

LOOKING TO SUNDAY®

Sunday, January 1, 2012

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.

THREE WORD ADVICE

Stop, look, listen!

Ready, set, go!

Stop, drop, roll!

We all have heard those words of advice.

If we cross a road or railroad track, we are warned to come to a stop, to carefully look both ways, to listen for any oncoming traffic or warning sounds, and only then to proceed.

If we are in a competitive game, we are told to get ready, to set our body in the correct position, and then go. Run the race. Play the game.

If we are in a situation where our clothing has caught fire, we are taught not to run in panic, but to come to a complete stop, drop to the ground, and then roll in order to smother the flames.

All good advice, that comes in just three words.

This Sunday, January 1, is the Solemnity of Mary the Mother of God. It is also the start of the New Year of 2012. The Gospel for Sunday (Luke 2:16-21) offers us advice that could be summarized in three words. Follow, share, reflect!

In that Gospel we learn how the shepherds followed the instructions given them by the angels. They "went in haste to Bethlehem and found Mary and Joseph and the infant lying in the manger." The shepherds then shared the good news of the Savior's birth with others and "all who heard it were amazed." While all this was happening, Mary "kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart."

Like the shepherds, we are to follow the advice and words of instruction that we receive, not from angelic messengers, but from the scriptures and the teachings of the Church.

Like those shepherds, we are to share with others the amazing news of God's love revealed in Jesus Christ and to let people know of the joy and peace we find in our relationship with Him and His Church.

Like Mary, we are to reflect on what is happening in our personal life and in our world, for it is by taking time to stop and reflect that we recognize the action and presence of God.

Follow, share, reflect! Those three words offer good advice for this New Year. If we heed that advice, we will truly have a Happy New Year. A year in which we grow in our relationship with the Lord!

Best Wishes for a New Year filled with God's Blessings!