



PRAYER LIST

David Adams, Andre Basmajian, Joseph Birchette, Steve Campbell, William Claiborne, Mary Davidson, Cathy Lipchak, Jim Melton, Erin Moores, Jesse Oliver, Joel Rivera, Rachel Robinson, Marilyn Reilly, John Rogers, Beulah Taylor, Richard Williams. Thank you for your prayers.

If you know of anyone who is sick, hospitalized, homebound, or dying and desires a visit from a priest, please call or email us. Without your help, we have no way of knowing.

SAINT PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH

800 East Grace Street

P. O. Box 933

Richmond, Virginia 23219-0933

Office: 804-643-4315

www.stpeterchurch1834.org

Emergency – If someone is dying or there has been a death, please call: 804-402-1221

Mass Schedule

Sunday: 8:30 & 10:45 am Weekday: 12:05 pm

Holy Day: Call the Parish Office or See Notices

Confession: Mon. thru Fri., 11:45 am

3rd Sunday of Easter

April 15, 2018

Mass Intention: Ivica Salopek

TODAY'S MUSIC

ENTRANCE	#459
At the Lamb's High Feast We Sing	
PSALM	#840
Lord let your face shine on us.	
OFFERTORY	#445
I Know That My Redeemer Lives	
COMMUNION	#441
Alleluia, Alleluia, Give Thanks	
RECESSIONAL	#467
Sing With All the Saints in Glory	

Holy Communion – *This is a reminder that Holy Communion, in the Catholic Church, is reserved to actively practicing Catholics. If you are not Catholic or have not been actively practicing your faith, then please refrain from receiving Communion. If you would like to learn how to be welcomed to full Communion, we would love to help. All you need to do is contact a priest. Our contact info is in this bulletin.*

SCHEDULE & MASS INTENTIONS

Mon.: Mass Intention: Shirley Keyes (L)
Tues.: Mass Intention: Lillian Thomas
Tues.: Social Ministry: 10:30 am – 12:30 pm
Wed.: Mass Intention: Shirley Keyes (L)
Thurs: Mass Intention: Jim Saunders
Fri.: Mass Intention: Columbus Donati

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PASTOR

Happy Easter everyone. I hope you are still enjoying the extra graces this season.

Today I want to talk about a topic that might not be thought of as directly related to religion but in fact has much to do with it. And it's relevant because Tuesday is tax day, the day taxes are due to the federal government. I used to be an accountant and a CPA.

What does Christ think about taxes? You may think he has nothing to say on the topic. That is not true.

Once Christ was specifically asked about taxes and famously said "render unto Caesar what is Caesar's."

That is to say, money has imprinted on it "The United States of America." Thus give it back to them as we are required.

But the question comes up, how much should be given back? What is fair?

All would agree that if 100% of our money was demanded, we would effectively be in a form of slavery.

All would also likely agree that if we gave none of our money to the government, the situation would also be less than ideal, as we would have no federal highway, no national military, and no other service provided by the government.

Somewhere in the middle is the answer but where?

Christians and those informed by Christian ideals tend to think, ‘well what type of tax system would Christ create?’

And while this is noble, to think or at least attempt to think of things with the mind of Christ, we need to be careful of one thing: using the tax code as a vehicle for charity.

The tax code has way too many exceptions. Have you ever seen how thick the tax code is? It is thicker than the bible. If God can communicate the history of human salvation to us in a book that is shorter than the tax code, that says there is too much in the tax code.

Here is what inevitable happens.

People often have good intentions. They propose to give a tax break to someone in need, such as a working family or a single mother, both godly sentiments. The elected officials in Congress pass laws and tax code is written to do that. Congress does it again and again, passing many laudable codes. In the meantime, something else happens. Congress gets good at passing tax laws. As human nature if fallen, Congress begins to make exceptions and pass tax codes in other regards. They begin to make exceptions for this donor who pushed them into office. They begin to make exceptions for that acquaintance, sometimes even in the same legislation that with some show of charity to some other group. And you end up with the current tax code that has more exceptions than almost anyone can wrap their head around.

But certain people do wrap their heads around it. They are called CPA’s. And they are hired by other people who use them to use those many laws to get out of paying taxes. It’s legal. They are allowed. And it’s hard to blame them for doing what is legal if it saves them money.

When Christ said “render to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and to God what belongs to God” he was saying something about the domain of works that are appropriate to them. That is to say, there are certain things that are proper to the domain of Caesar/the government and there are certain things that are proper to the domain of God and by extension the Church.

The true domain of government is to make decisions based not on charity, but on justice, particularly in regards to the tax code. Justice means giving each their due, or each giving their proper due. And when you have a system that makes possible so much lawful manipulation, each giving their proper due is highly unlikely.

In its place, a flat tax would be more just. Each pays the same percentage. It would be the same whether you make \$20k a year or \$2 million a year. It’s simple and easy and not subject to manipulation.

But what about the single mother or working family, how can we still help them and others in difficult situations? Well that is the work of charity and is proper not to the domain of government but to the domain of God and, by extension, the Church. The Church is supposed to be the one who helps in individual

situations of need. The Church is the one created by God for the works of charity. That is not the government’s domain.

Nowadays, many people want the government to solve all the problems in the world – homelessness, poverty, family problems, sickness, learning disabilities, discontent between peoples, etc. Too many people look to the government to fix all the problems of the world, and in doing so replace the Church with the government.

This is particularly true in regards to the tax code and the legal manipulation of money through taxes.

There may be another alternative to a flat tax that is just as simple, fair, just and discouraging of manipulation. But I can promise there will always be an unfortunate correlation between the size of the tax code, the government’s failed attempt at charity, and the tendency of people to replace what is proper to the domain of the Church with the government.

Fr. Rossi

Budgeted Weekly Income	\$ 3,288.00
Collection	<u>2,146.82</u>
Loss	\$ 1,141.18

Outreach & Social Ministry – 134 lunches were served on Tuesday, April 10, 2018. 103 dinners were served on Wednesday, April 11, 2018. Thank you for your generous help in serving God’s people.

COFFEE downstairs in the Parish Hall after each Mass on Sunday. Please join us and get to know your church family.

Emails:

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