

LOOKING TO SUNDAY®

Sunday, July 6, 2014

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.

COME TO ME!

"Come to me." Those words can elicit different emotions depending upon who says them.

When a principal tells a student, "Come to me, come to my office," those words can make the student feel uneasy and upset. She may wonder if she did something wrong and now is about to get reprimanded.

When a lawyer says to a person "Come to me, let's talk" after witnessing that person slip and fall in a local restaurant, those words might make the person feel suspicious of the lawyer's motives. He may wonder if the lawyer is interested in him or only interested in filing a lawsuit.

However, those same words can generate warm and loving emotions. That certainly is the case when they are from a grandmother who has come to visit her little grandchildren. She sees her excited grandchildren, throws open her arms and says, "Come to me, come to grandma." That same positive, affirming emotion is expressed when a husband notices that his wife is distressed over her elderly mother's growing dementia. He stops what he is doing and says to his wife, "Come to me, I'm here for you."

In this Sunday's Gospel (Matthew 11:25-30), Jesus says "Come to me" to the poor and powerless, the "little ones," who feel burdened and oppressed by the religious rules, regulations, and obligations imposed by the Pharisees and scribes. These "learned and the clever" ones had turned the law of God into something that enslaved rather than something that showed men and women how to be loving children of God.

This Sunday, Jesus, the one who reveals the Father to us, the one who is God in human flesh, throws open his arms and says to us, "Come to me."

While we are not burdened by the rules and regulations of the Pharisees and scribes, we can be weighed down and led astray by the values espoused by the "learned and clever" of society.

The "learned and clever" who proclaim that religious freedom does not extend beyond the walls of the worship space, who teach that human life only has value if society decides to give it value, who teach that each person creates his or her own moral absolutes, who believe that happiness comes with celebrity and unbridled sexual activity, who declare that money and power determine the worth of an individual, and who profess atheism as the creed of the truly intellectual and sophisticated.

In this confused society, which more and more seems to be lost in the darkness that results when humanity goes its own way, Jesus throws open his arms and lovingly says, "Come to me."

Those who come to Jesus and learn from his example find true peace and fulfillment in their lives – a peace and fulfillment only God can give. "Come to me, all you who labor and are

burdened, and I will give you rest...learn from me...for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves.”

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