

Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time



This Sunday's Readings remind us of how God can transform the little ones into great ones and great ones into little ones when He says, "I, the Lord, bring low the high tree, lift high the lowly tree, wither up the green tree, and make the withered tree bloom. As I the Lord have spoken, so will I do" (Ezekiel 17:24).

God keeps His promises. We may have experienced times when we know that God promised good things for us, but we seem to wait without avail. We might say, "I've been praying for this for a long time, but nothing seems to change." Surrendering to God's will means that we must let go completely even when it's not easy. Yet, when we do, we can see how God brings about a resolution wiser and even more quickly than we could have ourselves.

For those of us who have overcome an addiction, compulsion, or unhealthy attachment, we have experienced God doing the impossible (for nothing is impossible with God!). Realizing that alone we could not change a particular sin, compulsion, or addiction, we came to believe that it was the grace of God that transformed us. That is why it's often expressed that we're sober, abstinent, or free today only by the grace of God and the fellowship of recovery.

Fellowship doesn't simply mean fraternizing but means sharing our wisdom with each other regarding how we are overcoming a particular addiction, compulsion, or unhealthy attachment. As St. James writes, "Share your sins with one another that you may find healing" (James 5:16). As was told by Our Lady, "the healing is in the telling." We need to share our troubles and our solutions with one another. God wants us to be in relationship with each other.

All seven sacraments happen in relationship with someone else. Baptism is between the priest or deacon and the one to be baptized, Confession between priest and penitent, Confirmation is between the bishop and the confirmandi, Marriage between couples, Holy Orders between the bishop and ordinandi, and Anointing of the Sick between the priest and the anointed. So, grace and fellowship/relationship are the operative remedy. God can obviously work in isolation, but He wants us to experience His grace in community with each other. This is why recovery fellowships are so effective.

For some, the process of community sharing can be difficult, especially if we're not used to sharing personal things with others. Confession can be of great help because we can unburden ourselves of oppressive thoughts and actions in complete confidentiality, the "Seal of Confession."

Some of us are introverts, needing time for interior processing, while others tend to be extroverts and lean toward bouncing things off trusted companions. Either way, we all can benefit from a bit of the other's way of understanding. Put simply, the introvert will find new freedom by sharing aloud with the "talker type" and the extrovert can learn from the gift of listening and taking in what the "quieter type" has to share.

From all these experiences, humility, willingness, and openness allow these aspects of human growth in virtue and holiness to occur. The Gospel reminds us in the Parable of the Mustard Seed that great things happen in the smallest of beginnings. No matter our age, intellect, worldly success, let us remember that true spiritual progress happens by taking small steps and that by accumulating through slow progress over time, we too will become spiritually great in the eyes of God and one another. We will become Saintly!

Reflection Questions

- How has God delivered on His promises to you, even when it happened differently from the way you had planned?
- What personal concerns and solutions are you called to share with others today?
- Consider the spiritual progress that you have made in your recovery and describe how the seeds of faith have been sown and grown by God.

June Webinar: Recovery from Lust

*Join the CIR community for a webinar on June 20:
Foundations for Recovery from Lust Addiction*

- Led by Fr. Dismas, who has over 30 years of sobriety from lust addiction, this webinar will help build a spiritual foundation to overcome lust addiction, sexual compulsions, and attachments to pornography
- Men and women are encouraged to attend
- Webinar begins at 7p ET/4p PT Thursday, June 20
- For more info and to register for the event visit catholicinrecovery.com/event/webinar240620

Sunday Mass Readings this Week

First Reading: Ezekiel 17:22-24

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 92:2-3, 13-14, 15-16

Second Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:6-10

Gospel: Mark 4:26-34