

LOOKING TO SUNDAY®
Sunday, September 21, 2025
The Twenty-Fifth 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.

AUDITS

It is not unusual to hear about businesses, financial institutions, and even government agencies undergoing an audit. The purpose of an audit is to provide an objective evaluation of an organization's financial condition and its compliance with established standards and legal requirements.

Audits are often triggered by someone who has seen or heard of improper activity taking place in an organization. Such a whistle blower complaint often leads to the discovery of fraud and other criminal activity.

In this Sunday's Gospel (Luke 16:1-13), Jesus tells a parable about an audit being triggered by a whistle blower report. A rich man is informed that the steward whom he has placed in charge of his business has been "squandering his property." When the steward is told that he will have to give a full account of his employment, he realizes the audit will result in his dismissal.

Rather than admitting his corrupt activities, the steward boldly commits further fraud. He alters the ledgers and lowers the amounts that various tenant farmers owe his master. The steward draws these debtors into a scheme where they come out ahead and where he ends up in their good graces.

When the master learns what his employee has done, Jesus says, "the master commended that dishonest steward for acting prudently."

Perhaps that wealthy master reacted in that unexpected way because he himself was less than honest and upright himself. He also may have been impressed by the devious scheme devised by his steward—one schemer was amazed by the skill of a fellow schemer.

Scripture scholars have puzzled over the meaning of this unusual parable. But perhaps the reason Jesus told this story may be found in the line that follows it. Jesus says, "For the children of this world are more prudent in dealing with their own generation than are the children of light."

Jesus highlights the fact the "the children of this world," namely, those who see nothing beyond the grave, do whatever is necessary to gain wealth, to ensure their financial independence, and provide for their future.

Like the dishonest steward and perhaps like his rich master, they are willing to cheat, steal, and flout the law to get the wealth they seek.

Jesus seems to be saying it would be wonderful if “the children of the light” would give such effort and attention to deepening their relationship with God and storing up treasure in heaven by the way they live the Gospel and love their neighbor.

Sunday’s Gospel challenges us to audit our lives by comparing the effort we give to ensuring our financial security in this world with the effort we give to providing for our spiritual wellbeing in the next. As the dishonest steward realized, an audit can reveal a glaring discrepancy.

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