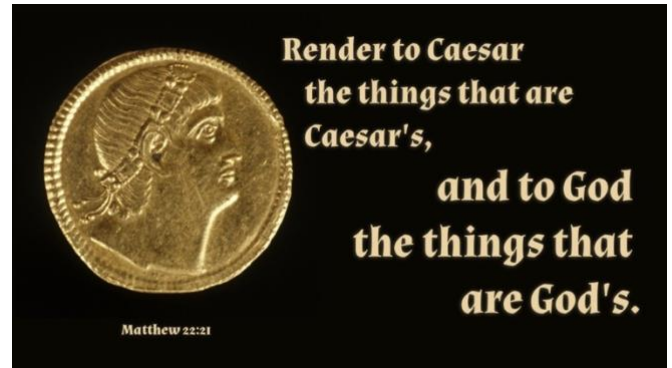


- 1) Isaiah 45:1, 4-6
- 2) 1 Thessalonians 1:1-5b
- 3) Matthew 22:15-21

## **The Lord of History**

The First Reading this coming weekend refers to King Cyrus, the founder of the Persian Empire, perhaps the greatest and most influential empire in the history of the Middle East. After conquering Babylon, the western end of his empire, he restored Jerusalem and Judea to the Jews who had been exiled 70 years earlier and he even financed the rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem and the



Temple, though he himself was not Jewish. Cyrus was truly one of the great, influential figures in the history of the world. All that happened only after the prophecy given by God to Isaiah. And that is the point of this weekend reflection: **God is the Lord of history**, nothing is outside of His plans, He is present in and through all historical happenings, great or small. This doesn't mean that King Cyrus was just a robot programmed by God to do His bidding. Cyrus, like all of us, was a free human being, endowed by God with life and a unique blend of talents and God respected that. Every human being chooses every minute, every hour, every day whether to utilize his freedom and talents in a way which is in harmony with God's plan for the human family. But even when we make the wrong decision by abusing our freedom and rebelling against the moral law laid down in Ten Commandments and in the teachings of Jesus Christ, God is wise and powerful enough to make even that rebellion help His overall plan. He truly is the Lord of history, using all things, even pagan emperors such as Cyrus, to build up the Kingdom of God. As the Catechism of the Catholic Church states (#303): "The witness of Scripture is unanimous that the solicitude of divine providence is concrete and immediate; God cares for all, from the least things to the great events of the world and its history."

There was once a priest whose vocation story illustrates this truth eloquently, though on a small scale. As a boy, he was an altar server in his parish. For years he served the Mass every week, without ever thinking about becoming a priest himself. Then one Sunday something happened that changed his life forever. He was one of the altar servers that day, and he was kneeling at the altar during the Eucharistic Prayer. The visiting priest on that day was very distracted during the Mass. He rushed through the Prayer so quickly and sloppily that the server could barely understand what he was saying. At the consecration of the bread and wine into the

Body and Blood of Christ, the priest rushed through the elevation and the genuflection as if it had no meaning at all. He did not hold the Blessed Sacrament carefully or reverentially, but just went through the motions of the Mass as if he were emptying a bag of groceries. Watching this celebration of the Mass, the young boy became angry. He thought to himself: "This is our Lord Jesus Christ, and this is the most sacred moment of the whole week, and this priest doesn't even seem to care!" It was his very next thought that became the beginning of his own priesthood. He found himself saying in his own heart, "I want to become a priest just so that I can treat Jesus in the Eucharist the way in which He should be treated, with honor, love, and respect." Certainly, God did not want that priest to celebrate Mass sloppily and carelessly that morning. And yet, God's Providence is so wise and powerful that He brought something wonderful out of something shameful - just as He ended the exile of his Chosen People through the actions of a pagan emperor. God is truly the Lord of history.

In knowing that God can cause even our small, oftentimes clumsy efforts to influence positively the outcome of human history, we should always be making those efforts however futile they may appear to us at the time. This is one reason why practicing Catholics throughout history have been in the vanguard of all the great social and historical movements: for instance the Polish Catholic worker's movement of Solidarity, which undermined the oppressive Soviet Empire in the 1980s. Practicing Catholics really must engage more fully in social issues so as to create a just society. People claim that there must be a separation between Church and State. That claim, however, ignores the distinction made by Jesus in today's Gospel passage, that when it comes to politics and culture not all issues are on the same level. Some issues are foundational because they are of divine origin and are bequeathed to all God's children by dint of their having been created in His image. For instance: human rights are transgressed when the most vulnerable in society such as the unborn whom God has endowed with life are robbed of that right to life. Other issues are decidedly secondary in nature: taxes, diplomacy, and alternative energy sources are important issues, but these are essentially different from the basic foundational issues mentioned above. These secondary issues are like the walls of a house; you can knock out a wall or rearrange a room without the house falling down about your ears, but if you mess with the foundation, you lose the whole structure. In giving foundational issues first priority, practicing Catholics are defending the human values essential to every society. Since practicing Catholics acknowledge God to be Lord of history, it is important that they inform themselves as to how our society today is denying God His primacy in our lives. To this end, I recommend [Catholic Answers' guide](#), which can be downloaded from the Internet. This guide will help you in distinguishing between those rights which truly belong Caesar, and those which truly belong to God, (Mt 22:21).

