

3rd Sunday of Ordinary Time



Our focus this week will continue to be on the First Step: admitting we are powerless over lust and sexual compulsions—that our lives had become unmanageable. We have come to a point in our journey where we are called to make a change from the addictive behavior and pursuit of unhealthy sexual attachments that once dictated our lives. Due to the all-consuming nature of our addiction, our solution requires that we be fully committed.

Addiction is cunning, baffling, and powerful. An objective glance at the behavior that got us here should be personal evidence of this claim. Recovery literature introduces our shared solution with the importance of a full commitment:

“Without help it is too much for us. But there is One who has all power—that One is God. May you find Him now!

Half measures availed us nothing. We stood at the turning point. We asked His protection and care with complete abandon" (*Alcoholics Anonymous*, p. 59).

We express our abandonment—or retreat from old actions, behavior, and way of thinking—by honestly uncovering the truth of our condition. Putting specific consequences of our self-centered behavior on paper makes it possible to see our lives from a new set of lenses. We trust that, with the help of God, this will not be an impossible exercise and is a critical part of making spiritual progress.

Self-knowledge can only get us so far. Acknowledging that we have been ruled by lust addiction and sexual compulsions is an important starting point. Beginning work on the First Step of recovery lays a foundation for the spiritual growth that is yet to come. As Catholics, we call this repentance.

Last week, we discussed the importance of accompaniment in this process. We can't do it alone, and sharing our work with a sponsor can be just as important as putting pen to paper. We abandon ourselves to God by putting faith in the experience, strength, and hope of others who attend meetings and value their recovery. We share openly and honestly in meetings and with our sponsors so that the truth may set us free.

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The time is now. Jesus echoes the sentiment of taking action to move away from our old behavior and way of life in this Sunday's Gospel:

*"This is the time of fulfillment.
The kingdom of God is at hand.
Repent, and believe in the gospel."*

The disciples of Jesus were no different than we are: simple individuals focused on their own agendas and obligations. They likely had their own set of concerns, fears, and hang-ups. Things changed when they encountered Christ, as He said to them:

*"Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men."
Then they abandoned their nets and followed him.*

The kingdom of God is at hand. Thanks to the Twelve Steps of addiction recovery, we know exactly what to do when God requests that we repent and believe in the Good News. We seek an individual who has been in our position, ask them to take us through the steps, and begin the process of writing and sharing. Suddenly we'll find that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.

- Describe how a thorough First Step has established a foundation for your recovery and new way of life.

- Recovery literature notes that, "Half measures availed us nothing."
 - What has helped you fully commit yourself to recovery?
 - How do you remain committed?

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- Be inspired by testimonies from CIR participants
- Receive new meeting announcements and community updates
- Find resources and articles overlapping the Twelve Steps and the sacraments
- Participate in this month's survey to help us better serve individuals and families impacted by addiction

Sunday Mass Readings this Week

1st Reading: Jonah 3:1-5, 10

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 25:4-5, 6-7, 8-9

2nd Reading: 1 Corinthians 7:29-31

Gospel: Mark 1:14-20