

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

For those who love someone struggling with addiction, compulsions, or unhealthy attachments, life can become heavy in ways that are difficult to put into words. We may carry concern about their well-being, frustration over repeated patterns, and a deep desire to help them change. Over time, this emotional weight can become exhausting. We try to anticipate problems, manage situations, and find the right words or actions that might finally make a difference.

Many of these efforts come from love. Yet they can also lead us into a burden we were never meant to carry. We may begin to take responsibility for another person's choices, believing that if we just try harder or respond differently, we can influence the outcome. This way of living typically leads to anxiety, resentment, and spiritual fatigue.

This Sunday's gospel offers a direct invitation into a different way of living. 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 to anyone who feels overwhelmed. In family recovery, the burden is often not just what is happening, but how we have been trying to carry it. We may be holding onto fear, trying to control outcomes, or taking on responsibilities that do not belong to us.

At first, taking on a "yoke" may not sound like relief. Yet the difference is found in who carries the weight. When we try to manage everything ourselves, the burden grows heavier. When we begin to trust Christ, something changes. We are no longer carrying it alone.

This shift is reflected in Step One. We come to accept that we are powerless over another person's addiction and that our lives become unmanageable when we try to control what we cannot change. This is not a loss of love. It is a movement toward truth. We can care deeply without taking ownership of another person's recovery.

Steps Two and Three build on this foundation. We begin to believe that God can restore order where we cannot, and we make a decision to entrust our lives and our concerns to His care. This does not remove our involvement, but it changes how we show up. We move from controlling to trusting, from reacting to responding, and from carrying everything alone to sharing the burden with God and others.

This kind of surrender is practiced daily. We may notice ourselves returning to old habits of worry, overthinking, or trying to manage outcomes. When that happens, we are invited to pause, pray, and let go again. We seek support, speak honestly, and allow others to walk with us.

Over time, something begins to shift. The constant pressure to fix everything begins to ease. We become more grounded, more patient, and more capable of loving without being consumed. The situation may not immediately change, but our experience within it does.

Jesus does not promise that the circumstances around us will become easy. He promises that we do not have to carry them alone. As we continue in recovery, we are invited to trust Him with what we cannot control and to receive the rest that comes from placing our burdens in His hands.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- Where do you notice yourself trying to carry a burden that may not belong to you?

- What does surrendering control look like in your relationship with a loved one right now?

- How are you learning to love with greater clarity, courage, and peace?

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