

LOOKING TO SUNDAY®

Sunday, May 4, 2025

The Third 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.

NEED TO TELL

When a student is awarded a full four-year scholarship to the college of his dreams, he will instantly share that wonderful news with his parents, relatives, and friends.

When a married couple is blessed with their first child, those parents, and the new grandparents, will proclaim that child's birth as loudly as the angels did at Bethlehem.

When an employee is given her sought-after promotion and a fabulous increase in salary, she will quickly tell others about her advancement in the company.

When something wonderful happens in our lives, we want to broadcast the news! Even if we wanted to keep things quiet, our faces would announce the information.

The apostles were just like us. They could not keep good news to themselves, especially the great news of the Lord's resurrection!

How could they not tell others that their beloved teacher, who had been arrested, unjustly condemned, crucified before a mocking crowd, and locked away in the tomb, was now risen and alive? He had conquered the power of sin and death.

The Lord had appeared to them the evening of his resurrection, wished them "peace," showed them his wounds, and breathed his Spirit upon them. The following Sunday, he had come again, removed the skepticism of Thomas, who then proclaimed him, "Lord and God." Then as we hear in Sunday's Gospel (John 21:1-19), the Risen Lord came to the apostles a third time, fed them breakfast on the beach, challenged Peter to re-affirm his love, and then commanded him to care for his sheep.

How could the apostles keep these events to themselves? Moreover, the Risen Lord had told them to announce the news, to make disciples of all nations, and on Pentecost he sent the Spirit to empower them to do just that.

Yet as we hear in Sunday's First Reading (Acts 5:27-32, 40b-41), this is what the members of the Sanhedrin had ordered the apostles not to do. They were to keep silent. But the apostles refused, saying, "We must obey God rather than men." They then proclaimed to the Sanhedrin the very message that they had just been ordered not to repeat! As Peter and John had previously told the members of the Sanhedrin, "It is impossible for us not to speak about what we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20).

Today, we are the people commissioned to announce the good news that was first proclaimed by the apostles. But to be effective and enthusiastic messengers of the Gospel, we first need to experience the presence of the Risen Lord in our own lives.

Such an encounter is possible since the Lord is risen, alive, and with us. We can hear his voice in the scriptures, experience his loving touch in the Sacraments, encounter him in the Eucharist, feel his compassion in the embrace of caring Christians, and know his gentle presence in quiet moments of prayer.

Without that personal encounter, we would simply be speaking about someone we have never met.

When we have experienced the presence of the Risen Lord and come to understand that his Resurrection is our assurance that death leads to eternal life, then we will want to tell others about him. Just like that student, those new parents, that employee, and the apostles we will not be able to be quiet!

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