

LOOKING TO SUNDAY®

Sunday, August 3, 2025

The Eighteenth 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.

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

AN EMPTY ABUNDANCE

Here in the United States, we live in a society that has produced an abundant harvest. We have supermarkets overflowing with food. We have businesses of every kind selling an endless variety of clothing, appliances, tools, houseware, toys, games, and other merchandise. We have car dealers offering gas powered, electric, and hybrid vehicles in a variety of makes and models. We have realtors marketing properties ranging from starter homes, condominiums, and apartments, to multi-bedroom residences with elevators.

Our entrepreneurial society has produced a harvest of items that did not exist some 60 years ago, such as personal computers, smart phones, flat screen televisions, microwave ovens, digital music, and more. That contemporary harvest also includes the world wide web, internet connectivity, social networks, streaming services, Amazon same-day delivery, and AI-powered digital assistants waiting for our voice commands.

Our society has produced an abundant harvest of things, and if Shark Tank is any indication, more products are on the way.

This material abundance has improved our lives in many ways. It also has so stuffed our closets and captured our attention that we can lose sight of what is truly important in life. This is what happened to the rich man that Jesus speaks about in this Sunday's Gospel (Luke 12:13-21).

The man's fields had produced such a tremendous harvest that he no longer had room for it in his barns. So, the rich man decided to build bigger barns, even larger storage units, to hold his grain and other possessions. With such an abundance of possessions, he felt his life and future were now secure. He could "rest, eat, drink, and be merry."

In that parable, God called that rich man a "fool." The man had been so self-concerned for his material well-being and acquiring ever more possessions that he had failed to grow rich in what mattered to God.

We live in a society with an abundant harvest of material possessions, a society where advertising, marketing, and social media encourage us to fill our "barns" with ever more things. We are continually being told there is always something else that we need to acquire to be truly happy and secure.

Yet despite our material abundance, our society is filled with people who feel their lives have little meaning and purpose. Their spiritual "barns" are empty. They have forgotten what Jesus told the crowd in Sunday's Gospel: "One's life does not consist of possessions." We are made for something more.

Unlike the self-centered rich man whose aim was to possess ever more things to secure his happiness, we need to work at possessing what matters to God. As Saint Paul tells us in our Second Reading (Colossians 3:1-5, 9-11), “Seek what is above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Think of what is above, not of what is on earth.”

© 2025 Rev. Thomas Iwanowski