

Tenth Sunday in Ordinary Time



There are powerful forces working toward keeping us from experiencing union with God and harmony with others. The spiritual disease of addiction is cunning, baffling, and powerful, involving subtle deceptions to divide us. Over time, we develop inclinations toward fear and resentment which disrupt our freedom and get in the way of authentic trust in God. We believe we are doing okay when we meet low, self-imposed standards for our spiritual life that protect our ego and shield us from truly surrendering.

Therefore, our recovery must go deeper than the surface-level symptoms of lust addiction, sexual compulsions, and other unhealthy attachments. We are called to be transformed and spiritual awoken to the Good News: Jesus Christ loves us, he gave his life to save us, and now he is living at our side every day to enlighten, strengthen and free us.

This Sunday's First Reading takes us back to the creation story. We hear from the third chapter of Genesis:

*After the man, Adam, had eaten of the tree,
the LORD God called to the man and asked him,
"Where are you?"*

*He answered, "I heard you in the garden;
but I was afraid, because I was naked,
so I hid myself."*

*Then he asked, "Who told you that you were naked?
You have eaten, then,
from the tree of which I had forbidden you to eat!"*

*The man replied, "The woman whom you put here
with me—*

she gave me fruit from the tree, and so I ate it."

*The LORD God then asked the woman,
"Why did you do such a thing?"*

*The woman answered, "The serpent tricked me into it,
so I ate it."*

Notice the reaction of Adam and Eve after they've given into original sin. Isolation, self-pity, finger-pointing, and shame were a few natural responses exhibited then and might describe our propensity to disengage from God after caving to sin and addiction in our lives today.

The sacraments of the Catholic Church and the Twelve Steps of recovery uncover our deeply rooted tendencies and provide healing and wholeness to our spiritual journey. Are we reaching for the fruit of our own self-will or are we relying upon daily renewal and guidance from our Lord?

Humanity found salvation from the transgressions of Adam and Eve through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. We surrender ourselves to the same God—who sacrificed his life so that we may experience eternal redemption—by accepting the gift and identity that he has freely given us. Our dark past can serve as a treasured asset if it propels us to seek the will of God and proclaim a message of hope to those who still suffer.

God has plans for communal recovery for his people, as Saint Paul writes in his Second Letter to the Corinthians:

*Since we have the same spirit of faith,
according to what is written, I believed, therefore I
spoke,
we too believe and therefore we speak,
knowing that the one who raised the Lord Jesus will
raise us also with Jesus
and place us with you in his presence.
Everything indeed is for you,
so that the grace bestowed in abundance on more and
more people
may cause the thanksgiving to overflow for the glory of
God.*

Reflection Questions

- Consider and describe how you relate to the process of hiding from God when engaged in sin and addictive behaviors.
- How have the Twelve Steps and the sacraments of the Church helped you overcome fear, resentment, and self-centeredness?
- How has your dark past become an asset to help others and remain reliant upon God?

Attend a CIR Retreat in 2024

There are several retreat opportunities around the U.S. this year to strengthen your recovery and faith

- Hear inspiring testimonies, attend meetings, engage the sacraments, participate in workshops, and more!
- Dedicated time for quiet meditation and fellowship
- Remaining 2024 retreat locations include Wichita, KS; Huntington (Fort Wayne), IN; Oceanside (San Diego), CA; and Subiaco (Fort Smith), AR
- For more information and to register for a retreat visit **catholicinrecovery.com/events**

Sunday Mass Readings this Week

First Reading: Genesis 3:9-15

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 130:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8

Second Reading: 2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1

Gospel: Mark 3:20-35