Cyrus to subdue nations before his countenance.

**Responsorial Psalm:** Ps 95:1. 3-5. 7-10.

(R.) Give the Lord glory and honour.

1. O sing a new song to the Lord, sing to the Lord all the earth. Tell among the nations his glory and his wonders among all the peoples. (R.)
2. The Lord is great and worthy of praise, to be feared above all gods; the gods of the heathens are naught. It was the Lord who made the heavens. (R.)
3. Give the Lord, you families of peoples, give the Lord glory and power, give the Lord the glory of his name. Bring an offering and enter his courts. (R.)
4. Worship the Lord in his temple. O earth, tremble before him. Proclaim to the nations: 'God is king.' He will judge the peoples in fairness. (R.)

**Second Reading:** 1 Thessalonians 1:1-5

We are mindful of your faith, hope, and love.

**Gospel Acclamation** Philippians 2:15.

Alleluia, alleluia!  
Shine on the world like bright stars; you are offering it the word of life. Alleluia!

**Gospel :** Matthew 22:15-21

Give to Caesar the things that belong to Caesar and to God the things that are God's.

**Communion Antiphon:** Cf Psalm 32:18-19

Behold, the eyes of the Lord are on those who fear him, who hope in his merciful love, to rescue their souls from death, to keep them alive in famine.

## REFLECTION by Greg Sunter

The gospel writer presents this episode as a deliberate attempt by the Pharisees to trap Jesus and turn the people against him. Their plan was a good one, with no apparent 'safe' answer: is it permissible (within Jewish tradition) to pay taxes to Caesar or not? If Jesus were to answer that it is not permissible to pay taxes then he would be identified as a rebel and a threat to Roman authority – leaving himself open to severe punishment. If he were to answer that it was permissible to pay the taxes he would have alienated a lot of his audience who resented the taxes imposed by Rome.

Instead of falling into the trap set by the Pharisees, Jesus approaches the question in a completely different way. He asks them to show him the money with which they pay the tax. Immediately, he has turned the tables on them. He doesn't appear to carry any of the coin in question and yet the Pharisees' disciples carry them as a matter of habit. They are asking if it is permissible to pay the tax and yet freely carry the coin with which the tax is paid. Jesus shows up the hypocrisy of their question by forcing them to reveal their own position in the simple action of producing one of the Roman coins. Jesus then closes the dispute by instructing them to render (give) to Caesar what belongs to Caesar but, more importantly, render to God what belongs to God. In a very simple way Jesus has shown up the Pharisees' disciples as being collaborators with the Roman authority and placing that authority above the authority of God. He reminds the listeners that regardless of earthly authority, the first duty is owed to God.

### Historical Context – What's in a face?

The question of coinage was a problematic one for first century Jews. The tradition – grounded in the commandments given to Moses on Mt Sinai – forbade the use of 'graven' or carved images. The people of Israel took this prohibition very seriously and did not portray the human face in artwork of any kind. Roman coins were minted with the face of the emperor on them and it was compulsory that taxes be paid with Roman coin. This helps to explain the role of the Temple money-changers who converted the Roman coin into Temple coin that could be used for religious purposes.

### Scriptural context – Jesus and the Pharisees


The gospel of Matthew tends to treat the Pharisees rather harshly. In fact they had more in common with Jesus' style of teaching than other religious groups of the time and some have suggested that Jesus may even have been quite closely associated with the Pharisees. The role of the Pharisees was to interpret the Torah – the Law – for everyday people. They were teachers and preachers who often had a group of disciples who were their followers. The community in which the gospel of Matthew was written regarded the Pharisees harshly because they saw Jesus – not the Pharisees – as the rightful interpreter of the Law.

### Different View – A simple question?

This gospel passage is sometimes interpreted as Jesus' endorsement of the Christian responsibility to state authorities. It has been interpreted as affirming the obligation to pay taxes and participate in the processes of government. In fact, Jesus neatly avoided the direct question put to him and never gave a response to the question of paying taxes. Rather, he made the question a much broader one and reminded people that their first obligation was to God, not the state. It is an excellent example of the need for critical interpretation of scripture. A simple, literal reading of this text leads us to drawing simple, literal conclusions about whether or not we should be paying taxes.

MASS TIMES		
	St Raphael Church	Mater Dei Church
Tues		9:15am Mass
Wed		8:45am Rosary, Novena 9:15am Mass
Thurs	9:15am Mass	St Michael's Charismatic prayer group (see program)
Friday	7:30pm Adoration	9:15am Mass
Sat	4:30pm Reconciliation 5:00pm Vigil Mass	Mass only on 1st and 3rd Saturday of the month. Next mass is on 21st Oct.
Sunday	8:00am Mass	10:00am Mass

**ST MICHAEL'S CHARISMATIC PRAYER GROUP**  
**Every Thursday night MATER DEI CATHOLIC CHURCH**  
**6:30 pm Rosary, 7:00 pm Praise and Worship and Reconciliation, 7:30 pm Talk or Mass or Adoration**  
**Dates to Remember**  
**Oct 26 Understanding Different types of Suffering Ron Maldigri**



As you may have already seen, Pope Francis has declared that Friday 27<sup>th</sup> October 2023 will be a **day of fasting, penance, and prayer for peace**. He also has invited the various other Christian confessions, members of other religions, and all who hold the cause of peace in the world at heart to participate.  
<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/255729/pope-francis-announces-prayer-vigil-day-of-fasting-for-peace-in-israel-hamas-war>  
 Prayer intentions at St Mary's Cathedral on 27th October will be devoted to the cause of peace and the support of people caught up in conflict and war. Proceedings will commence with Vespers at 5.00 pm, prior to 5.30 pm Mass and followed by a Holy Hour. Bishop Richard Umbers will preside. All are welcome.