**Death by Complacency**

The Boiling Frog

The boiling frog is a fable describing a frog being slowly boiled alive. The premise is that if a frog is put suddenly into boiling water, it will jump out, but if the frog is put in tepid water which is then brought to a boil slowly, it will not perceive the danger and will be cooked to death.



Although we are blest to enjoy the benefits of a democracy, staying informed about important current issues is only half of our democratic duty. As practicing Catholics, we are called not only to help maintain civil society but also to help improve it, to help build up a civilization of justice and love. In democratic societies such as ours, we have the freedom to do this by making good use of the various opportunities which we have to make this happen. Many of our friends, colleagues, and neighbors want to make the right decisions in life but are unaware of the differences between foundational and secondary issues. They

are hungry for the truth on these complicated issues but may not know where to look for answers or worse still whom to believe. As followers of Christ, we are called to feed the hungry both literally and figuratively and to let our light shine before others. Sociological studies have repeatedly shown that the single biggest influence on popular opinion is the input and advice received from trusted friends and colleagues. We should therefore never be afraid to provide them with food for thought by shedding light on the Church's teachings in conversations around the water cooler or at dinner parties. We are God's messengers and as such we have something important, nay, something vital to contribute to these conversations! The great Anglican political thinker Edmund Burke (in a letter addressed to Thomas Mercer) once said, "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing." In today's largely democratic world, where good and evil are still battling it out, let us continue to be among the good. To this end, let us resolve to give always to God that which belongs to God but nothing less, and to give to Caesar that which belongs to Caesar but nothing more. In other words, we must not allow ourselves to be boiled to death by indifference and inaction but be ready instead to jump to God's defence when things begin to heat up.

**October – the Month of Mary**

In October, 20 minutes prior to the start of all weekend Masses, you are invited as follows to join the congregation in praying the Most Holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary:

Batawa:	4:40pm	led by Mrs. Donna Maingot
Stirling:	8:55am	led by the St James Catholic Women's League
Frankford:	10:40am	led by Mrs. Shirley Balasubramaniam

I would suggest that you offer a rosary for your personal needs and intentions, and would ask that you considering also offering a rosary for any of the following Universal Needs & Intentions of the Church:

- For Church leaders, that the Holy Spirit might fortify them in their Gospel mission
- For our world, that the peace of Christ might touch the hearts of leaders and influencers
- For the sick, the lonely, and those who live on the margins in our communities, that neighbours might open their hearts to them
- For public authorities, that the love of Christ might penetrate their hearts
- For lawmakers, that God might guide them in living out their duty
- For victims of violence or racism that they might find healing
- For those who have gone before us marked with the sign of faith that they might find peace in God's presence
- For the world, that God might lead us in ways to protect and serve one another
- For all those who feel alone or abandoned, that God might strengthen and comfort them
- For those in oppressed regions of the world, that God might guide them to places of freedom and peace
- For those who are held captive by their addictions, that God might lead them to find recovery and healing
- For victims of oppression and racism that God might soften the hard hearts of their persecutors
- For those who are ill with the Coronavirus, that God, the Divine Physician, might offer them hope and provide healing
- For all who feel despair, that God might lift their cloud of darkness and fill them with hope
- For those who are in danger of premature death by natural or unnatural causes that God might stay the hand of nature and man
- For. . .

Where can you go this weekend to Mass? Here are the attendance numbers from last weekend Check it out!			
	SHJ – 5pm Saturday	SJM - 9:15am Sunday	SFA – 11am Sunday
	10 October	11 October	11 October
Placements Available in Church Each Weekend	16	47	16
Parishioners Who Attended Last Weekend	22	52	25
Placements Still Open Last Weekend	4	18	2



Face coverings are now mandatory.

**\*Weekdays\***

- If you are unable to make it to Mass on Saturday or Sunday, don't forget that we also have a weekday Mass at 9 a.m. in St Francis, Frankford every Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. Before setting out, however, be sure to check the Weekly Parish Bulletin, which is sent with this newsletter, because weekday Mass schedules can sometimes change!

Weekends

- The doors of the church open 30 minutes before the start of Mass.
- Seating is on the basis of first-come-first-seated.
- Upon arriving at the church, please let the usher know how many people are in your group.

**Parish Financial Support**



Thank you for continuing to help our Parish through these difficult times with both your prayers and generous donations. Your contribution will help to ensure that the Parish can cover its present financial obligations until we are able to reopen our doors.

Here are now 6 ways to donate:

1. Set up an automatic deposit to the Parish bank account – this can be done by calling the Parish at 613-398-6745.
2. Bring your weekly donation envelope (cheque only!) to the Office at 288 Riverside Parkway, Frankford, and leave it in the small black mailbox to the right of the door.
3. Bring your weekly donation envelope (cheque only!) to the St James Church at 236 Edward Street, Stirling, and leave it in the black mailbox to the left of the main door.
4. Send an e-transfer from your account to St Francis of Assisi Parish at email [assisifrankford@gmail.com](mailto:assisifrankford@gmail.com). Then email us at [assisi@sympatico.ca](mailto:assisi@sympatico.ca) to let us know (a) the password which you have chosen for us to access the donation, (b) your first and family names, address, telephone number, and the number on your regular Sunday donation envelope (if you do not have one, let us know that, too).
5. Mail your donation to St Francis of Assisi Parish, PO Box 339, Frankford, ON K0K 2C0
6. At Mass in the Collection Box

