

LOOKING TO SUNDAY®

Sunday, August 31, 2025

The Twenty-Second 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.

INVITATION ADVICE

Imagine we were earning just enough to provide for our family and cover our monthly bills. Then we attend a seminar where a financial advisor tells us that we should set aside at least \$500 a month to cover unanticipated expenses and to save for retirement.

As much as we might want to follow that good advice, we simply would not have the money to do so.

Sometimes, it is difficult, if not impossible, to follow the advice we are given, no matter how good that advice might be.

We might have that reaction when it comes to the advice that Jesus gives us in this Sunday's Gospel (Luke 14:1, 7-14).

There Jesus tells a leading Pharisee who had invited him to his home for dinner, "When you hold a lunch or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or your wealthy neighbors....invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind; blessed indeed will you be because of their inability to repay you."

Jesus obviously meant this advice for more than a single Pharisee. Otherwise, why would Luke have included these words of Jesus in his Gospel?

Jesus seems to be advising us also to include "the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind" among the guests we invite to our family table.

As much as we might want to follow this advice, we might hesitate to do so. If we went through the streets of our city, inviting the poor, the homeless, the suffering, and the neglected to our tables, we might put ourselves and others at risk.

We would be unaware of the mental stability, the health challenges, the addictions, or possible criminal backgrounds of those we brought to our table. We would not even be sure that they would leave our home after the meal.

Sometimes good advice, even advice found in the scriptures, should be carefully considered before being followed literally. We might remember that volunteers and professionals who deal with people in need generally do so in pairs and follow certain procedures meant to safeguard themselves and those they are seeking to help.

Though we might not be able to completely follow the advice Jesus gives us in Sunday's Gospel, we could respond in some way. For example, whenever we invite friends and relatives to our home for lunch or dinner, we might calculate the cost of providing food and drink for a single guest. Then we could donate that amount of money to a local organization caring for "the poor,

the crippled, the lame, the blind” and others on the streets of our cities. We might also consider the amount of time we would spend enjoying that lunch or dinner with our relatives and friends, and volunteer that amount of time to help at a local soup kitchen or food pantry.

While we might not be able to completely follow the good advice Jesus gives us in Sunday’s Gospel, each of us can respond in some way.

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