

# **LOOKING TO SUNDAY®**

**Sunday, January 29, 2017**

## ***The Fourth 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.

### **FIRST ON THE LIST**

If employers have several tasks they want their workers to accomplish during the course of a workday, they usually give them a list. The item the employer puts first will be the job that the employer considers most important and that most needs to be done.

The same holds true for our personal "to-do" lists. Whatever is most important and will give us the greatest sense of accomplishment should be number one and the first thing we begin to do. What is number one on any list is the first thing we need to address.

God also has a list of things that he wants us to accomplish. There is a list in the Old Testament and one in the New Testament.

The list in the Old Testament is composed of the Ten Commandments. Not surprisingly the First Commandment describes what is most important for us to do as God's People. "I, the LORD, am your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, that place of slavery. You shall have no other god besides me." (Exodus 20: 2-3) We are not to make gods out of things, relationships, possessions, power, pleasure, money, or out of our needs and desires. God is to be the guiding force in our lives. "You shall have no other god besides me."

In the New Testament, Jesus gives a list of what is most important for us to do as his followers. That list, called the Beatitudes, is found in this Sunday's Gospel (Matthew 5:1-12). Once again what appears first is what is most significant. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, theirs is the kingdom of God."

Jesus tells us that those who have the humility and wisdom to realize their need for God and the poverty of spirit that results without him are the people God can fill with his presence, joy, and peace. They are the people who walk in the way of the Lord that leads to true happiness.

In both lists God puts the same thing first. The most important thing that God wants us to do is to recognize the need for God to be first in our lives. It is that need that brings us to Mass, that brings us to the Bible, that brings us to prayer, that brings us together as Church, and that brings us to recognize him in the poor and suffering of our world.

If we work at what is first, we will be doing what is most important in the eyes of God and most important for our spiritual lives. Working at those things will bring us into God's kingdom of joy and peace.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, theirs is the kingdom of God." Blessed are they who do what is first.