

# **LOOKING TO SUNDAY®**

**Sunday, May 11, 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.

## **THE GOOD GATE**

Jesus is the Good Shepherd. Certainly all Christians are familiar with that beautiful image. Jesus is the good shepherd who cares for his sheep, who seeks out the lost, and who is even willing to die for his flock.

In the Gospel for this Sunday (John 10:1-10), often known as Good Shepherd Sunday, Jesus speaks of the shepherd who "calls his own sheep by name and leads them out...and the sheep follow him." But in that passage Jesus does not call himself a shepherd. Instead he says, "Amen, amen, I say to you, I am the gate for the sheep." In fact, a verse later, he says it again, "I am the gate. Whoever enters through me will be saved."

Jesus speaks of himself as the gate through whom the sheep must pass in order to enter the sheepfold where they can find rest and security. He is also the gate that makes certain that only the rightful shepherds are allowed to enter and lead out their sheep.

While we may not be familiar with shepherds and sheep in our urbanized world, we certainly are familiar with gates. We are required to pass through security gates to board airplanes, to gain access to government offices, to enter certain residential communities, and to attend some public events.

Such gates are designed to keep out those who might have evil intentions and to lead those who pass through them into a place of security and safety.

Jesus, who calls himself the "gate," does the same thing for us. He opens the way to a place where we can be secure in God's love and he protects us from those who would do us spiritual harm.

In the sacrament of Baptism the Lord ushers us into a new relationship with God and gives us a place in his sheepfold, a place in his Church. Through his words and actions in the scriptures the Lord shows us the way to true peace and happiness in life. Through the preaching of the Church, the Lord warns us of those behaviors and ways of living that will lead us astray and deaden our spirits. By his example, he helps us to tell the difference between those who are good shepherds and those whom he describes as "thieves and robbers," who have no regard for the sheep.

Yes, Jesus is the Good Shepherd, but as Sunday's Gospel makes clear, he is also the Good Gate. Those who enter through that gate discover peace and joy in this life and are brought to the "green pastures" of eternal life.

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