

LOOKING TO SUNDAY®

Sunday, May 13, 2018

Seventh 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.

LIKE A MOTHER'S LOVE

This Sunday, Mother's Day, we lovingly honor the women who gave us birth, fed us, changed us, dressed us, raised us, comforted us in moments of sadness, encouraged us, cheered our successes, and along with our fathers were our protectors and guides as we grew to maturity.

Mothers also did something else for us. Mothers prayed for us and worried about us especially when we left their protective care, when we left the nest and went out into the world.

Mothers were concerned when we began school, went off to college, drove the family car in heavy traffic, spent a weekend away with friends, rented our first apartment, or started a job far from home.

And no matter their children's ages, mothers continue to worry and pray for their sons and daughters as they make their way in the world.

In this Sunday's Gospel (John 17:11-19), we hear Jesus at the Last Supper praying to his heavenly Father. Jesus prays for his disciples who will go out into the world just as he did. As he tells his heavenly Father, "As you sent me into the world, so I sent them into the world."

Like a caring mother or father, Jesus is worried about his disciples who will go into the world. He prays that they may be protected from "the evil one" and kept safe in a world where as Jesus says, "they do not belong."

In his prayer, when Jesus uses the word "world," he does not mean the material world. A world, that as we read in the Book of Genesis, God found to be "very good" when he created it.

Rather the "world," as Jesus uses the word in Sunday's reading, refers to sin and evil and to all those things opposed to the Gospel.

As Jesus tells his heavenly Father, "I gave them your word, and the world hated them, because they do not belong to the world any more than I belong to the world."

The forces of the "world" opposed Jesus, and Jesus knew those same forces would oppose his disciples when they went forth from the "nest" of the Upper Room, into the mean streets of Jerusalem.

So, filled with concern for his disciples, and most likely worry as well, Jesus prays for his disciples. He knows that he will no longer be physically present to guide and direct them.

Mothers worry and pray for their children as they go forth into the world, a world of created beauty but also a world of human sin where the "evil one" can lead them away from all that is good, all that is in keeping with the Gospel.

On this day when we honor the women who have worried and prayed for us as we went out into the world, the Gospel reminds us that Jesus is worried and concerned about us as we go forth into the world.

Jesus is Lord, Savior, Redeemer, Holy One, and Messiah – all wonderful titles that tell us about Jesus. But Sunday's Gospel and Sunday's observance of Mother's Day give us another appreciation of Jesus. They tell us that Jesus' love for us is like the love of a mother concerned and worried about her children.

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