

# **LOOKING TO SUNDAY®**

**Sunday, June 12, 2016**

## ***The Eleventh 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.

### **TIME TRAVEL**

*Time Bandits, Back to the Future, A Christmas Carol, Somewhere in Time, It's a Wonderful Life, Ground Hog Day,* and the Star Trek movies, *The Voyage Home* and *First Contact*, all have something in common. All those films involve time travel. The characters in those films move backward and forward in time.

Sometimes they go back in time a day or two and sometimes they journey back hundreds of years. On other occasions they move forward well into the future.

While time travel is the stuff of science fiction stories, we might wish that it were possible for us to travel back in time, at least back into our own personal history.

Most likely we all have things we would like to change if we could turn back the clock.

Perhaps we might change the school we attended and the major we pursued. Perhaps we might take back what we said to a loved one in a moment of anger. Perhaps we might alter our unhealthy life style. Perhaps we might reverse our decision to ignore the vows of our marriage. Perhaps we might decide to be less self-centered and selfish. Perhaps we might give less time to our job and career and more to our family. Perhaps we might resist temptation more successfully and fall into sin less often.

Since we all are imperfect, sinful beings, we all have things in our past that we would change if we could travel back in time.

In this Sunday's Gospel (Luke 7:36-8:3) we meet a woman described as "a sinful woman in the city." That woman in a sense finds a way to turn back time.

When she hears that Jesus is having dinner at the house of Simon the Pharisee, she pushes her way in uninvited and unannounced. She stands behind Jesus, who is facing Simon and she washes his feet with her tears, dries them with her hair, and then anoints them with ointment. She performs the acts of hospitality and respect that Simon neglected.

While Simon looks with scorn at the woman and with disdain at Jesus for accepting such attention from a known sinner, Jesus sees someone seeking to move beyond her past, to erase her sins.

Jesus then turns to the woman and away from Simon. He praises the woman for the love she has shown him and tells her, "Your sins are forgiven....Your faith has saved you."

Jesus frees the woman from her past. She is no longer "a sinful woman in the city," but a forgiven woman. A woman with a future not controlled by her past. A woman who can move into the future. As Jesus tells her, "Go in peace."

In a sense, by seeking the forgiveness of Jesus that woman traveled back in time and altered her past. It no longer controlled and defined her.

What that woman experienced is what we can experience in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Through that sacrament Jesus forgives our sins and moves us into the future freed from our past offenses.

While time travel is the stuff of science fiction, spiritual time travel is the stuff of God's mercy!

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