

LOOKING TO SUNDAY®

Sunday, February 24, 2013

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.

SELECTIVE DEAFNESS

There are people who are deaf, who are unable to hear the voices of those around them.

There are also people who are selectively deaf. They hear what they want, and they are deaf to those words they prefer not to hear or that make them uncomfortable.

A mother might tell her teenage son that he can go out with his friends Saturday night as long as he completes his chores Saturday afternoon. The boy hears he can go out with his friends and conveniently misses the other part of his mother's reply.

A man is told by his doctor that his cholesterol number of 310 is much too high, but the rest of his blood test results look good. The man goes home and tells his wife that all is fine. The man only hears and reports the positive news from the doctor.

Selective deafness is something that affects most of us. We tend to listen to news programs that fit our political point of view and tune out the rest. We seek the opinion of people who usually affirm and praise us, and we close our ears to those who tend to be critical.

In this Sunday's Gospel (Luke 9:28-36), Jesus, who had been speaking of his approaching suffering and death and of his disciples need to embrace the cross, is transfigured in glory before Peter, James, and John.

In that moment of glory, Jesus is seen speaking to Moses, who represents the law of God, and to Elijah, who represents God's message proclaimed by the prophets. God's voice is then heard saying, "This is my chosen Son, listen to him." Jesus is then seen standing alone. He is the one who now embodies the message of the law and the prophets. He is the Son who speaks the message of God. He alone is the one to whom we are to listen.

Yet often we are selectively deaf to the words that Jesus speaks to us through the scriptures and through his Church. We willingly hear his words about God's love, care, and compassion, and about God's willingness to forgive our sins.

Yet we tend to be deaf when it comes to his words about loving our enemies, putting God's will before our own, sharing our wealth with those in need, recognizing the strangers among us as fellow children of God, proclaiming our faith in a world that worships materialism and power, making time for prayer and worship, confronting our sinfulness, etc.

We willingly hear the words of Jesus that fit our lifestyle and affirm the values we have chosen for ourselves and we tend to be selectively deaf to those that challenge and confront us.

In our selective deafness God says, "This is my chosen Son, listen to him." Listen to ALL he has to say!