

SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

As we step into a new year, many of us take stock of where we've been and where we're headed. For those affected by a loved one's addiction, compulsion, or unhealthy attachment, this is an opportunity to root ourselves more deeply in a spiritual path of surrender, support, and peace. The Twelve Steps offer us an interior posture of humility and honesty as we admit that we are powerless over others and that our lives had become unmanageable.

This process invites us to stop trying to control outcomes or manage someone else's recovery. We begin to shift from anxious doing to patient being—from reacting to surrendering. The Twelve Steps and the sacramental life of the Church give us a structure of hope when chaos, fear, and uncertainty have overwhelmed us. Our journey, like the Church year, begins anew with a return to what matters most: the healing love of God.

The gospel reading this Sunday (John 1:29-34) shows John the Baptist recognizing Jesus for who He truly is:

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."

Like John, we are invited to "behold" the Lord—often not in dramatic moments, but in the quiet ways God reveals Himself through recovery, prayer, and the community

of faith. Many of us come to believe not all at once, but through small moments of clarity that build trust over time. We may begin with a simple willingness to see things differently.

We do not need to figure this out alone. One of the great gifts of recovery is spiritual accompaniment—meeting with someone who can listen without judgment, share their experience, and gently guide us as we seek a healthier way of living. That person is not a savior, but like John the Baptist, someone who points us toward Christ.

In *Introduction to the Devout Life*, Saint Francis de Sales describes such a 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).

As we walk this journey, we are shaped by those who help us grow and by those we accompany. Our community of recovery becomes a reflection of Christ's body—interdependent, compassionate, and unified in grace. When we share honestly, listen humbly, and practice patience with others and ourselves, we make space for God to work.

In the year ahead, we can ask: How is the Holy Spirit leading me? Who might I walk alongside, and who might I ask to walk with me? The more we surrender our need for

control and open ourselves to grace, the more clearly we can behold the Lamb of God—and trust Him to lead our families to peace.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- How have you experienced surrender in relation to your loved one's recovery?

- Who are the spiritual companions in your life, and how have they helped you grow in trust?

- In what ways are you being invited to walk alongside someone else this year?

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