

LOOKING TO SUNDAY®

Sunday, October 9, 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.

WOULD YOU ACCEPT?

If you received an invitation from the President to join him and his family for Thanksgiving dinner at the White House, would you accept?

If you were phoned by your local bishop and invited by him to fly to Rome to meet the Pope, would you accept?

If you received a certified letter from the owners of the NY Giants, asking you to join them in their luxury box for all the home games at MetLife Stadium, would you accept?

Most of us would gladly accept those invitations. We would feel honored to receive them and thrilled to tell all our relatives and friends about them. Those invitations would announce that we were held in high regard by important people. To say the least, we would feel very special. Presidents, popes, and business leaders do not invite just anyone into their lives.

In this Sunday's Gospel (Matthew 22:1-14), a king invites a number of guests to his son's wedding. Obviously those invited were important in the king's estimation. Otherwise, he would not have invited them to the wedding of the prince. But rather than appreciating the status and honor the king had given them by asking them to the wedding, they refused to come at the appointed time. They even went so far as to disrespect and even kill the messengers the king had sent to remind them of the royal affair.

We are recipients of an invitation from someone far greater than any royal, civil, religious, or business leader. We have been invited by God himself to have a place at his table, to have a relationship with him. That invitation was first issued the day we were baptized and it continues to come to us.

That invitation comes each Sunday, as God invites us to share at the table of Word and Sacrament.

That invitation comes at different moments, as God calls us to love and honor him in the poor, the suffering, the lonely, and the hurting that he sends our way.

That invitation comes as we wake to a new day of life, another invitation from God, to live worthy of the status he has given us as one of his children.

Often we disregard those divine invitations. Perhaps we no longer consider them special since they just keep coming. But each invitation is important, and even more important is the response we make.

Like the king in this Sunday's Gospel, God knows who accepts his invitation and who pushes it aside for something else, or someone else. The wise person recognizes when he or she has received an invitation so extraordinary that only a fool would refuse it!