

LOOKING TO SUNDAY®

Sunday, August 24, 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.

THE QUESTION

Good teachers ask questions of their students. Those questions are designed not only to determine how much students know, but also to spur discussion and to encourage students to think.

Jesus, the greatest of teachers, asked questions of his disciples. They included the following:

“Can any of you by worrying add a moment to your lifespan?” (Luke 12:25)

“Why are you terrified, O you of little faith?” (Matthew 8:26)

“What were you arguing about on the way?” (Mark 9:33)

“What profit would there be for one to gain the whole world and forfeit his life?” (Matthew 16:26)

“If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them goes astray, will he not leave the ninety-nine in the hills and go in search of the stray?” (Matthew 18:12)

“Does this shock you? What if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before?” (John 6:61-62)

“For who is greater: the one seated at table or the one who serves?” (Luke 22:27)

In this Sunday's Gospel (Matthew 16:13-20), Jesus asks a question of his disciples, perhaps the most important of all his questions, a question also found in the Gospel of Mark (8: 29) and Luke (9:20). After asking what people are saying about him, he poses this question to his disciples, “But who do you say that I am?”

Peter responds, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” By his answer Peter declares his belief that not only is Jesus the long-awaited Messiah, even more astounding, he is divine.

Peter professes that the God who created the universe, the God who is beyond space and time, the God who breathed the breath of life into humanity, the God who chose the children of Abraham to be his special people, the God who parted the Red Sea and etched his commandments on tablets of stone, stands before him in Jesus.

As this Sunday's Gospel is read, Jesus asks us that key question he asked his disciples, “But who do you say that I am?” In posing that question, Jesus is really asking us; Who am I for you? How do I fit into your life? How do I shape your choices? How do I influence your use of time and money? What impact do I have on your moral decisions?

If we see Jesus as Peter did, as “the Christ, the Son of the living God,” then we will live differently from those who think of Jesus in some lesser way.

Good teachers ask questions to make their students think. This Sunday's question should leave us considering what we personally believe about Jesus Christ.

If we cannot answer that question without repeating another person's words or using theological terms we heard in a religion class, then we really do not know who Jesus is.

"But who do *YOU* say that I am?"

© 2014 Rev. Thomas B. Iwanowski