

Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time



As we approach the end of the liturgical year, the Church's readings take on a tone of urgency and endurance. The apocalyptic language reminds us that life can feel uncertain, but God's love is constant. These final Sundays before Advent call us to patient faith and perseverance—a message especially fitting for family members affected by addiction.

When a loved one struggles, life often feels out of control. We may fear what tomorrow holds, worry about the future, or try to manage outcomes beyond our reach. Yet, like apocalyptic scripture, our experience of chaos can be transformed by grace. God is at work, even in uncertainty, and He calls us to rest in His faithfulness rather than our own will.

The apocalyptic passages of Scripture are meant to bring comfort to those in distress, not fear. They remind us that God is near to the suffering and that every trial can become a doorway to hope. But if we misinterpret these messages—or the circumstances of our own lives—they can stir anxiety instead of peace. When we dwell too long on what's wrong, we lose sight of what's possible. Recovery teaches us that what we focus on grows: searching for grace reveals grace; searching for fear produces fear.

Saint Paul offers practical guidance in this Sunday's second reading (2 Thessalonians 3:7-12):

*We wanted to present ourselves as a model for you,
so that you might imitate us.
In fact, when we were with you,
we instructed you that if anyone was unwilling to
work,
neither should that one eat.
We hear that some are conducting themselves among
you in a disorderly way,
by not keeping busy but minding the business of
others.
Such people we instruct and urge in the Lord Jesus
Christ to work quietly and to eat their own food.*

Paul reminds us that true peace comes from focusing on our own responsibilities and spiritual growth rather than trying to fix others. For family members, this may mean practicing detachment, praying instead of controlling, and letting God guide our loved ones in His time.

The same principle applies in recovery. Our serenity depends on doing our part—daily prayer, self-care, fellowship, and service—and trusting God with the rest. When we stay grounded in our own work and resist the temptation to micromanage others, we discover a calm strength that no chaos can shake.

God's Kingdom grows quietly within us as we practice humility, patience, and love. By tending to our inner lives, we help create an atmosphere of peace where healing can happen. One day at a time, we learn that endurance is not passive waiting—it's active faith in the God who is making all things new.

Reflection Questions

- How do you practice patient trust in God when your loved one's recovery or choices feel out of your control?
- What helps you focus on your own spiritual work rather than “minding the business of others”?
- How have you experienced God's peace through quiet, consistent action in your recovery?

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Sunday Mass Readings this Week

First Reading: Malachi 3:19-20a

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 98:5-6, 7-8, 9

Second Reading: 2 Thessalonians 3:7-12

Gospel: Luke 21:5-19