

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Many who struggle with lust addiction know what it is like to feel caught between desire and exhaustion. We may genuinely want to change, make commitments, and put safeguards in place, only to find ourselves returning to the same patterns. Over time, this cycle can wear us down. We try harder, think more, plan better, and still feel burdened by the same struggle.

This can lead to a discouraging question: why is effort not enough? The answer is not that effort has no place, but that effort alone cannot carry the weight of recovery. When we rely only on our own strength, we typically end up reinforcing the same cycle of control, failure, and shame.

This Sunday's gospel offers a different approach. 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 the experience of carrying something that feels too heavy to manage alone. Lust addiction is not just about behavior. It includes secrecy, shame, isolation, and the pressure of trying to control something that repeatedly feels out of control. For some, the burden also includes distorted ways of seeing ourselves and others, where desire becomes separated from dignity, truth, and love.

Jesus does not begin with instruction. He begins with an invitation. “Come to me.” This reflects the movement of

Steps One, Two, and Three. We admit that we are powerless, come to believe that God can restore us, and decide to turn our will and our lives over to His care.

Taking on Christ's yoke means allowing Him into the struggle rather than trying to handle it privately. It does not eliminate the need for action. We still need accountability, honesty, boundaries, and concrete changes in behavior. But these actions are no longer driven solely by our own effort. They are supported by grace.

One of the greatest challenges in lust addiction recovery is isolation. We may feel that we should be able to fix this on our own or that others would not understand. Yet isolation is where the burden becomes heaviest. Bringing our struggle into the light through honest conversation begins to reduce its power. It also helps us remember that we are beloved children of God, not problems to be hidden.

Surrender in this context is not passive. It is active trust. It means reaching out when we would rather hide, telling the truth when we would rather minimize, and asking for help when we would rather rely on ourselves. These choices may feel small, but they shift the direction of our lives.

Over time, we begin to notice a change. The urge to control everything starts to loosen. We become more aware of our temptations, more willing to act early, and more open to support. The struggle may still be present, but it no longer defines us in the same way.

Jesus describes His yoke as easy and His burden as light, not because recovery is effortless, but because it is shared. We are no longer alone in the fight. God is present, and others walk with us.

Recovery from lust addiction is not about achieving perfect control. It is about learning to live in honest relationship with God and others. As we continue this journey, we are invited to bring our burdens into the light, trust God with what we cannot carry alone, and take the next right step in freedom.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- Where are you still trying to rely only on your own strength in recovery?
- How does isolation increase the weight of your struggle?
- What is one concrete way you can invite God and others into your recovery today?

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