

LOOKING TO SUNDAY®

Sunday, October 4, 2015

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.

MORE POWERFUL WORDS

Words are powerful things. Words can bring us joy and happiness, but they can also bring us sorrow and pain. Words can encourage us and fill us with hope, but they can also cause us to become depressed and despairing. Words can comfort and reassure us in times of trouble, but they can also challenge us and make us uncomfortable.

Words are powerful things and their power can increase depending on when we hear them. For example, the words "I love you, Mom" so freely spoken on Mother's Day, have greater power and meaning when they come from a teenager for seemingly no reason at all.

That is equally true when it comes to the words found in the scriptures. Their power increases depending upon when we hear them. Jesus' words, "Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28), have greater power if we hear them when we feel discouraged and defeated in life rather than when all is going well.

This Sunday's Gospel (Mark 10:2-16) is all the more powerful for it comes on the day that marks the opening of the Synod of Bishops on the Family. Catholic bishops from across the world will meet in Rome from October 4 to October 25 to discuss issues facing families in today's changing and increasingly secular society. Topics will include the sacrament of marriage, the indissolubility of the marriage, divorce and re-marriage, same sex unions, family life, the faith formation of children, the impact of poverty and migration on families, etc.

In this Sunday's Gospel, Jesus speaks words related to the Synod. Jesus speaks of God's original plan for marriage; he speaks of marriage as a union of a man and a woman, he says, "what God has joined together, no human being must separate." Jesus then goes on to speak of the special place of children in his eyes. "Let the children come to me; do not prevent them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these."

As the bishops gather to prayerfully reflect on the role of the family and the challenges that families face, Jesus speaks words that remind us of the ideal that God continues to set before us all.

Sunday's Gospel, which was assigned to be read on this particular date some 50 years ago, comes at a time that makes its words especially significant.

Words are often more powerful because of when we hear them, and that is particularly true when it comes to the words of God!

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