

LOOKING TO SUNDAY®

Sunday, December 28, 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.

CREATING THE CULTURE

It's said that every organization takes on the culture or personality of its leadership.

If a large company were run by executives only interested in making money, unconcerned with the welfare of their employees, and more than willing to cross the line if it would increase their bottom line, then it would not be surprising if the employees of such a business did not care about their customers and were less than motivated and honest.

On the other hand, if company executives realized the long term value of good customer relations and honest dealings, and appreciated their employees and showed that appreciation by the way they treated and compensated their workers, then it would not be unexpected if their employees had a positive, friendly, and helpful attitude at work.

The way upper management acts influences the behavior of those they supervise.

That is also true in families. Parents set the values and culture of their families.

If the driving goal of parents is to be financially successful, their children will tend to judge others according to material wealth and value money over relationships.

If parents are into sports, it would not be astonishing to find their children very competitive and playing every sport in town.

If parents are abusing drugs and alcohol and have no regard for their health, then discovering that their children are smoking and drinking and popping pills would not be a shock.

This Sunday we celebrate the Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. A family that was holy because Mary and Joseph were observant Jews who were obedient to the laws of God and the demands of their faith. We see that in Sunday's Gospel (Luke 2:22-40) when Mary and Joseph take the child Jesus to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord. There they fulfilled "all the prescriptions of the law of the Lord."

Mary and Joseph made obedience and faithfulness to God and his commands their first priority. Because of the culture they created in their home, Jesus "grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him."

If families today are to be holy places where love of God and love of neighbor are lived out, it will only happen if parents set the tone. Parents need to create a culture in their home that puts God first and not money, sports, pleasure, or celebrity.

If families are to be holy, parents need to create a culture of holiness. Holy parents – holy children – holy families. Or to put it very simply, the apple does not fall far from the tree!

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Best Wishes for a Joyful Christmas Season!