

Reflection Questions

- When has complacency tempted you in your recovery journey?
- How do Paul's words about righteousness, faith, and gentleness challenge your daily habits?
- What does the story of Lazarus and the rich man teach you about where your priorities need to shift?

Living the Steps Begins October 1

*Join the Catholic in Recovery community
as we journey together through the Twelve Steps*

- Gatherings will take place via Zoom Wednesday mornings at 9:00a ET/6:00a PT for 22 weeks (ending March 11)
- Work through the Twelve Steps of recovery integrating Catholic faith using *The Catholic in Recovery Workbook*
- Small group breakouts based on addiction type and gender
- Visit catholicinrecovery.com/livingthesteps to learn more and register

Sunday Mass Readings This Week

First Reading: Amos 6:1a, 4-7

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 146:7, 8-9, 9-10

Second Reading: 1 Timothy 6:11-16

Gospel: Luke 16:19-31

Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time



The author of the Letter to the Hebrews writes, "The word of God is living and effective, sharper than any two-edged sword, penetrating even between soul and spirit, joints and marrow, and able to discern reflections and thoughts of the heart" (Hebrews 4:12). This is especially true for those of us who have lived with the chaos of addiction in our families. As we commit to our own recovery, God's word pierces our hearts in new ways, helping us recognize where we need healing and where we must let go. The same is true of recovery readings, which often reach us differently depending on the season of life we are in.

This Sunday's first reading opens with a sobering warning: "Woe to the complacent in Zion!" (Amos 6:1). For us, complacency may come when the immediate crisis in our family passes. As life becomes calmer, we may forget how much pain we once carried, slipping back into old habits of control, enabling, or worry. Even when things appear stable, we must remain rooted in prayer and the daily practice of spiritual principles.

Many of us have promised ourselves we would never go back to the fear, loneliness, and isolation that consumed us in the past. Yet we know that our condition includes what some call a “built-in forgetter.” Over time, it can become difficult to recall how heavy the burden of unhealed family dysfunction felt—especially when life gets more comfortable.

Good intentions alone are not enough to sustain peace. That is why we make a daily commitment to live by new principles. In this Sunday’s second reading, Saint Paul exhorts us to, “Pursue righteousness, devotion, faith, love, patience, and gentleness” (1 Timothy 6:11). By offering encouragement to others and sharing our own story of growth, we keep gratitude alive and remember how far we have come.

Seeking comfort is not wrong, but it must be rightly ordered. Our first priority is our spiritual life, which gives us serenity no matter our circumstances. We pray to be reasonably happy in this life and supremely happy with God forever in the next.

Jesus illustrates the dangers of misordered priorities in this Sunday’s Gospel (Luke 16:19–21):

"There was a rich man who dressed in purple garments and fine linen and dined sumptuously each day. And lying at his door was a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, who would gladly have eaten his fill of the scraps that fell from the rich man's table. Dogs even used to come and lick his sores."

As expected, their fates are reversed. Lazarus is comforted in heaven, while the rich man suffers torment (Luke 16:22–23). The rich man begs for another chance, but Abraham reminds him, "If they will not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded if someone should rise from the dead" (Luke 16:31). This story reminds us that recovery is sustained not by comfort or complacency but by gratitude, service, and faithfulness.

For us, this means continuing to practice humility even when life seems easier—staying honest about our need for God, keeping boundaries in place, and showing compassion to others who suffer. Each act of service, each moment of surrender, keeps our recovery alive and our hearts soft before God.