

LOOKING TO SUNDAY®

Sunday, January 18, 2015

This email, entitled Looking to Sunday®, focuses on the Gospel Reading 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.

THE FIRST QUESTION

"What are you looking for?" Those are the first words that Jesus speaks in the Gospel of John. They are also the first words of Jesus to appear in a Sunday Gospel in this New Year of 2015.

In the Gospel for this Sunday (John 1:35-42), John the Baptist is standing with Andrew and another disciple. As John sees Jesus walk by he says, "Behold, the Lamb of God." After hearing his words, the two disciples leave John, and begin following the one John pointed out, the one whose coming he had been announcing.

When Jesus sees them, he asks, "What are you looking for?" While the question has an obvious meaning, namely, why are following me, it also has a deeper meaning. One that applies not only to Andrew and his companion, but also applies to us – a meaning that is particularly appropriate at the start of 2015. "What are you looking for?" In other words, what you are looking for in your life? What are you seeking? What do you want out of life?"

There are a variety of possible answers to those questions. Some people might answer they are looking for love, looking for a true friend, a soul mate, a marriage partner.

Others might respond they are seeking financial security, a home of their own, or other material possessions.

Still others might say they are looking for power, position, and prestige.

Still others might reply they are searching for the most excitement, enjoyment, and sensual pleasure that life can offer.

Then there are those who would say they are looking to be known as a good parent, a faithful spouse, a moral individual.

But no matter the answer anyone might give, the truth comes down to this. After our basic human needs are satisfied, we are all looking for someone or something to give our life meaning, purpose, and joy. Even those who pursue things that are ultimately destructive, see them as good, at least at the moment they choose them.

When Andrew and the other disciple left John and began to follow Jesus, they did so because they believed that Jesus was the one for whom they were truly looking. He was the one who would bring joy and happiness to them and to the people of Israel. Obviously they thought that to be true, for Andrew seeks out his brother Peter and brings him to Jesus.

In Jesus we discover the truth and the meaning and purpose of life. In Jesus we meet the God who has made us for himself and for whom our hearts ache even if we might not always recognize our heart's true desire. In Jesus we gain a relationship with the one who came so that we "might have life and have it more abundantly." (John 10:10)

“What are you looking for?” We give some indication of our answer by the choices we make and the things we do each day. But this Sunday, Jesus challenges each of us to seriously consider how we would reply to his question. “What are *you* looking for?”

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