

LOOKING TO SUNDAY®

Sunday, November 12, 2017

The Thirty-Second 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

REMEMBER THE FORECAST

It is the responsibility of weather forecasters to report the current conditions and more importantly to inform the public about the coming weather. Those meteorologists tell us what to expect tomorrow, the next day, and even seven to ten days ahead. They are not always accurate but most days what they predict does happen.

However, if those weather forecasters were always wrong, if the kind of weather they predicted never came about, we would soon stop believing their reports.

There is an organization that has been predicting a future event far more important than the coming weather. The Church has been forecasting the glorious Second Coming of the Lord. It continues to make that forecast several times during the celebration of every Sunday Mass.

In the Creed we profess that Jesus "will come again in glory."

When we proclaim the mystery of faith we say, "We proclaim your Death, O Lord and profess your Resurrection until you come again."

In the third Eucharistic Prayer the priest prays, "as we look forward to his second coming we offer you in thanksgiving this holy and living sacrifice."

Then in the prayer following the Our Father the priest asks that we may be kept safe "as we await the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ."

But that second coming, continually forecast by the Church for almost 2,000 years, has not taken place.

This Sunday's readings address why that forecast has not yet come about and why that forecast should still be taken to heart.

In the Gospel (Matthew 25: 1-13), Jesus tells a parable about ten virgins waiting to welcome the bridegroom. Rather than coming at the expected time, he comes at midnight when those awaiting his arrival have fallen asleep. Only five of those virgins are prepared for that late arrival. They are ready to welcome him with oil-filled lighted lamps.

Jesus tells that parable to warn us to be ready even if he should return much later than we might expect.

Then in our Second Reading (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18), Paul assures the Christians at Thessalonica who expected the Lord's return to occur within their own lifetimes, not to worry about those who are dying. All the faithful, living and dead, will be caught up in glory when the Lord returns.

The Lord's Second Coming, the arrival of the divine bridegroom to use the image of the Gospel, continues to be forecast by the Church. When it will happen only God knows.

But we are to live with that forecast in mind. If we do, what a positive change there will be in our priorities, in our attitude, in our use of time, and in our behavior.

Imagine if all believers lived that way, what an amazing change there would be in our world.

The Church is forecasting the Lord's return. We are to live as if that forecast were meant for today!

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