

LOOKING TO SUNDAY®
Sunday, October 29, 2017
The Thirtieth 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

A QUESTION

Town Hall Meetings have become very popular. During such meetings public figures interact with citizens. There is usually a short presentation by the government official, candidate, or public figure. Then the major part of the meeting is devoted to that individual responding to questions posed by members of the audience.

Such town hall meetings are not restricted to political issues, even bishops and pastors have started to convene such meetings to listen to the questions and concerns of parish members.

Town hall meetings are an effective way for those in charge to open lines of communication and to become aware of the concerns of those they serve.

Imagine for a moment, that Jesus held a town hall meeting and he invited you to be part of the audience. When it was your turn to come forward, what would your question be? Would you ask about death, heaven, unanswered prayers, the future of your children?

Throughout the Gospels, we have people coming up to Jesus with their questions. In last Sunday's Gospel, someone asked Jesus about paying taxes to Rome. In this Sunday's Gospel (Matthew 22:34-40), an expert in Jewish religious law asks, "Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?" Of all that God wants us to do, what is most important? A great question!

Without hesitation, Jesus responds, "You shall love the Lord, your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." Then he adds, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

In his answer, Jesus makes it clear that love of God is not a matter of feelings. After all, feelings change with our moods and with what is happening in our personal lives.

The love we are to have for God is a matter heart, mind, and soul. While we think of "heart" in terms of affection, in the scriptures the heart is the center of will, character, and conscience. Loving God is about deciding to put God first in our lives and to make our will conform to his will.

When we have that kind of love for God, we can more easily love ourselves and our neighbor. For our relationship with God brings us to see ourselves and our neighbor as wonderful creations of God. Made in God's image and likeness, we and our neighbor are worthy of respect and care. A decision for God leads us to a decision to choose what is good for ourselves and our neighbor.

In this Sunday's Gospel, Jesus answers a key question – a question worthy of any town hall meeting. "What is the most important thing I need to do in my life?"