

Thoughts on the Readings of Oct. 18th, 2020

The Common Thread God goes before us, just as he went before King Cyrus of old. He levels supposedly high places—even death and hell themselves—bringing salvation with glory and great strength. What would we do then, chosen and devoted disciples, but worship and become imitators of the Lord? As such, we concern ourselves with matters of his eternal kingdom instead of being preoccupied with the things of this world. God will take care of this world and its governance, just as he did with Persia, Babylon, and Israel.

First Reading - [Isaiah 45:1-7](#) God has used many earthly kings to accomplish his will. He still employs the rulers of our world so that his will is done on earth as it is in heaven ([Matt 6:10](#)). Our prayers should attend kings, presidents, and other government rulers. Yet, as much as God used a king named Cyrus, he has used the King of kings to accomplish far more. The armies of Hell have been vanquished through the cross of Christ. He is the one who causes people from the east to the west to know that there is none besides the Lord who accomplishes these things.

Psalm - [Psalm 96:1-9, 10-13](#) Declare to the nations of the glory of God. This is accomplished by offering more for missions than we do for government—in terms of money, as well as work and prayer.

Second Reading - [1 Thessalonians 1:1-10](#) “Our gospel” ([1Thes 1:5](#)), or the gospel of Christ’s Church is what ultimately impacts the world. Taxes, civic authority, and armies are of some use. Yet in the end, our trust must be placed in the gospel of Christ’s kingdom. As such, our efforts and prayers must be with those workers in the true kingdom on this earth. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, individual lives are changed—as well as nations.

Gospel - [Matthew 22:15-22](#) Pay your taxes and pray to God. Jesus has called us to do both, trusting the Lord with the nations. Certainly, God will use our prayers even more than our taxes but we are called to be faithful in each. This is not a matter for debate; it is a matter of obedience.