21st /22nd Oct (4th Sun/3rd Sat)	St. Raphael's		Mater Dei	
	5:00pm	8:00am	6:15pm	10:00am
<b>Acolytes</b>	Greg Driver	Norman	Ray Low	Volunteer
<b>EMOHC</b>	Gail	Florence		
<b>Readers</b>	Volunteers	Rounds Family	Br Michael Nina M	Lucy Mityr Matthew P
28th /29th Oct (5th Sun/4th Sat)	St. Raphael's		Mater Dei	
	5:00pm	8:00am	6:15pm	10:00am
<b>Acolytes</b>	Greg Driver	Volunteer	No Mass	Volunteer
<b>EMOHC</b>	Volunteer	Volunteer		
<b>Readers</b>	Karen Volunteer	Annie JP Moral		Nina M Volunteer

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**MEN'S BUSINESS**

**FAITH FRIENDSHIP FOOD**

**WEDNESDAY 15 NOV 6.30PM**  
**ST DECLAN'S PENSHURST SCHOOL HALL**  
**ENTER VIA PENSHURST ST**

Cost - \$10 includes guest speakers, light meal, drinks and lucky door prizes.  
 Register and pay via QR code by 10th November



**Hearts on Fire  
FEET ON THE MOVE**

**catholic MISSION** Freecall: 1800 257 296  
[catholicmission.org.au/tim](http://catholicmission.org.au/tim)

**Death Anniversary:** Barry Humphreys (late husband of Vilma)  
**Pray for good health of :** Mark Green, Rihanna Choi, Gisselle Clark (Oscurio), Joan Rounds, Graeme Dorahy, Anne Lo, Sunga Family, Adele Shehata, Anna Liza Torres Zapata.  
**Pray for the deceased:** Meri Beljo, Mary Toohey, Briege Robson, Monica O'Brien, Antonius Widjaja, Jeffrey Bishop, Fr Isidore, Holy Souls in purgatory.

**The Catholic Weekly**  
 22 Oct 2023 PULPIT POINTS

- Heartbreak in the Holy Land
- Australian pilgrims' narrow escape
- Voice to Parliament: Catholics react
- Editorial: Catholic Social Teaching after the Voice
- Philippa Martyr: What the stats say about schools and faith (p18)
- Monica Doumit and George Weigel on Synodality

There will be children's liturgy this Sunday at 10am mass at Mater Dei Church

**Thank you for your generous donations**

Dear Parishioners,  
 There have been reports of SMS message scams targeting individuals and parishes in the Archdiocese. These scams impersonate the members of our parish, including myself, asking for urgent help and often requesting gift card purchases for those in need. Rest assured that neither I nor any member of our parish staff would ever ask for such assistance through SMS or any other unsolicited means. If you receive suspicious messages, contact the parish office directly in person or via phone on 02 9546 2605

ROSARY	
St Raphael's Church	Mater Dei Church
Every Monday at 7:30pm with Blessed Sacrament	Every Sunday 9:30am before the 10am mass

Date	Mater Dei & St Raphael Parish Calendar 2023	Parish
19th Nov Sun	Catechist mass at St Mary's Cathedral 2:30pm	Cathedral
25th Nov Sat	St Raphael Christmas party after vigil mass	St Raphael
2nd Dec Sat	Mater Dei Christmas party + family Mass at 5:30pm	Mater Dei
7th Dec Thurs	St Raphael's Christmas concert with John Burland	St Raphael

Mater Dei Home Rosary		
24-10-2023	Nives Care 33 Church Street Blakehurst	11-00 AM
31-10-2023	Nives Care 33 Church Street Blakehurst	11-00 AM

COLLECTIONS LAST WEEKEND		
TYPE	St Raphael's	Mater Dei
First	340.25	170.85
Second: loose	233.30	176.50
Envelopes	340.00	475.00

**Calling in Sick**

A high school had a policy that the parents must call the school if a student was to be absent for the day. Kelly deciding to skip school and go to the mall with her friends waited until her parents had left for work and called the school herself.  
 This is the actual conversation of the telephone call...  
 Kelly: "Hi, I'm calling to report that Kelly so-and-so is unable to make it to school today because she is ill. Secretary at high school: "Oh, I'm sorry to hear that. I'll note her absence. Who is this calling?" Kelly: "This is my mother."  
 Needless to say, she didn't pull it off!

*WUNNY*

**PARISH DIRECTORY**

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 Parish Secretary: Juliana Widjaja  
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