

LOOKING TO SUNDAY®

Sunday, November 16, 2025

The Thirty-Third 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.

Looking to Sunday has been published for more than sixteen years.

ABOUT NOW

In this Sunday's Gospel (Luke 21:5-19), Jesus warns those admiring the splendor of the Temple in Jerusalem that a time would come "when there will not be left a stone upon another stone that will not be thrown down."

Jesus then goes on to predict future disasters that will signal the end of time. He speaks of earthquakes, famines, plagues, wars, insurrections, unexplained signs in the sky, religious persecutions, societal confusion, and other human and natural disasters.

The destruction of the Temple that Jesus predicted happened in 70 AD when Roman armies put down a Jewish revolt, razed Jerusalem and destroyed the Temple.

The other calamities mentioned by Jesus have also occurred. For example, wars have ravaged and destroyed countries and civilizations and brought nations into worldwide conflict.

Diseases, plagues, famines, and natural disasters have caused the deaths of hundreds of millions of people over the years.

Social unrest, political rivalries, and revolutions have disrupted societies and polarized populations.

The rejection of established norms and moral standards has led to increasing corruption, crime, violence, and the breakdown of the family.

Escalating secularism, atheism, and the denial of anything beyond the material have incited a growing persecution of Christians and a rejection of the Gospel.

Hateful political ideologies, nuclear proliferation, high-tech weapons, and the spread of Artificial Intelligence, threaten human existence.

In our own day, we have had to endure the Covid pandemic; been affected by an escalating number of natural disasters; witnessed increasing violence and political polarization; noticed growing levels of addiction, depression, and suicide; and seen the promotion of behavior that would have been condemned by previous generations.

Yet all these happenings, which parallel the events foretold by Jesus, have not ushered in the end of time.

But Jesus was not predicting future events; if he were, then what the prophet Malachi predicted in our First Reading (Malachi 3:19-20a) would have already occurred. The day would have come "blazing like an oven, when all the proud and all evildoers will be stubble...But for you who fear my name, there will arise the sun of justice with its healing rays."

Instead, Jesus is teaching us that no matter what happens in our world, we are to bear witness to the truth of the Gospel and testify to our faith in him. He encourages us to persevere in living as his followers, as he assures us “by your perseverance you will secure your lives.”

Sunday’s Gospel is not about what may happen in the future but about remaining faithful to God in every circumstance. As Jesus shows us by his death and Resurrection, those who remain faithful to God will ultimately prevail. As Jesus poetically puts it “not a hair on your head will be destroyed.”

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