

LOOKING TO SUNDAY®

Sunday, December 9, 2018

The Second Sunday of Advent

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.

WHEN & WHERE

When we watch a film or read a book that is said to be based on actual events, we need to know when and where those events took place.

Occasionally, the time and place are revealed in the very title of the book or film. For example, the movie "Pearl Harbor" is obviously set in Hawaii during December of 1941, while the film "Gettysburg" takes place in Pennsylvania during the Civil War.

Sometimes the title gives no indication of the setting. Instead a date and a location flash on the screen as a film begins or that information is found within the first pages of a book.

We can also learn the time and place by watching or reading descriptions of the scenery, the clothing, the modes of transportation, the mannerisms, and the style of speech. Obviously, men wearing top hats and women riding in carriages speak of 19th Century England, while polyester clothing and disco music bring to mind Manhattan in the 1970s.

Knowing the time and place helps us to understand and appreciate a story.

In this Sunday's Gospel (Luke 3:1-6), Saint Luke begins his account of John the Baptist by giving us the time and place of his ministry.

Luke tells us the names of those holding power and the names of those serving as high priests. That information lets us know that the ministry of John the Baptist began around the year 28 AD. Besides giving us the time, Luke gives us the place. He tells us, "John went throughout the whole region of the Jordan."

Luke gives us those details to make it clear that he is telling us about a real person, actual places, and true events. He describes how God acted in the life of John the Baptist.

The other Gospel passages associated with Advent show us how God acted in the life of Joseph the Carpenter and the life of Mary of Nazareth to prepare the way for his Son.

In knowing the time and place we can better appreciate the story of salvation, we can better appreciate how God acted in the lives of people.

This Advent Season would be an appropriate time for each of us to look at our own lives and to identify the times and the places where God has touched us. And God most certainly has, otherwise we would not be people of faith.

The God, whose coming was announced by John the Baptist and who will come again in glory, continues to come to his people. To appreciate that continuing "advent" of God, we need to recognize the times and places where God has touched us. Knowing those details will help us to better understand the story of God's personal relationship with us.

