

## **LOOKING TO SUNDAY®**

**Sunday, January 14, 2018**

### ***The Second Sunday in Ordinary Time***

This email, entitled Looking to Sunday®, focuses on one or more of the scripture readings for the coming Sunday. It prepares readers to hear God's Word at Mass and it offers a point of reflection to consider in the days leading to Sunday. Looking to Sunday is written by Father Tom Iwanowski.

#### **AN IMPLICATION OF CHRISTMAS**

At this time in January all that is left of the Christmas Season are credit cards bills waiting to be paid, unwanted gifts that have yet to be returned or exchanged, leftover holiday cookies, and evergreen needles that continue to avoid the vacuum cleaner.

However, this Sunday's Second Reading from Saint Paul (1 Corinthians 6:13c-15a, 17-20), tells us that what we celebrated at Christmas has implications for our lives throughout the year.

Christmas highlighted our belief that God took on flesh and walked among his people. God became intimately involved with his creation.

And that is something that continues to happen. At our Baptism, God came into our lives. God chose us to be part of the Church, part of the Body of Christ. The Spirit of God came to dwell within us. We might say Christmas happened *in* us.

As Saint Paul tells us, "Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? ... Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?"

That is an amazing fact. God dwells in us. That reality is visibly proclaimed each time we receive Holy Communion. We receive the Body and Blood of Christ. The Lord comes to dwell within us, the Lord comes into our "temple."

Since that is what we believe, it follows that we should reverence and care for our bodies and the bodies of others. That belief led Saint Paul to conclude, "The body is not for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body."

Unfortunately, we live in a society where the human body, the body made for the Lord, is not revered and respected by many people.

Sexual abuse, harassment, and assault, which seem increasingly prevalent, degrade the bodies of women and men.

Human trafficking, today's new slave trade, makes the bodies of its victims into commodities to be bought, sold, and traded.

Pornography, readily available on any computer or smart phone, debases the dignity of the human body and warps the thoughts and emotions of those who view its images.

Casual sexual activity, promoted by a hookup culture, makes the bodies of women and men into toys to be used and then abandoned.

In the face of such behavior, the Church promotes very counter-cultural values.

If God took on a human body and was born as the Child of Bethlehem, then the bodies of all people are worthy of honor.

If the Spirit of God dwells within us through Baptism, then we need to make certain that nothing we do lessens the dignity we have as “temples” of the Holy Spirit.

The Christmas season may have come and gone, but the implication of God taking on human flesh needs to be seen in us during every season, especially in the way we reverence our human body and the bodies of others.

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