

LOOKING TO SUNDAY®

Sunday, October 2, 2016

The Twenty Seventh 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.

MORE NEEDED

If I had more time, I would be involved in the athletic and social activities of my children.

If I had a larger salary, I would financially assist my aging parents with their expenses.

If I had more motivation, I would start that exercise program the doctor recommended.

We all have good things we would like to do if only we had more time, more money, more motivation, more this or more that.

In this Sunday's Gospel (Luke 17:5-10), the disciples make this request of Jesus, "Increase our faith."

To understand why those disciples asked for more faith, we need to consider what Jesus told his disciples just before they made that request.

Jesus had taught his disciples that they were not to divorce and remarry. They were to put God before money and possessions. They were to care for the poor at their door. They were to avoid giving scandal. They were to correct a brother or sister who did wrong. They were to forgive anyone who sought their forgiveness, even a person who "wrongs you seven times in one day and returns to you seven times saying, 'I am sorry.'" (Luke 16:18 – 17:4)

In response to such high expectations, the disciples ask Jesus for an increase of faith. Perhaps with more faith, they could do what Jesus asked.

However, rather than granting their request, Jesus tells them, "If you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you would say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you."

Using exaggerated and colorful language, Jesus challenges his disciples to put the faith they already have to work. Even a little faith can do a lot.

Jesus tells us that helping the poor and the sick, living according to Gospel values, striving to be good examples to others, forgiving our enemies, being a faithful spouse and parent, sharing our blessings, being a true Christian, do not start to happen when our faith increases to a certain level. Rather those good things begin to happen when we allow the faith we do have to motivate and direct our lives.

Parents who want to get more involved with their children do not wait until work slows down. No, they consciously decide to take time for their children even if that begins at only an hour a week.

Adult children do not wait until their financial assets increase before they assist their aging parents. They use what they have now to help their mother or father.

And if people waited until their motivation increased before they began to exercise, most people would still be waiting. The smallest motivation can lead to the first few steps that can eventually lead to a daily walk.

We need to use what we have now to get to where we would eventually like to be. That is true in everyday life and it is true in our faith life.

Jesus tells us to put whatever faith we have to work today. Don't wait for an increase of faith, use what you have!

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