

# **LOOKING TO SUNDAY®**

**Sunday, June 10, 2018**

## ***The Tenth Sunday in Ordinary Time***

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.

### **NAMES AND LABELS**

We live at a time when many people who hold conflicting opinions, support rival political parties, arrive at different solutions to social problems, or embrace divergent philosophies of life no longer politely and respectfully discuss their differences.

Instead they launch personal attacks at those whose ideas diverge from their own. They call their opponents ignorant, stupid, ill-informed, close-minded, and hate-filled.

For example, a person who disagrees with them concerning immigration policy must be a xenophobe or a proponent of open borders. A person whose political views are not like their own is called a crazed liberal or a conservative demagogue. A person whose religious views contradict their beliefs is labeled a heretic.

We live at a time when many people dismiss and demonize those with different ideas.

We see that same attitude in this Sunday's Gospel (Mark 3:20-35.) The scribes from Jerusalem who could not accept the preaching of Jesus, his forgiving of sins, his healing on the Sabbath, demonized Jesus. They claimed that Jesus was "possessed by Beelzebul." They said his power was not from God but from "the prince of demons."

But the religious authorities were not the only ones to criticize and attack Jesus. When his relatives saw how Jesus was conducting his ministry, they were embarrassed and upset. So much so that, as we read in Sunday's Gospel, "they set out to seize him, for they said, 'He is out of his mind.'" Jesus was not behaving as they thought he should. He was angering those in authority; he was causing unwanted controversy.

Because the scribes and the relatives of Jesus were upset with the words and the actions of Jesus, they wrote him off and closed their minds to his message. After all, why would people who thought Jesus was "out of his mind" or in league with the "prince of demons" give him their attention.

Perhaps Sunday's Gospel teaches us that we are not to be like them when it comes to dealing with people with whom we disagree.

We are not to call them crazy or demonize our opponents. Instead, as Jesus did, we are to continue to proclaim the truth of the Gospel and to do so with love and with respect.

As Jesus told us, "Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your heavenly Father, for he makes his sun rise on the bad and the good."

In other words, love your opponents, and pray for those who attack your ideas, that you may be children of your heavenly Father, for he makes his sun rise on those who agree with you and those who differ with you.

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