

SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Many of us who grew up in dysfunctional or chaotic environments learned early on that we could not trust others to meet our needs or help us feel safe. We often carried that belief into adulthood, along with behaviors that once served to protect us but now hold us back from emotional and spiritual growth. As adult children, we seek recovery to heal our relationship with ourselves, with others, and with God.

The Twelve Steps offer a path toward this healing. Step One invites us to recognize how our attempts to control or manage life have become exhausting and ineffective. We may have taken on roles like the hero, the scapegoat, the invisible one, or the caretaker—often losing touch with our true selves in the process. When we finally admit our powerlessness over these patterns, we open the door to God’s healing presence.

This Sunday’s gospel reading (John 1:29-34) presents a powerful moment of spiritual recognition. John the Baptist, sent to prepare the way for Christ, sees Jesus approaching and declares:

John the Baptist saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. He is the one of whom I said, ‘A man is coming after me who ranks ahead of me because he existed before me.’ I did not know him, but the reason why I came baptizing with water was that he might be made known to Israel.” John testified further, saying, “I saw the Spirit come down like a dove from heaven and remain upon him.”

John recognizes what is most important—not his own role or importance, but the presence of the one who can truly

heal and restore. His humility and clarity speak to a deeper truth: we need someone greater than ourselves to lead us to peace.

As adult children, we often struggle with trust. But we are not asked to recover alone. Just as John pointed others toward Christ, God places people in our lives who can help us grow spiritually and emotionally. These might include therapists, sponsors, mentors, or friends in recovery who offer experience, strength, and hope. They are not perfect—but they help reveal the One who is.

Saint Francis de Sales, in *Introduction to the Devout Life*, describes this kind of sacred relationship as one that “must be strong and sweet, altogether holy, sacred, divine, and spiritual.” He encourages us to “have the greatest confidence in [a spiritual companion], mingled with a holy reverence, yet so that the reverence diminish not your confidence, nor your confidence hinder in any way your reverence... confide in him with the respect of a daughter for her father and respect him with the confidence of a son in his mother” (Part I, Chapter 4).

Healing comes when we allow God to work through others and when we allow ourselves to be seen—not through a false self, but with honesty and humility. The people who walk with us in recovery help us unlearn old patterns and open ourselves to new ways of being.

As we begin this new stretch of Ordinary Time, we’re invited to examine how we’re beginning again. We may not have grown up in environments where love was expressed clearly or where trust was safe. But through

God’s grace, and by walking this path of recovery with others, we begin to learn how to live differently.

Jesus, the Lamb of God, offers not just forgiveness but transformation. He takes away our shame, confusion, and fear. In its place, He gives identity, peace, and belonging. Step by step, we are becoming the beloved children of a loving Father.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- How has your experience as an adult child shaped the way you view trust, authority, or vulnerability?
- Who in your life has helped point you toward the healing presence of Christ?
- What patterns or roles from childhood are you beginning to release through recovery?

MASS READINGS

FIRST READING Isaiah 60:1-6

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Psalm 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-11, 12-13

SECOND READING Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6

GOSPEL Matthew 2:1-12