

LOOKING TO SUNDAY®

Sunday, March 30, 2014

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.

MORE THAN TWO EYES

When investigating a crime, police officers search for witnesses who saw what occurred and who can give a description of the people involved. Such eyewitnesses can often tell the police the number of people involved, their gender, race, approximate height, build, and style of clothing. If those witnesses were close to the scene they might even be able to provide law enforcement officials with the eye and hair color of those involved and any distinctive features that might make them stand out from others.

Witnesses can describe the physical appearance of people. But to truly describe a person, to really know who a person is, it takes more than just a good set of eyes. It takes the ability to see beyond the outward appearances.

For example, we can observe a woman run out of a store. We can describe her but do we know her situation in life? Is she a store employee chasing a shoplifter, or a frantic mother rushing to her child's school because she just learned her little boy was injured? Is she cruel or kind, single or married, self-centered or selfless? It takes more than seeing to know who a person truly is. This Sunday's Gospel for the Fourth Sunday of Lent (John 9:1-41) is about witnessing, seeing, and knowing.

Jesus comes across a man blind from birth. Jesus heals the man and gives him sight. But the Pharisees who observe the results of Jesus' action see Jesus as someone obviously "not from God, because he does not keep the Sabbath." The crowds following Jesus see him as a famous miracle worker endowed with power.

But the blind man whose eyes were opened sees Jesus differently. At first he describes Jesus as a man. As he tells his neighbors, "the man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and told me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.'"

Later when being questioned by the Pharisees the man says of Jesus, "He is a prophet." When questioned a second time by the Pharisees, he has a further insight and says Jesus is a man from God. He reasons "if this man were not from God, he would not be able to do anything."

After the man is expelled from the synagogue Jesus seeks him out and reveals himself as the Son of Man. The man whose sight was restored then sees Jesus for who he truly is and worships him.

Unlike the Pharisees and the crowds who witnessed the works of Jesus and only saw a Sabbath breaker or a miracle worker, the man who was given eyes to see the world around him was also given the gift of faith to truly see Jesus and to recognize him as the Lord to be worshipped.

In our day many people only see Jesus as either a problem as did the Pharisees, or a miracle worker as did the crowds. Such people are like witnesses who only see what meets the eye.

However those blessed with faith see as did the man given sight by Jesus. They see Jesus as the Son of Man, as the one “who came into this world for judgment, so that those who do not see might see, and those who do see might become blind.”

It takes more than just two eyes to truly see Jesus!

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