

LOOKING TO SUNDAY®

Sunday, November 30, 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.

WATCH OUT! BE ALERT!

*You better watch out
You better not cry
You better not pout
I'm telling you why
Santa Claus is coming to town.....
So be good for goodness sake
Santa Claus is coming to town*

That is what children are told in the song *Santa Claus Is Coming To Town*. Children take those words to heart because they are certain that Santa Claus is coming. After all, they have seen evidence that he came in the past.

They have found gifts under the Christmas tree. They have discovered only crumbs on the plate where they put cookies for Santa on Christmas Eve. And some children have even claimed to have seen boot prints and hoof prints in the snow.

In this Sunday's Gospel (Mark 13:33-37) for the First Sunday of Advent and for the start of this new Liturgical Year of 2015, Jesus tells us, "Be watchful! Be alert!" Be ready for the coming of the Son of Man.

Yet even after hearing those words, most children and most adults will be far more prepared for Christmas and for Santa than they will be for the coming of the Son of Man.

Yet that lack of preparation is understandable. During the past 2,000 years some 80 generations of Christians have lived and died and heard the words of Jesus about being watchful and alert for his coming and nothing has happened.

Children would certainly give up waiting for Santa if they never saw evidence that he came, and so "older children" may do the same when it comes to waiting for the Son of Man to return in glory.

At the start of this Advent Season Jesus tells us once more to be watchful and ready for the coming of the Son of Man and the coming of God's kingdom.

Perhaps we would take that advice more to heart if we realized that the Son of Man has been coming into our world as he promised. We may be missing his coming because we expect it to take place in a stupendous, awesome way as described in some passages of scripture.

While that certainly can happen, perhaps we need to consider that the Son of Man may come in a less dramatic way. After all, when Jesus first came at Bethlehem he came so quietly that most of the world was unaware of his arrival.

It may be that the coming of the Son of Man happens in small ways that one day will add up to something wonderful, the Second Coming of the Lord.

A glass can be rapidly filled with water in a few seconds, but it can be also be filled one barely noticed drop at a time. In both cases, the glass is filled. So it may be with the coming of the Son of Man. He comes in small ways that may be missed by those who are not alert.

The Son of Man and his kingdom may come when we experience an unexpected act of kindness from a stranger; when friends stand by us when we are overwhelmed by a personal tragedy; when a pope washes the feet of prisoners and proclaims mercy over law; when nations come together to help a country devastated by a natural disaster; when oppressed people rally for justice and freedom; when the hungry are fed, the homeless are sheltered, and the powerless are respected; and when peace breaks out in a place that has known only violence and war.

When such things happen, goodness triumphs over evil, light dispels the darkness, and the Son of Man and his kingdom come a little more into our world.

This Advent Season we are told once again, "Be watchful! Be alert!" Don't miss the evidence that the coming of Son of Man is a present reality and not just a future hope.

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