

# **LOOKING TO SUNDAY®**

**Sunday, February 24, 2019**

## ***The Seventh 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.

### **ON THE FINAL**

You and I know about different professions and careers. We obviously know about our own profession, its requirements and expectations, its good and bad points.

We also know about the careers and professions of relatives and friends.

However, there is one profession of which we all have considerable knowledge, even if it may not be our own or that of someone we know. That profession is teaching.

We know a great deal about teaching because we have been dealing with teachers for years. We have observed and interacted with teachers during our time in elementary and high school. Many of us have also dealt with teachers and professors in college or graduate school or when taking continuing education courses. Some of us have been watching teachers for more than 20 years.

We know what makes inspirational teachers and teachers who make us wish we were anywhere else but in their classrooms.

One of the things we know from being in school is that when a teacher emphasizes a point again and again, it must be important. It is also something that will likely appear on a future exam.

In this Sunday's Gospel (Luke 6:27-38), Jesus our teacher, gives his disciples, gives us, a lesson about love of enemies. He begins by saying, *"To you who hear I say, love your enemies."*

Jesus then continues by explaining what such love involves. He says, *"do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you."*

Jesus then gives us concrete examples of how we are to treat an enemy who hits us or steals from us. We are to "love our enemies and do good to them." We are to imitate our ever-merciful God, who is "kind to the ungrateful and to the wicked."

Then in case we miss the point, Jesus ends the lesson by saying, "Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful ... Stop judging .... Stop condemning .... forgive."

Jesus not only taught that lesson by his words, he taught it by his life. Most dramatically as he hung upon the cross. "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." (Luke 23:34)

To put it mildly, such love and forgiveness are a challenge. But Jesus, our teacher, tells us how to begin. He tells us to pray for our enemies. Pray for them by name. Pray that God will bless them. Pray that we might see them as God sees them.

And if we cannot do that, then we should ask God to give us the grace to one day make such prayers our own.

This Sunday, Jesus our teacher emphasizes love of enemies for a good reason. Jesus wants his disciples, his students, to know that love of enemies will be on our final exam.

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