

A Denarius For Your Thoughts

Almighty and everlasting God, in Christ you have revealed your glory among the nations: Preserve the works of your mercy, that your Church throughout the world may persevere with steadfast faith in the confession of your Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Look

The discussion of financial stewardship this year might feel more stressful than before for many reasons. Global economic crisis, local parish transitions, underwater mortgages, friends and family that have moved away, high unemployment... there's cause for fear on many fronts. It's not just hard to ignore these threats, it seems unwise to ignore them.

1. Wherever you are in your stewardship discernment, what weighs most heavily on your mind this year?
2. Is this worry unique to this year in some way?
3. How does this worry relate to each of the three T's (time, talent or treasure)?

Book

Matthew 22:15-22

Jesus navigates this linguistic and political trap masterfully. He diverts the question away from an argument about whether Rome's taxes on these non-Roman people is fair. Instead, he provides an answer that helps deconstruct the differences between civic duty and spiritual discipline.

1. How is the discussion of taxes paid in denarii different from tithes paid from a harvest?
2. When contrasting taxes and pledging, how does pledging harken back to Gen 12:1-3?
3. In what ways is Jesus' answer about more than just money?

Took

Money, although a convenience, is an abstraction. It helps us (as a society) manage the exchange of good and services. But this abstraction can make the spiritual discipline of stewardship more challenging to engage with. With all the uncertainties of our present day world, this can make that challenge all the more great.

1. How has your engagement with stewardship gone this season?
2. What can you do this week to help gain more clarity of what God is calling you to pledge?