

## **LOOKING TO SUNDAY®**

**Sunday, April 8, 2018**

***Second Sunday of Easter***

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.

### **PROOF REQUIRED!**

If we were told that something absolutely extraordinary had happened, something that had never occurred before, we would be skeptical. We would look for some sort of proof, some confirmation before we believed what we were told. We would be like Thomas in this Sunday's Gospel (John 20:19-31).

That first Easter Sunday evening when his fellow disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord," Thomas refused to believe what he was told. He demanded proof.

Thomas knew what everyone else knew. A person, who was crucified by skilled Roman executioners and locked away in a tomb, did not suddenly emerge and start holding conversations with people.

Before Thomas would believe that the crucified Jesus had risen from the dead he wanted proof. He wanted the same proof his fellow disciples received. They believed because they saw for themselves.

Earlier that day when Mary Magdalene had told Peter and John about the empty tomb, they ran to investigate. Peter and John did not take Mary's word that the body of Jesus was not in the tomb.

Later that same day when Mary reported her encounter with the Risen Lord outside the tomb, the disciples were still skeptical. They remained behind locked doors, hiding in fear.

The disciples did not believe until they saw the Lord for themselves, until they had proof. Thomas required the same thing. As he said, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger into the nailmarks and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."

The following Sunday, the Risen Lord came to his disciples. He stood before Thomas and offered him the proof he required. "Put your finger here and see my hands, and bring your hand and put it into my side, and do not be unbelieving, but believe."

In response Thomas made his famous profession of faith, "My Lord and my God!"

Today, there are many people like Thomas. They hear the message of the Gospel that proclaims that Jesus is alive and risen, that he is Savior and Lord, but they look for proof. Like Thomas, they want to see for themselves. They don't want to be taken in by "fake news."

We are the ones who have to provide the proof they are seeking. We do that by how we live as members of the Church, by how we live as members of the Body of Christ.

We see an example of the early Church doing just that in Sunday's first reading. (Acts 4: 32-35) There we read, "The community of believers was of one heart and mind, and no one claimed

that any of his possessions was his own, but they had everything in common....There was no needy person among them, for those who owned property or houses would sell them, bring the proceeds of the sale, and put them at the feet of the apostles, and they were distributed to each according to need.”

The lives of those first Christians were so transformed that it was evident that something amazing had happened to bring about such a radical change.

They went from being self-concerned to being concerned about others. They went from being disconnected individuals to being a community of mutual love. They went from holding tight to money and possessions to letting them go to serve the needs of others.

Those Christians were the proof of the Resurrection. We might say they were the “nailmarks” and “side” of Christ that people could see and so come to believe in the Risen Lord.

If people today are skeptical about the Resurrection of Jesus, it may be our fault. We may not be giving them the proof they need.

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*May the Risen Lord bless you with his presence and peace  
during this Easter Season!*