

LOOKING TO SUNDAY®

Sunday, April 27, 2025

The 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.

Looking to Sunday has been published for more than sixteen years.

HOLY SPIRITED!

"At sunset, all who had people sick with various diseases brought them to Jesus. He laid his hands on each of them and cured them" (Luke 4:40).

"Everyone in the crowd sought to touch Jesus because power came forth from him and healed them all" (Luke 6:18-19).

In these two passages from his Gospel, Luke summarizes the miraculous healing power of Jesus. After the Ascension, Peter and the other apostles continued that ministry of Jesus. They healed the sick, drove out demons, and even raised the dead. In Sunday's Second Reading (Acts 5:12-16), we learn that that people "even carried the sick out into the streets and laid them on cots and mats so that when Peter came by, at least his shadow might fall on one or another of them."

Such power was present in these disciples because of the Spirit bestowed on them by the Risen Lord. On that first Easter Sunday night when he appeared to his disciples, John tells us that "Jesus breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit.'" That gift of the Spirit was dramatically seen on Pentecost when the Spirit's presence was manifested in a strong driving wind and tongue of fire.

Since that time, the Spirit has been active in the Church empowering and motivating Christians to preach the Gospel, to witness to their faith in Jesus, to work for peace and justice, to feed the hungry, to shelter the homeless, to welcome the refugee, to care for the sick and hurting, to educate the young, to open the eyes of society to the sanctity of human life at every stage—and to love as Jesus loved!

The more we allow the Holy Spirit to work in our lives, the more we give evidence that the Lord is risen and alive. In a sense, we become the proof that leads people to profess what Thomas said of Jesus in this Sunday's Gospel (John 20:19-31), "My Lord and my God."

In the weeks ahead, the Catholic Church will publicly recognize a person who truly allowed the Spirit to work in his life in an amazing way. The Church will celebrate the canonization of Carlo Acutis, the Catholic Church's first millennial saint. He was a British-born Italian teenager who died in 2006 at the age of 15 shortly after being diagnosed with acute leukemia.

Carlo was not only a typical teenager who enjoyed hiking, video games, and being with friends; he was also a devoted follower of Christ. He attended daily Mass, received Holy Communion each day, prayed the rosary, spent time in Eucharist adoration, showed concern for the poor and the homeless, led his parents back to the Church by his example, and used his computer skills to create an online exhibit of eucharistic miracles and Marian apparitions. Carlo Acutis

truly let the Holy Spirit work in his life and even today the Spirit is using him to touch others. Over the past year, more than a million people have made a pilgrimage to his tomb in Assisi, Italy.

Carlo Acutis has truly become a holy influencer for the young, and the not-so-young, because he allowed the Holy Spirit to work in his life.

That same Holy Spirit first given by the Risen Lord to his disciples is with us through our Baptism and Confirmation. May we allow the Spirit to do what he did for Carlo Acutis; may we allow the Spirit to make us saints!

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