

LOOKING TO SUNDAY®

Sunday, June 2, 2019

The 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.

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

WHAT KIND OF PEOPLE?

What kind of people do you imagine Jesus wants us to be?

If someone asked us that question, we might answer by saying Jesus wants us to be loving, compassionate, caring, forgiving, understanding, generous, selfless, humble, and considerate.

These are qualities that Jesus expects of his followers. They also are traits that Jesus himself embodied during his ministry.

However, in this Sunday's Gospel reading (John 17:20-26) Jesus speaks about another quality that he expects of his disciples. In fact, he specifically asks his heavenly Father that this trait might be seen in all his followers down through the ages.

He says, "Holy Father, I pray not only for them, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, so that they may all be one."

Jesus wants us to be united. He wants us to be a harmonious family of faith bound together by our common relationship with him and the Father. As he prays, "May all be one, as you, Father, are in me and I in you."

That prayer for unity offered by Jesus at the Last Supper is one that is continued by the Church and is especially true as we gather at the table of the Lord.

At Mass, the priest prays "that we, who are nourished by the Body and Blood of your Son and filled with his Holy Spirit, may become one body, one spirit in Christ." (Eucharistic Prayer III) Just before we share the Sign of Peace, the celebrant asks the Lord to look upon "the Church and grant her peace and unity."

Then as we receive Holy Communion, we take on that unity the Lord seeks. We become one with the Lord and with our fellow Christians. Just as the members of a human family are of the same flesh and blood, so are we. For we too share the same flesh and blood, namely, the Body and Blood of Christ.

We live in a world where despite being digitally connected, people seem to be more socially divided, more polarized, more separated by their politics, opinions, economic status, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and group identification.

Imagine the impact Christians would have on society if we lived out the spirit of unity we share at Mass outside the doors of the church. If we did that then the world would realize the truth of the Gospel and the life-changing power of the Christian faith.

Yes, Jesus wants us to be morally good, compassionate, and merciful, but above all he wants us to be united as brothers and sisters with one another and with him.

That is the reason the Lord invites us Sunday after Sunday “to take and eat...to take and drink.” He continually challenges us to become what we receive – “holy communion.”

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*May the Risen Lord continue to bless you
during this Easter Season!*