



FOURTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Many adult children of dysfunctional homes carry a quiet but persistent sense of responsibility. We may feel the need to manage situations, anticipate others' needs, or keep things from falling apart. These patterns often developed early in life and helped us cope in environments that felt unstable or unpredictable. Over time, however, they can become burdens that are difficult to set down.

Even when we recognize these patterns, it can be hard to change them. We may continue to rely on control, overthinking, people-pleasing, or emotional withdrawal to navigate relationships. We may sense tension before others notice it, assume responsibility for another person's mood, or struggle to rest unless everything feels settled. This can leave us feeling exhausted, disconnected, or unsure of how to respond differently.

This Sunday's gospel offers a meaningful invitation into this experience. Jesus says (Matthew 11:28-30):

"Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves. For my yoke is easy, and my burden light."

These words speak directly to those who are carrying more than they were meant to carry. The burden is not only what is happening in the present, but also the patterns we developed to survive the past.

In recovery, this begins with Step One. We come to see that our lives have become unmanageable when we rely on old

coping strategies to navigate present relationships. We may recognize that our reactions are not always rooted in current reality, but in past experiences that still influence us. This awareness opens the door to change.

Taking on Christ's yoke does not mean ignoring our past or pretending that our patterns do not exist. It means allowing Him to walk with us as we begin to live differently. It means bringing our habits of control, fear, and self-protection into the light and becoming willing to try something different. This typically begins with small changes.

We may practice pausing before reacting, noticing what we are feeling, and asking whether our response is rooted in the present or in the past. We may begin to express our needs more clearly, set boundaries where necessary, and allow others to take responsibility for themselves. These actions usually feel unfamiliar, but they help us move toward a more grounded way of living.

This kind of surrender can feel risky because old roles may have once kept us safe. We likely wonder who we are if we are not fixing, performing, disappearing, or absorbing everyone else's emotions. Christ's invitation offers reassurance. We do not have to abandon ourselves in order to belong. We can learn a new way of being held by God and supported by others.

Over time, we begin to experience a different kind of rest. It is not simply the absence of activity, but the easing of internal pressure. We no longer feel the same need to manage everything or to hold ourselves responsible for what

is outside our control. This creates space for greater peace, clarity, and connection, both within ourselves and in the relationships we are learning to rebuild.

Recovery for adult children is not about rejecting the past. It is about living differently in the present. As we continue this journey, we are invited to bring our burdens to Christ, to walk with others who understand, and to trust that we can learn a new way of relating, one that is grounded in truth, freedom, and love.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- What burdens from earlier life do you still find yourself carrying today?
- When do you notice old roles shaping your reactions in the present?
- What would it look like to let Christ help you carry what once felt like yours alone?

MASS READINGS

FIRST READING Zechariah 9:9-10

RESP. PS. Psalm 145:1-2, 8-9, 10-11, 13-14

SECOND READING Romans 8:9, 11-13

GOSPEL Matthew 11:25-30