

LOOKING TO SUNDAY®

Sunday, May 8, 2011

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.

THE NEXT SUPPER

The Last Supper. Those words bring to mind the meal that Jesus shared with his Apostles before his crucifixion and death. As Saint Paul wrote "the Lord Jesus, on the night he was handed over, took bread, and, after he had given thanks, broke it and said, 'This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.' In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.'" (1 Corinthians 11:22-25)

Those words might also bring to mind the famous painting by Leonardo da Vinci that depicts the stunned reactions of the Apostles when they are told by Jesus that one of the twelve would betray him.

Whatever the case, those words certainly convey the idea that the Last Supper was the final meal that Jesus shared with his disciples. However, that was not the case. In this Sunday's Gospel (Luke 24:13-35), we read of the next supper.

That supper took place on Easter Sunday afternoon. Two disciples, dejected and disillusioned after the death of Jesus, were making their way from Jerusalem back home to Emmaus. As they walked along, the Risen Lord, whom they failed to recognize, joined them and gradually helped them to understand those scripture passages that foretold that the Messiah, "the Christ should suffer."

As the daylight faded, the two disciples invited their new companion to join them for supper. While "he was with them at table, he took the bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them." Jesus performed the very same actions as he did at the Last Supper. With that, those two disciples recognized their companion as their Risen Lord.

That next supper that took place on the road to Emmaus was only the start of millions of such suppers down through the ages. Since then the followers of Jesus Christ have gathered Sunday after Sunday to listen to the scriptures that refer to him. And they have gathered at a table where once again, they have recognized his presence in the breaking of the bread.

The Last Supper was the final one before the Resurrection, since then there have been an endless series of suppers where the Risen Lord has joined his followers around a table. That will continue until Christ comes again in glory. Until then, there will always be a next supper.

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