

Recovery from lust addiction often begins when we realize how far we drifted from the present moment. Many of us lived in a cycle of anticipation, fantasy, and regret. We chased the promise of relief while avoiding the deeper loneliness, fear, or stress that drove our behaviors. The result was a life divided between what we presented publicly and what we carried in secret.

Learning to live one day at a time helps bring our lives back together. Instead of trying to manage every temptation that might appear in the future, we focus on the grace available in this moment. Recovery becomes less about controlling everything and more about remaining honest, connected, and spiritually awake today.

Lent invites us to examine what we have been relying on for life. Lust addiction often convinces us that certain images, fantasies, or encounters will finally satisfy our deepest longings. Yet those experiences rarely bring lasting peace. Instead, they can leave us feeling more isolated and spiritually empty.

Saint Paul speaks about the difference between living according to the flesh and living according to the Spirit in this Sunday's second reading (Romans 8:8-11):

*Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh; on the contrary, you are in the spirit, if only the Spirit of God dwells in you. Whoever does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is alive because of righteousness. If the Spirit of the one who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, the one who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also, through his Spirit dwelling in you.*

For those recovering from lust addiction, life in the flesh often means allowing desire to rule our decisions. We may have treated people as objects rather than persons created in God's image. Over time, that distortion damages our relationships and our sense of dignity.

Many of us reached a point where we felt spiritually lifeless. Shame convinced us that lasting change was impossible. Yet the gospel story of Lazarus reveals that Jesus has authority even over death itself.

Standing before the tomb, Jesus calls Lazarus back to life (John 11:43-44):

*He cried out in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" The dead man came out, tied hand and foot with burial bands, and his face was wrapped in a cloth. So Jesus said to them, "Untie him and let him go."*

Recovery can feel very similar to this moment. Christ calls us out of the secrecy and isolation where addiction thrives. Yet the process of being "untied" often happens through the help of others. Sponsors, accountability partners, therapists, spiritual directors, and recovery groups help remove the habits and lies that once kept us bound.

As beloved children of God, we are learning a new way of seeing ourselves and others. The Steps guide us toward honesty, humility, and connection. The sacraments strengthen us when temptation feels overwhelming. Over time, our hearts begin to heal.

Living one day at a time keeps us grounded in that healing. Yesterday's failures do not define us, and tomorrow's temptations have not yet arrived. Today we can choose

honesty. Today we can reach out for support. Today we can ask God for the grace to live in the light.

Christ continues to call each of us by name. As we follow Him out of the tomb, we discover that real freedom grows through community, accountability, and trust in God.

## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- When have you noticed how living in secrecy or fantasy pulled you away from the present moment?  
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- What practices help you remain honest and connected when temptation begins to grow?  
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- How are you experiencing Christ inviting you to step further into the light today?  
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## MASS READINGS

**FIRST READING** Ezekiel 37:12-14

**RESP. PS.** Psalm 130:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8

**SECOND READING** Romans 8:8-11

**GOSPEL** John 11:1-45

