

Reflection Questions

- How do you exercise trust in God through your recovery journey and daily spiritual practices?
- What challenges in your life make it difficult to accept and adapt to the circumstances around you?
- How has your own powerlessness and need for a savior been evident to you within the past week?

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Sunday Mass Readings This Week

1st Reading: Habakkuk 1:2-3; 2:2-4

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 95:1-2, 6-7, 8-9

2nd Reading: 2 Timothy 1:6-8, 13-14

Gospel: Luke 17:5-10

27th Sunday in Ordinary Time



Faith tends to be a misunderstood concept, even among Christians. Faith is not an alternative to science and logical thought, but an attitude of trust in the presence of God. Faith keeps us open to what God can and will do if He were sought with an open mind and heart. Throughout our recovery journey, we are asked to put faith and trust in God doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.

This attitude is formed and grown by working the first three steps of addiction recovery. We admit that our own resources, ideas, and plans were limited. As we relied more and more on our addictive behaviors and unhealthy attachments, our lives became unmanageable. We need to transition out of self-sufficiency and begin to rely on something far greater than ourselves. We put our faith in God, trusting that He will guide, protect, and transform us.

Step 3 invites us to live each day with real faith—not just some mental understanding that God exists and that Jesus loves us. Real faith, per Bishop Robert Barron, "Goes way beyond a vague intellectual ascent. It looks like trust and confidence. It looks like really turning your life over to God." Jesus shares a similar idea with His followers in this week's Gospel Reading:

*The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith."
The Lord replied,
"If you have faith the size of a mustard seed,
you would say to this mulberry tree,
'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would
obey you.*

The above Gospel passage comes immediately after Jesus tells his disciples, "If [your brother] sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times comes back to you and says, 'I repent,' forgive him." Forgiveness for ourselves and others requires grace.

Jesus is describing the amazing things that can happen when we live with confidence in the Power already at work in us. The more we surrender to Him, the greater things can happen. We are merely stewards of the life God has entrusted to us, and we learn that faith and trust are increased the more we exercise them throughout our recovery.

When we, alone, attempt to unbind ourselves from the shackles which enslave us, we tend to further tighten their grip. Anguish appears in the short-term and hope deteriorates over time. Therefore, our program of action is not so much *self help* in nature but better described as a "God, help!" program.

Real faith is necessary for a growing ability to forgive and receive love from God and others. As the Lord's Prayer and 9th step amends remind us, we have needed to be forgiven and are called to extend the same mercy to others. We should keep in mind that we do not claim to be perfect servants of the Lord. Rather, we are trying to make spiritual progress through faith and trust.

Those who have received the Spirit of Jesus are strong, loving, and wise. They reflect the Light of Christ, which attracts others to live by faith. Aided by the honest and humble nature of recovery fellowships, we have the chance to reflect the same Light to others as we walk with a hopeful faith and trust in the Lord as encouraged by this week's Second Reading:

*For God did not give us a spirit of cowardice
but rather of power and love and self-control.
So do not be ashamed of your testimony to our
Lord,
nor of me, a prisoner for his sake;
but bear your share of hardship for the gospel
with the strength that comes from God.*