

LOOKING TO SUNDAY™

Sunday, November 15, 2009

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.

2012

This weekend, the long awaited movie *2012* opens in theaters across the country. The movie depicts a doomsday event as floods, earthquakes, volcanoes, fires, tsunamis, and other disasters destroy the earth. The movie is based on a belief that when the ancient Mayan calendar comes to an end on December 21, 2012, the world will come to an end as well.

Those advertising *2012* would be happy to know that the Gospel reading for this coming Sunday (Mark 13:24-32) fits the theme of the film. The Gospel speaks of a coming time of destruction. "In those days after that tribulation the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from the sky, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken...heaven and earth will pass away."

But a careful look at Sunday's Gospel proclaims that the end of time is not something negative and destructive but something positive. It heralds the coming of the Lord who will send his angels to "gather his elect from the four winds, and from the end of the earth to the end of the sky." The Lord's coming is to be looked for with hope just we look forward to seeing signs of the arrival of summer.

Perhaps the way we picture the end of time and the coming of the Lord depends upon the view we have of God and of ourselves. If we see God as distant, harsh, and judgmental and ourselves as immoral and sinful before God, then we picture the end of time as a disaster. If we see God as a loving Father, who sent his Son to be our Good Shepherd, and we see ourselves as members of his flock, then we picture the end of time that heralds the Lord's coming as something to be welcomed. It's even something for which we pray at every Mass "protect us from all anxiety as we wait in joyful hope for the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ."

Finally, Sunday's Gospel does have a comment about December 21, 2012. "But of that day and hour, no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father." (Mark 13:32)

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