

The Official Newspaper  
of the City of Heppner and the County of Morrow

**Heppner**

**GAZETTE-TIMES**  
U.S.P.S. 240-420

Morrow County's Home-Owned Weekly Newspaper

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**Spiritually Speaking**  
Father Thankachan Joseph  
St. Mary's Catholic Church Wasco



**GIVE GOD WHAT BELONGS TO HIM**

We have no right to own anything that does not belong to us. Does God have the first place in our lives? Do we see ourselves as believers first? Today's word challenges us to make first preference to God always.

The first reading from the prophet Isaiah (45:1, 4-6) reiterates the basic principles: God is the God of history, and He is in charge of the world, and nothing occurs by accident or by mere coincidence. The Lord is constantly at work even though we may not see His hand or recognize Him. King Cyrus may think that victory comes because of his might but he is God's hand to chasten the rebels who fight against Israel. The prophet goes on to repeat to his people that God is supreme, and none can take His place. Even though the people do not acknowledge and give due credit to God, He still takes care of His people and will continue to provide for them. God took care of His people through a pagan king, and He continues to take care of us through the most unlikely people in strange and wonderful ways. Even at this time of different wars that take place around us and natural calamities of fire, flood, earthquakes etc., we need to acknowledge the fact that we are all surviving and going ahead not because of our merits. It is because of Him who has a plan for every one of us.

During the last few Sundays, we were listening to how the Lord Jesus is having a conflict with His contemporaries. Today's Gospel from Matthew (22:15-21) continues showing the conflict growing between the Pharisees and Jesus. The Pharisees tried to test Jesus on the issue of paying taxes to the Romans and put Him in jeopardy for His opinion on the matter of taxation. "Is it permissible to pay taxes or not?" The unconcealed question is whether it is proper to pay taxes to the government, but there is a hidden agenda that Jesus is aware of. Because the tax paid to Rome was a constant humiliation and a reminder that they were a conquered people, a majority of the Jews hated it and the Pharisees were against paying taxes to the Romans. On the other hand, Herod and his followers were in favor of paying taxes to Rome. Whichever way, Jesus knew their inside thoughts and answered the question in a way different from their expectations. He knew He would be trapped. If He said taxes had to be paid to Rome the people would be against Him and if He said the opposite, He would be seen as provoking revolt against the authorities. Jesus completely sidesteps the issue by asking them for a coin with which the taxes were to be paid. This coin bore the image of Caesar and an engraving declaring his authority. Jesus simply says, "Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and to God what belongs to God." Since the money comes from Caesar and belongs to him, he obviously has a right to demand it, so Jesus says, "Give it to him."

Jesus is not entering into a discussion of the rights of the state and the rights of religion; He is not making a statement in favor of one or the other, but on the occasion of the question He proposes a deeper truth. What matters more to Jesus than being under Caesar's rule and paying taxes, is belonging to God's kingdom. Jesus is reminding His listeners of a deeper issue: that of being people of God. If they belong to God, then they have to give God His dues through their daily lives. Jesus offers the idea that everyone should have God as the most important priority in their lives. A good Christian is one who fulfills his duty both to his fellow men and to God. Only when there is a clash of interests do we have to remind ourselves that God always comes first. Nowadays there is a trend to travel miles to attend a ball game or something similar but forgetting to attend a weekday holy service. Is it right? We need to keep in mind the above principle "Give God what belongs to Him." Then surely, He in turn will lead according to His fashion. So, make first preference to God always.

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**Port of Morrow in stalemate**

-Continued from PAGE ONE  
the process to move forward and we let somebody else make the decision since we're unable to."

"Rick mentioned that he wants to do what's in the best interest of the Port," replied Doherty. "I don't think giving this selection to the county court is in the best interest of the Port."

"I would prefer to make the decision," said Stokoe, "but it's obvious we're not going to get there."

While Taylor said he also preferred to either decide or defer to the county board of commissioners, he eventually agreed to the request to continue the process in hopes that the Port Commission could reach a decision. On Oct. 6, the commissioners voted 3-1, with Stokoe dissenting, not to adjourn the meeting but to recess until Oct. 11.

Despite that, the Oct. 11 meeting yielded no results. Continued interviews and discussions again ended in a deadlock, and Taylor decided to adjourn the meeting.

The next day, and despite objections from Commissioner Murray, Taylor

sent a letter to the Morrow County Board of Commissioners informing them of the stalemate and asking for the board's intervention.

"A majority cannot agree," Taylor wrote in his letter. "I respectfully request that you consider the top two applicants as you establish your process for appointment to the Port of Morrow Commission."

Hard on the heels of Taylor's letter, Murray and Doherty sent their letter objecting to the request. They claimed Taylor acted outside of his authority by proceeding without a majority vote.

"Legal council was consulted and no statutory time limit has been presented to the commission," their letter stated. "We recommend you take no action until a majority vote from our commission is presented."

The Morrow County Board of Commissioners had scheduled a special meeting for Oct. 13 to discuss the issue, but that meeting was later canceled. The issue remains unresolved for now.

**Holly Rebekah Lodge host BINGO and Dinner Oct. 29<sup>th</sup>**

The Holly Rebekah Lodge will be having their monthly dinner and BINGO afternoon on October 29<sup>th</sup> at the lodge Hall on Main Street in Lexington. This month they will be having pulled pork sand-

wiches and Cole Slaw for \$5 starting at 3 p.m. and BINGO is 50 cents per card starting at 3:30 p.m. If you would like to play BINGO but don't want to eat, feel free to come.

**Electric Co-Op Annual Meeting Thursday, November 2<sup>nd</sup>**

The Annual Meeting of the Members of Columbia Basin Electric Cooperative, Inc. is planned as a luncheon for Thursday, Nov. 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Isobel Edwards Hall in Fossil. Registration starts at 11:15 a.m. with lunch

served at 12:00 p.m. The annual meeting and election of Directors will follow the lunch. Multiple door prizes will be awarded. All members are welcome to come and learn about their Electric Co-Op.

**The ODFW host webinar to discuss the Mule Deer Plan Oct 24th**

The ODFW will be hosting a webinar about its rewrite for the Mule Deer Plan on Oct. 24th at 6 p.m. They will be focusing on chapters about predation and harvest management. The webinar will have a wildlife biologist presenting and answering the public's questions. You can watch the webinar, read the chapters, and submit questions through their website, listed below, it will also be posted on YouTube afterward.

While the influence of predation on the deer population is a complex one, the plan is focused on research and monitoring efforts to determine the level of predation and how the rate is impacted by other factors, as well as what the ODFW has learned from past predator removal studies and efforts.

Join the conversation at [https://www.dfw.state.or.us/wildlife/management/plans/mule\\_deer/index.asp](https://www.dfw.state.or.us/wildlife/management/plans/mule_deer/index.asp)

**The Oregon Circuit Court host Community Conversation Oct. 30<sup>th</sup>**

The Oregon Judicial Department invites all Oregonians to an online community conversation to provide ideas and feedback about how to improve the courts. The topics will include how to make the courthouse safer and more welcoming, how to make it easier to do business with the courts, improve the jury, and how the courts

can improve on talking to and listening to the community. The OJD especially wants to hear from people who have used, interacted with or helped someone inter-act with the courts this past year. Join the conversation on Monday, Oct. 30th, from 5:30 pm-7 pm online at courts.oregon.gov/event.

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