

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). For those of us who grew up in dysfunctional homes, God's word cuts through the lies we once believed about ourselves and exposes the patterns we developed to survive. Recovery readings often have the same effect, reaching us in new ways as we face layers of our past.

This Sunday's first reading warns, "Woe to the complacent in Zion!" (Amos 6:1). For adult children, complacency may show up when we settle for surface-level healing or avoid deeper work. Once life feels manageable, we may be tempted to slip back into denial, ignoring the hidden wounds that still drive our fears and behaviors.

Many of us have faced our own "rock bottoms"—moments when old strategies no longer worked and the pain became too heavy to ignore. Grateful for a second chance, we promised never to go back. Yet we know how easy it is to forget, to minimize the dysfunction of our past, or to return to unhealthy roles when life feels uncertain.

This is why daily commitment is essential. Saint Paul reminds us in this Sunday's second reading: "Pursue righteousness, devotion, faith, love, patience, and gentleness" (1 Timothy 6:11). These virtues become anchors as we learn new ways of relating to ourselves and others. By sharing our stories and listening to the experiences of others, we maintain gratitude for God's healing work and remain devoted to continued growth.

Seeking comfort is not wrong, but if comfort becomes our highest pursuit, we risk losing sight of the deeper healing God offers. True serenity comes when our spiritual life is prioritized above all else. Jesus drives this home in the Gospel parable of the rich man and Lazarus (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."

Lazarus is lifted up, while the rich man suffers torment (Luke 16:22–23). Abraham tells him plainly: "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 parable reminds us that recovery is not about surface appearances or short-term relief but about long-term transformation.

Each day we choose vulnerability over denial, honesty over silence, and faith over fear, we walk a little further from dysfunction and closer to freedom. God calls us to remain awake, vigilant, and willing, so that our lives bear witness to His healing power for generations to come.

Reflection Questions

- What does complacency look like for you as an adult child of a dysfunctional home?
- How can Paul's encouragement to pursue faith, love, patience, and gentleness help you break old patterns?
- What lesson from the story of the rich man and Lazarus challenges you to keep growing in your recovery?

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