

PALM SUNDAY OF THE LORD'S PASSION

Palm Sunday begins with celebration and quickly moves into the story of Jesus' suffering and betrayal. The same crowds who shouted praise soon fall silent as Christ is condemned and led toward the cross. This dramatic shift reveals something about the human heart that many people in recovery recognize.

Addiction to lust and sexual compulsions often involved similar swings between excitement and emptiness. Moments of temptation or fantasy might have promised relief or satisfaction. Yet the aftermath frequently brought shame, isolation, and regret. Over time this cycle left many of us spiritually drained and disconnected from the people we cared about most.

Palm Sunday invites us to walk with Jesus through the Passion narrative and to reflect on our own patterns of weakness. The gospel shows how quickly even devoted disciples struggled to remain faithful. Peter confidently promises loyalty, yet later denies knowing Jesus when fear overtakes him.

For those recovering from lust addiction, these moments can feel familiar. We may remember times when we sincerely intended to change but still returned to behaviors we knew were harming us. The gap between our intentions and our actions often filled us with shame.

In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus reveals a path that leads out of that cycle. Knowing the suffering that awaits Him, He turns to the Father in prayer (Matthew 26:39):

He advanced a little and fell prostrate in prayer, saying, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet, not as I will, but as you will."

Jesus expresses the full weight of His struggle while ultimately surrendering to the Father's will. For those recovering from lust addiction, this kind of surrender becomes an essential turning point. We acknowledge that willpower alone cannot free us from deeply rooted patterns. Instead, we place our trust in God and invite others to support us in our recovery.

Step One calls us to admit our powerlessness over lust. Steps Two and Three invite us to believe that God can restore us to wholeness and to entrust our lives to His care. Through prayer, accountability, and honest relationships, we begin replacing secrecy with connection.

Shame often tells us that we are beyond redemption. Yet the Passion story reminds us that Christ willingly walks toward the cross out of love for us. His sacrifice reveals that no part of our past is too broken for God's mercy.

As beloved children of God, we are learning a new way of living. We begin to see others not as objects for gratification but as persons created in God's image. This transformation unfolds gradually through daily recovery practices such as meetings, sponsorship, and participation in the sacramental life of the Church.

Palm Sunday reminds us that the road to resurrection passes through surrender. The painful truths we once tried to avoid become places where healing begins. As we bring our struggles into the light, we discover that freedom grows through honesty, humility, and community.

Christ continues to call each of us forward. When we respond to that call, we step out of secrecy and into the light of God's grace.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- When have you noticed the cycle of excitement and shame that once shaped your struggle with lust addiction and sexual compulsions?

- What does surrendering your will to God look like in moments of temptation or loneliness?

- How are you experiencing growth in honesty and connection in your recovery today?

MASS READINGS

PALMS PROCESSION Matthew 21:1-11

FIRST READING Isaiah 50:4-7

RESP. PS. Psalm 22:8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24

SECOND READING Philippians 2:6-11

GOSPEL Matthew 26:14—27:66

