

LOOKING TO SUNDAY®

Sunday, July 5, 2015

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.

FAITH NEEDS TO GROW

Jesus was a man of power. He did the impossible.

He fed a crowd of thousands with a few loaves of bread and a couple of fish.

He healed the sick.

He made cripples walk.

He strode across the waters of a lake.

He freed those possessed by demons.

He even raised the dead to life.

Those who saw his power exclaimed, "He has done all things well. He makes the deaf hear and the mute speak." (Mark 7:37) His manifestations of power even led people to want "to come and carry him off to make him king." (John 6:15)

Yet in this Sunday's Gospel (Mark 6:1-6) Jesus is rendered almost powerless in his hometown of Nazareth. "He was not able to perform any mighty deed there, apart from curing a few sick people by laying his hands on them."

The power of Jesus was limited by the lack of faith of his neighbors. To the people of Nazareth, Jesus was no prophet, no rabbi, and no worker of wonders. They saw Jesus as they saw him before he left home. He was just "the carpenter, the son of Mary, and the brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon." As Jesus was before, so he would always be in their eyes.

What happened in Nazareth still happens today. Many people fail to grow in their understanding of Jesus. They continue to see Jesus as they did when they were young. For them Jesus remains a good man who loved people, a gentle shepherd, and a miracle worker who lived long ago in a far off land. They believe his teachings amount to nothing more than a plea to treat others as you would want to be treated. Their conversations with Jesus are limited to the prayers they learned in childhood. "

If Jesus is to truly affect our lives, we need to continually grow in our relationship with him and in our appreciation of what it means for us to say he is Lord, Savior, Redeemer, and Son of God.

Jesus could work no powerful deeds for the people of Nazareth because they were unwilling to see him in any other way than they did in the past. In fact, "he was amazed at their lack of faith."

Jesus will not be able to do the powerful things he wishes to do in our lives, if we do not grow in our faith and in our knowledge of him. Seeing Jesus only as we did before will limit what Jesus is able to do for us today.

The more we grow in our faith, the more powerfully Jesus will affect our lives!

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