

LOOKING TO SUNDAY®

Sunday, November 23, 2014

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.

IT'S WHO YOU KNOW!

Personal connections are important. In fact, it is often said that who you know is more important than what you know.

Parents, for example, who are acquainted with the respected, generous alumni of a prestigious university, have a better chance of getting their son or daughter accepted into that academic institution than parents without such connections.

An ardent fan, who is determined to meet a famous celebrity, might have that dream fulfilled if that fan has a relative who knows someone who is a member of that star's security detail or who works in that star's home.

A college graduate looking for a position in city government has a good chance of being hired if that person becomes a friend of the campaign manager while working for the mayor's re-election.

Knowing influential, powerful, wealthy, and famous people can make all the difference when it comes to getting ahead in life.

However, the Gospel for this last Sunday of the Liturgical Year of 2014 (Matthew 25:31-46) contradicts that common belief. That reading says that knowing the kind of people that society often dismisses and ignores can benefit us far more.

In Sunday's Gospel, Jesus speaks of the time when the Son of Man will come in all his glory. At that time he will separate those who will advance to a place in the kingdom of heaven from those who will be condemned to eternal punishment.

The people who will be granted a place in the kingdom are those who knew the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the ill and the imprisoned and did what they could to alleviate their suffering and pain. Those who associated with the poor and the powerless were associating with Jesus himself, the one we honor this Sunday as the King of the Universe. As Jesus says, "Whatever you did for one of the least brothers of mine you did for me."

The individuals who did nothing for the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the ill, and the imprisoned, will not have those people to speak on their behalf. Furthermore, in ignoring those people without influence and powerful connections, they were ignoring the Lord himself. "Amen, I say to you, what you did not do for one of these least ones, you did not do for me."

Sunday's Gospel dramatically proclaims that the people we think can do nothing for us are precisely the ones who can do the most in the long run. They are the people it truly pays to know!