

Twenty-ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time



*The Lord is your guardian; the Lord is your shade;
he is beside you at your right hand.
The sun shall not harm you by day,
nor the moon by night.
The Lord will guard you from all evil;
he will guard your life.
The Lord will guard your coming and your going,
both now and forever."*

This Sunday's psalm, Psalm 121, is a song of assurance—an ancient traveler's blessing for protection on a dangerous journey. For those of us recovering from lust addiction, it speaks directly to our spiritual path. We are learning to walk in faith, humility, and trust, knowing that God guards our every step, even when temptation or shame threatens to overtake us.

Recovery literature describes how prayer can sometimes feel out of reach: "All of us, without exception, pass through times when we can pray only with the greatest exertion of will. Occasionally we go even further than this. We are seized with a rebellion so sickening that we simply won't pray" (*Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, p. 105). Those words ring true for anyone who has faced long battles with lust. There are times when we feel too ashamed or unworthy to approach God, or when our prayers seem unanswered.

At such times, we are called to keep praying—not to change God's will but to realign our hearts with it. As Step 11 reminds us, our prayer should be for knowledge of His will and the power to carry it out. Lust thrives in isolation, but faith grows through honesty and connection.

Saint Paul encourages this faithfulness in his letter to Timothy (2 Timothy 3:14–15):

*Remain faithful to what you have learned and believed,
because you know from whom you learned it,
and that from infancy you have known the sacred Scriptures,
which are capable of giving you wisdom for
salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.*

Returning to Scripture and prayer reminds us who we are: God's beloved, not defined by our past. In the book of Exodus, we see a living image of prayerful perseverance (Exodus 17:11–13):

*As long as Moses kept his hands raised up,
Israel had the better of the fight,
but when he let his hands rest,
Amalek had the better of the fight.
Moses' hands, however, grew tired;
so they put a rock in place for him to sit on.
Meanwhile Aaron and Hur supported his hands,
one on one side and one on the other,
so that his hands remained steady till sunset.
And Joshua mowed down Amalek and his people
with the edge of the sword.*

Moses' battle was won through community. When his arms grew tired, others held them up. Recovery works the same way: when temptation drains us, we need fellowship to lift our hearts and prayers to God. Alone, we grow weak. Together, we are strengthened.

Our fight is not against flesh and blood but against the powers of darkness (Ephesians 6:12). Lust is cunning and powerful, but God's grace is greater. When prayer feels distant, we can simply lift our eyes and ask for the willingness to keep seeking Him. God guards our hearts, protects our steps, and restores purity through devotion, not perfection.

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- When has your prayer life felt dry or disconnected, and how have you found your way back to God?
- Who are the “Aarons and Hurs” in your recovery—those who help you lift your hands toward God when you grow tired?
- How does remembering that God guards your life change the way you face temptation?

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First Reading: Exodus 17:8-13

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 121:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8

Second Reading: 2 Timothy 3:14-4:2

Gospel: Luke 18:1-8