

# **LOOKING TO SUNDAY®**

**Sunday, October 1, 2017**

## ***The Twenty-Sixth 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

### **NEEDED FOR A CHANGE OF MIND**

When a person changes his or her mind about something or about someone, that change happens for a reason.

People do not go from holding one idea to suddenly embracing another without a reason. That is particularly true when people take a position completely opposite of the one they held previously.

For example, if a person whose idea of a perfect meal was an eight-ounce filet mignon accompanied by a mountain of crispy French fries and onion rings, suddenly began ordering steamed vegetables and tofu burgers we would wonder what caused that person to change his or her approach to food.

People change their minds for a variety of reasons. Some discover new information that shatters their former beliefs. Others are influenced by the arguments put forth by individuals they respect. Some come to realize that an ever-decreasing number of people share their point of view. And still others have a personal experience that leads them to see things in a new way.

People can have many reasons for changing their minds, for adjusting their way of thinking, and for altering their behavior.

But besides having a reason, something else is required for a change of mind. A person needs humility. A person has to be humble enough to admit that he or she was wrong.

If we think our beliefs, our opinions, our actions are correct why would we change them? We can only have a change of mind if we can admit that we were wrong about something or someone.

This Sunday's Gospel (Matthew 21:28-32) is about people changing their minds. In that Gospel, Jesus tells a parable about a father who asks his two sons to work in the vineyard. The first son refuses "but afterwards changed his mind and went." The second son said "Yes, sir," but then did not go.

The first son not only came to realize the obedience he owed his father, he also had the humility to admit he was wrong. So he changed his mind and he did as his father asked.

The second son said he would go but never went. Perhaps he saw working in the vineyard as something beneath him, something for slaves and servants but not for an owner's son.

After speaking about the first son, who changed his mind for the better, Jesus then praises the tax collectors and prostitutes who were listening to the preaching of John the Baptist and changing their minds about the way they were living.

Those tax collectors and prostitutes had the humility to realize they were sinners in need of repentance.

After praising them, Jesus then criticizes the chief priests and elders for not believing in John's message of repentance. How could they? In their minds, they were the holy ones. They were too proud and self-righteous to realize John's message was also for them

If we are to change our minds and to turn from sin, we need a reason. We also need to be humble enough to admit that sometimes we are wrong. Like the tax collectors and prostitutes of the Gospel we need to be humble enough to admit that we are sinners.

Perhaps it is not our sins that lead us away from God so much as it is our lack of humility. It was that lack of humility that kept the chief priests and elders from hearing the message of John the Baptist and later the message of Jesus.

A change of mind, a change of heart, a change of life, and even a change of diet, requires humility. As Jesus tells us, "the one who humbles himself will be exalted." (Luke 14:11)

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