

LOOKING TO SUNDAY®

Sixth Sunday of Easter, May 21, 2017

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.

SHOWING LOVE

How do we let our friends know that we love them?

We do that in a variety of ways. We tell them. We spend time with them. We give them gifts on special occasions. We take them out for dinner. We invite them to our homes and introduce them to our relatives and other friends. We come to their aid when they need help. We support them in times of sorrow and celebrate with them in times of joy. We affirm and encourage them. We offer them our wisdom and advice and at times we just listen.

But the best way to show love for a friend is by doing what that person would most appreciate. For example, one of your friends might particularly enjoy receiving cards and gifts, especially at unexpected times. Another friend might welcome invitations to share a home-cooked meal.

As Christians, we are called to love God. We do that in a variety of ways, but perhaps the best way to demonstrate our love for God is by doing what Jesus tells us in this Sunday's Gospel. (John 14: 15-21).

Speaking at the Last Supper, Jesus says to his disciples, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments." A few verses later he says the same thing in a slightly different way, "Whoever has my commandments and observes them is the one who loves me."

In other words, the way Jesus wants us to express our love for him is by our obedience to his commandments. Commandments that were summed up earlier at the Last Supper when Jesus said, "I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another." (John 13:34)

The love that Jesus commands and that he showed his disciples and all those he encountered was not a matter of feelings and sentiments, but rather a matter of action and decision.

Jesus accepted the outcast, welcomed the stranger, forgave the sinner, befriended the lonely, defended the weak, fed the hungry, healed the sick, proclaimed the truth, attacked hypocrisy, took time to pray, read the scriptures, and proclaimed the Good News to all.

What he did, he now commands us to do. If we do as he asks, Jesus tells us that we will be blessed with his presence and with the gift of his Spirit.

While we can do many things to show love for God, the thing God most desires from us is our obedience to his commands. That is what Jesus tells us in this Sunday's Gospel.

"Whoever has my commandments and observes them is the one who loves me. And whoever loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and reveal myself to him."

Keeping the commands of Jesus is the way we show our love for him. It is also the way we make room for the Spirit of God to enter our lives.

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*May the peace and joy of the Risen Lord
be with you during this Easter Season!*

