1. **Romans 13:1-2**

* Who has established the highest authorities on earth according to Paul?
* For those who “resist” this established authority and rebel against them, whom are the really rebelling against?
* What is the consequence disobeying governing bodies which have been established to keep order according to Paul?
* Who do you believe may fall into this category of “higher authorities”, please name the offices or titles you believe this may apply to in your life?
* Does any of Paul’s words surprise you in this reading, please share?
* **Catechism 1897 - 1899**
* Why is such an “authority” on earth necessary for us, according to what you have read so far and know from life’s experiences?
* **Wisdom 6:1-8**
* According to this reading from **Wisdom**, who was it that gave these “Kings” and   
  “magistrates” their authority?
* Are all in authority being held accountable for their decisions, laws, and actions?

1. **Romans 13:3-7**

* Give a title you see Paul use for those who are an “authority” in this reading?
* If an atheist, or other individual who is not Christian is in a position of “authority”, can that title still apply to them too, if so, how?
* **1 Peter 2:13-17**
* Consider Peter’s message, Paul’s words in **verse 7** of **Romans,** and the **Catechism**, what does this say to you about our attitude towards our own government officials, laws, and persons who hold authority of some kind in our lives, work, etc.?
* Did any of the scriptures we read imply these individuals and their decisions would be perfect?
* What advice might you offer for a new Christian who strongly disagrees with and is having a hard time accepting an “authority”, who is as Paul says, a minister of God?
* **Catechism 1900 – 1904**
* Can there be an “unjust law” according to the **Catechism**, and if so, how does it apply to us Christians?
* **St. Chrysostom** (347 – 407 A.D.) *Homilies on Romans 23*

“Paul is saying here that we bear witness to the benefits which the ruler gives us by paying him a salary. The taxation system may seem to be burdensome and annoying, but Paul turns it into proof that rulers care for their people. Why, after all, do we pay taxes to the emperor? Is it not because he provides for us? We would not have paid it in the first place if we did not know that we are the ones who benefit from this government. It was for this reason that the men of old agreed that rules should be maintained by the people, because they neglect their own affairs in order to devote themselves entirely to the public welfare, spending all their energy in order to protect us.”

* **Tertullian** - ecclesiastical writer-(155 – 220 A.D.) *On Idolatry 15*

“So far as concerns the honors due to king or emperor, we have a clear ruling to be subject in all obedience, according to the apostle’s command, to magistrates and princes and those in authority, but **within the limits of Christian discipline**, so long as we keep ourselves free from idolatry.”

* Share a thought or two about the words of **St. Chrysostom** or **Tertullian** who was an early ecclesiastical writer.
* Please share something that was new or important for you to hear today.