

LOOKING TO SUNDAY®

Sunday, January 26, 2025

The Third 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.

Looking to Sunday has been published for more than sixteen years.

WRITTEN FOR YOU!

Imagine how you would react if a noted author came to your home and presented you with a book he or she had just completed. And amazingly, the author told you that it had been written especially for you. Obviously, you would be surprised and eager to read the book you received.

Then imagine that as you were finishing that book, that same author unexpectedly appeared once more and gave you a second book that continued the story you had been reading.

We hear about such an unexpected event in this Sunday's Gospel (Luke 1:1-4, 4:14-21). Saint Luke begins his Gospel by revealing that he had written it for a particular person. "I too have decided, after investigating everything accurately anew, to write it down in an orderly sequence for you, most excellent Theophilus." Luke wanted to present Theophilus with a book that would help him to "realize the certainty of the teachings" about Jesus.

Luke then went on to write a second book for Theophilus, the Acts of the Apostles. This book began with the words, "In the first book, Theophilus, I dealt with all that Jesus did and taught until the day he was taken up, after giving instructions through the holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen." Then Luke began to relate how the apostle began to spread the message of Jesus, and the Church began to grow.

Theophilus, to whom Luke addressed his two books, was most likely a Gentile of high rank and influence. But while Luke may have been writing to a specific individual, his work is meant for everyone who wants to be part of the Christian community, who wants to be "a friend of God," or a "Theophilus" as would be said in Greek.

For Luke's writings to nourish the faith of Theophilus, his books had to be read. And that remains true today. The Word of God needs to be read and proclaimed if it is to affect our lives and draw us into a deeper relationship with the Lord.

This Sunday, the Church celebrates the Sunday of the Word of God. This Sunday was instituted by Pope Francis in 2019 to remind us of the life-changing power of God's Word found in the scriptures.

Unfortunately, the Word of God often remains unread on the pages of the Bible. Bibles are frequently purchased, in fact, sales increased more than 22% in 2024. However, Bibles are less frequently read.

This Sunday, we might resolve to deepen our love and appreciation of God's Word by reading the two books written by Luke for Theophilus.

Each day, we might read one chapter of Luke's Gospel. Then at the end of 24 days, we might continue with the Acts of the Apostles.

The Word of God made a difference in the life of Theophilus, and it can make a difference in our lives. It can make us a better "Theophilus," a better "friend of God."

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