

Giving to God What Belongs to God

Church of the Redeemer Astoria
October 18, 2026 | Proper 24 |

By. Fr. Carlos

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Dear brothers and sisters,

In today's Gospel, people try to trap Jesus with a question about taxes. But his answer invites us to examine something much deeper than money:

"Give to God the things that are God's."

What belongs to God?

Everything. Our lives, our families, our time, our abilities, and our possessions. Everything we have is a gift entrusted to our care.

Jesus asks whose image is on the coin. It bears Caesar's image. But we bear the image of God. We belong to him. God desires our whole lives, including how we use what we have.

Material things can serve a good purpose. We need food, a home, and resources to care for our families. But possessions can also become our masters. We can become so afraid of losing what we have that we forget the needs of others.

Christian stewardship begins when we recognize that we are caretakers of God's gifts. We receive them with gratitude and use them with love.

I have experienced God's care through the generosity of others. When I first came to this country, before my wife could join me, people helped feed me and sustain me. Their kindness reminded me that I was not alone. God was caring for me through their hands.

And I have experienced the joy of sharing.

One December, in a very poor community in Colombia, we wanted to give Christmas gifts to the children. We had very little, but we began with what we had. Then other people came to help. Together, we brought Christmas joy to dozens of children.

We could not do everything by ourselves. But each person offered something, and together we could do much more.

That experience reminds me that we do not have to wait until we have more than enough before we begin to share.

In today's letter, Saint Paul remembers the Thessalonians' faith, love, and hope. They received the Gospel, and their lives became an example to other communities. The love of God became visible through them.

That is our calling too. We are called to be Christ's hands, reaching out to others with the gifts we have received.

As we begin our stewardship campaign for 2027, I invite every household to pray about making a pledge: a commitment to give regularly to the ministry of this church.

We hope to gather these commitments on Christ the King Sunday, offering them to God with thanksgiving.

A pledge helps our church plan its ministry. It supports a community where we celebrate the sacraments, teach the faith, share meals, welcome our neighbors, and accompany people through joy and sorrow.

Our offering is also an act of worship. Today's psalm invites us to bring our offerings into God's presence. When we give, we say: "Lord, thank you. Use these gifts so that others may know your love."

We have different resources and responsibilities. Some can give more; others can give less. Each of us is invited to consider a generous, regular commitment according to our means.

This week, take time to pray. Look at what God has entrusted to you. Consider what you can share, and how your pledge can express your faith and gratitude.

Everything comes from God. We belong to him.

May we give him our hearts, our gifts, and our lives, ready to serve.

Amen.