

# SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Recovery from lust addiction often begins with a strong focus on behavior. We track sobriety, avoid obvious triggers, and build safeguards to protect ourselves from acting out. These practices are necessary and life-giving. Yet many of us eventually discover that long-term healing requires more than behavioral restraint. It calls for transformation at the level of desire, intention, and truth.

This Sunday's gospel reading speaks directly to that deeper work. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus does not reduce sin to outward actions alone. He addresses what happens within the heart, where distorted desires often take shape long before behavior follows (Matthew 5:17, 21-22):

*Jesus said to his disciples: "Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I have come not to abolish but to fulfill... You have heard that it was said to your ancestors, You shall not kill; and whoever kills will be liable to judgement. But I say to you, whoever is angry with his brother will be liable to judgement."*

For those recovering from lust addiction, these words can feel confronting. Many of us already carry shame around our struggles, and we may fear that focusing on the heart only adds to that burden. Yet Jesus is not exposing us to condemn us. He is naming the place where true healing must occur. Addiction thrives on secrecy, fantasy, and compartmentalization. Freedom begins when we allow God into those hidden spaces.

Step One invites us to admit powerlessness not only over compulsive behaviors, but over the distorted ways we have learned to seek comfort, validation, or escape. As recovery deepens, we learn that sobriety is sustained

through honesty, accountability, and a growing willingness to bring our interior lives into the light. Each time we share truthfully, shame loses some of its power.

The second reading reminds us that this kind of interior transformation does not come through sheer willpower. Saint Paul points to a wisdom that originates in God rather than in self-control alone (1 Corinthians 2:6-7):

*Brothers and sisters: We speak a wisdom to those who are mature, not a wisdom of this age nor of the rulers of this age who are passing away. Rather, we speak God's wisdom, mysterious, hidden, which God predetermined before the ages for our glory.*

God's wisdom assures us that purity of heart is not something we manufacture. It is something we receive over time as we cooperate with grace. Recovery teaches patience with the process and humility about our limits. Through prayer, the sacraments, and trusted accountability, our desires are slowly reordered, and our capacity for healthy intimacy grows.

Jesus also teaches about integrity in speech, calling his followers to let their "yes" be yes and their "no" be no. For those healing from lust addiction, this honesty extends beyond words. It includes how we live transparently, how we honor boundaries, and how we take responsibility for our actions. Each truthful choice strengthens our connection to God and weakens the isolation that fuels addiction.

Sobriety is not simply the absence of compulsive behavior. It is the presence of a growing freedom to love rightly.

As we continue to surrender our hearts to God one day at a time, we discover that healing intimacy is possible, grounded not in fantasy or control, but in truth and grace.

## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- How does Jesus' focus on the heart shape your understanding of healing and sobriety?  
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- What helps you bring hidden thoughts or desires into the light rather than carrying them alone?  
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- In what ways are honesty and accountability supporting your growth toward healthier intimacy?  
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## MASS READINGS

**FIRST READING** Sirach 15:15-20

**RESP. PS.** Psalm 119:1-2, 4-5, 17-18, 33-34

**SECOND READING** 1 Corinthians 2:6-10

**GOSPEL** Matthew 5:17-37

