

LOOKING TO SUNDAY®

Sunday, April 27, 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.

LOCKED DOORS

We live in a society where doors are shut, locked, bolted, and often alarmed. There are security firms who install various devices to make sure that no intruder enters our home or place of business. If one does, alarms sound and the local police are immediately summoned. We want to feel secure when we lock our doors.

Locked doors are mentioned twice in this Sunday's Gospel (John 20:19-31). We read that on the first Easter Sunday "the doors were locked, where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews." After the events of Good Friday, the disciples had securely locked and bolted the doors of the place where they hiding. They were afraid that those who had crucified their Master might be seeking to arrest his followers. But the Risen Lord appeared to his fearful and astonished disciples, wished them peace, and breathed his Spirit upon them. The Lord who had smashed the doors of death could not be deterred by doors made of wood.

The Gospel then tells us that the following Sunday, the Risen Lord came once more "although the doors were locked." The disciples who had rejoiced a week earlier when they saw their Risen Lord were still bolting doors. This time the Lord challenged Thomas who was locked in disbelief to open the doors of his heart and believe.

The Risen Lord, who came to his fearful disciples and sent them forth to be instruments of his peace and mercy in the world, continues to come to his Church - a Church that sometimes locks itself away in fear like those first disciples. The Lord comes to the Church through men and women who challenge it to open its doors. This Sunday we celebrate the canonization of two such people, **Pope John XXIII** and **Pope John Paul II**.

Pope John, in calling the Second Vatican Council in 1962, challenged the Church to move beyond its defensive and fearful stance and to embrace the world. He challenged the Church to open its doors to the modern world.

Pope John Paul during the 27 years of his pontificate traveled to 129 countries. He knocked on their "doors" and invited them to open themselves to the Good News of the Gospel. As he told the Church and the entire world on the day of his inauguration as pope in 1978, "Do not be afraid. Open wide the doors for Christ."

The Sunday's Gospel and this Sunday's rites of canonization make one thing abundantly clear - the Risen Lord does not want his Church hiding in fear behind locked doors!

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*May you experience the peace and joy of the Risen Lord
during this Easter Season!*

