

# **LOOKING TO SUNDAY®**

**Sunday, January 27, 2019**

## ***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 ten years.

### **NEW THINKING**

What did Jesus see as his main mission in life?

Was it to free humanity from the power of sin? Was it to bring healing and hope to the suffering? Was it to usher in the kingdom of God? Was it to confront the hypocrisy and injustice of his day? Was it to make God's love visible by his words and actions? Was it to invite people to follow him? Was it to start the Church?

Certainly, those are all good answers.

In this Sunday's Gospel (Luke 1:1-4, 4:14-21), Jesus himself gives us the answer to that question. He tells us his principal mission in life.

Luke wrote that during a service in the synagogue of Nazareth, Jesus took the scroll of the prophet Isaiah and found a certain passage. After reading it he said, "Today this Scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing."

Jesus applied what he read to himself. In doing so he told us his primary mission. It was "to bring glad tidings to the poor .... to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord."

Three of those four actions had to do with preaching.

This reveals that the primary mission of Jesus was to preach, it was to proclaim a new way of thinking about God, a new way of thinking about ourselves, and a new way of thinking about our relationship with others and with the world.

For Jesus knew that how we think affects how we act. It determines our behavior.

That preaching mission of Jesus, which continues each time the scriptures are proclaimed and each time the Church announces the Good News of the Gospel, is more needed in our day than ever.

For we live in a society that promotes a way of thinking very different from that of Jesus.

Society tells us to think of morality as something we determine for ourselves.

Society tells us to think that the more things we possess, the greater our wealth, the happier we become.

Society tells us to think about pornography as just a form of harmless entertainment.

Society tells us to think about marriage as a temporary relationship between any two people.

Society tells us to think of gender as fluid and changeable.

Society tells us to think of abortion as a form of health care.

Society tells us to think of religion as something for the uneducated and ignorant.

Society tells us to think of heaven, hell, and eternal life as myths concocted by those afraid of dying.

When we think in those ways, our behavior becomes sinful and selfish. We move into the darkness. We lose our dignity as children of God.

The main mission of Jesus was to proclaim a new way of thinking about God, about ourselves, and about life. If we think as Jesus taught, our behavior changes for the better and God's kingdom comes into our lives and into our world.

Jesus came to preach a new way of thinking that would lead to a new way of living. That was his main mission in life.

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