

## Reflection Questions

- What experiences in recovery have given you a chance to practice letting go of the need to control people, places, things, and outcomes?
- What spiritual tools help you accept and adapt to the conditions of the world around you?
- How do you maintain awareness of your attitude?

### Online/Phone Men's Meeting Available

*Meeting for men recovering from pornography and sex addiction*

- *Every Wednesday at 3:00 PM ET/12:00 Noon PT*
- *Join by computer, smartphone, or tablet: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/922967253>*
- *Dial in using your phone: (646) 749-3122*  
*Access code: 922-967-253*
- *Email [info@catholicinrecovery.com](mailto:info@catholicinrecovery.com) with questions*

### Sunday Mass Readings This Week

**1st Reading:** Wisdom 9:13-18b

**Responsorial Psalm:** Ps 90:3-4, 5-6, 12-13, 14, 17

**2nd Reading:** Philemon 9-10, 12-17

**Gospel:** Luke 14:25-33

## 23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time



We often experience suffering as a result of being absolutely sure of how things in our lives ought to go. When things happen differently, our ability to maintain peace and serenity is related to our capacity to *let go*. While active in our addictions and unhealthy attachments, we numbed these feelings by acting out. It helped maintain the illusion of control over people, places, things, and outcomes.

Now that we are attempting to live life on God's terms, we must build a new set of tools in order to deal with the uncomfortable feelings that first arise when we realize just how little control we actually have. We have given up the role of director and seek counsel from a new Employer.

*Letting go* is a rather vague and ambiguous way to describe the act of putting our trust in God. We hear this often in Christian circles and recovery fellowships, and this usually includes delayed gratification—a mindset with which we may lack experience. However, given our limited insight into God's plans for us and the rest of the world, we would be wise to attempt something different.

This week's First Reading explores the challenges we place on ourselves and the freedom that comes with putting our lives in God's care:

*Who can know God's counsel,  
or who can conceive what the LORD intends?  
For the deliberations of mortals are timid,  
and unsure are our plans.  
For the corruptible body burdens the soul  
and the earthen shelter weighs down the mind that  
has many concerns.  
And scarce do we guess the things on earth,  
and what is within our grasp we find with  
difficulty;  
but when things are in heaven, who can search  
them out?  
Or who ever knew your counsel, except you had  
given wisdom  
and sent your holy spirit from on high?  
And thus were the paths of those on earth made  
straight.*

Seeking the will of God is less about burdening ourselves to find all the hidden answers to our concerns, but is rather an opportunity to accept and adapt to conditions around us exactly as they are.

The principle of surrendering, letting go, or turning over our will aligns with our internal movement of ordering our lives around God. He need not be the only thing in our lives, but He must be the first thing. As our relationship with Him grows, we recognize that we become much less attached to our own expectations and perceived needs while gaining eagerness to adapt to the changes we encounter.

"Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple," Jesus declares in this week's Gospel reading before giving two examples that highlight the importance of planning for the long-term. "In the same way, anyone of you who does not renounce all his possessions cannot be my disciple," He adds, this time referring to our attachment to personal expectations and the limited understanding we have of what is truly best for us.

Accepting and adapting to the world around us takes time and practice. Each time we pause, suspend judgment, and ask God for direction, we grow in our capacity to let go. We learn that, perhaps, the one thing we can control is our attitude. Therefore, suffering is inevitable, but misery is optional.