

# **LOOKING TO SUNDAY®**

**Sunday, October 11, 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.

## **LIKE THE RICH MAN**

"Go, sell what you have, and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me." Those are the challenging words that Jesus speaks to the rich man in this Sunday's Gospel (Mark 10:17-30).

When the man heard those words, we are told, "At that statement his face fell, and he went away sad, for he had many possessions."

If we are honest with ourselves, most of us would do exactly what the rich man did. We would shake our heads and walk away. We would not be able to just sell everything we possessed and give all the proceeds to the poor.

In fact, if we did so, our relatives and friends might think we were losing our minds or perhaps they might suppose we had a terminal illness and were preparing to leave this world.

Also, if we did what Jesus asked of the rich man, the poor would certainly benefit by our charity but who would care for us and for our families? How would we pay for our food, clothing, shelter, health care, education, and transportation? Would our charity lead us to the welfare office?

Even religious brothers and sisters who take a vow of poverty and rid themselves of their possessions do so knowing that their religious order has the financial resources to care for their personal needs. Even they do not literally follow what Jesus asked of the rich man.

One way to apply this Gospel to our own personal lives is to realize that the rich man was a good person. He was striving to keep all the commandments of God, so much so that we are told that "Jesus, looking at him, loved him."

It was in response to the question the rich man asked him, "Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" that Jesus challenged the man to sell what he had, give to the poor, and to follow him. The man was asking about the next step he should take in his spiritual life.

Jesus was well aware of what that particular man needed to do. Jesus knew what was holding him back. It was his money and possessions. They were the things that the rich man needed to let go of if he was to progress in his relationship with God.

We who hear this Sunday's Gospel are like the rich man. Like him we are striving to keep the commandments of God. If we were not, we would not be part of God's Church, we would not be reading the scriptures, we would not be coming to Mass.

But each of us still has further to go in our spiritual journey. We have behaviors, possessions, attitudes, even relationships that may be holding us back from taking the next step in our spiritual lives.

This Sunday's Gospel challenges us to consider what Jesus might say to us if we were brave enough to ask him, "Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

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