

Fifth Sunday of Easter



During the Easter season, the Church invites us to reflect on renewal through the lens of the early Church. The first readings from the Acts of the Apostles bear witness to the growing Christian community, while the second readings from the Book of Revelation turn our hearts to the eternal hope that lies ahead. For those in recovery from lust addiction, this hope isn't distant or abstract—it's a promise we begin to experience as we surrender our lives to God and allow Him to restore what lust and self-will once distorted.

This Sunday's second reading offers a profound glimpse of redemption:

*I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,
"Behold, God's dwelling is with the human race.
He will dwell with them and they will be his people
and God himself will always be with them as their
God.
He will wipe every tear from their eyes,
and there shall be no more death or mourning,
wailing or pain,
for the old order has passed away."
The One who sat on the throne said,
"Behold, I make all things new."*

For those early in recovery, this vision may feel far off—blurred by the weight of guilt, shame, and secrecy. Lust addiction thrives in isolation and dishonesty. We may have spent years pretending we were fine, even while our interior lives were consumed by fantasy, compulsive behavior, and spiritual despair. But when we begin to get honest—with God, ourselves, and others—we open the door to something new.

Like the apostles spreading the Good News, we are called to share our experience, strength, and hope. Paul and Barnabas traveled from town to town, testifying to the transformation made possible through Jesus. Similarly, those of us in recovery share our story to let others know they're not alone and that healing is possible. For those trapped in the cycle of lust, control, and objectification, the message of a new life through surrender is indeed good news.

This transformation cannot happen in isolation. Left to our own devices, we will return to old patterns—especially when life gets difficult. Without God’s grace and the support of others on this path, we’re vulnerable to the same emotional swings that once led us back into destructive behaviors. Recovery teaches us to respond differently, to pause and pray, and to grow through discomfort rather than escape it. The apostles speak to this spiritual reality in the first reading: “It is necessary for us to undergo many hardships to enter the kingdom of God.”

In recovery, we come to accept that pain and struggle are part of growth. The difference now is that we don’t face it alone, nor do we need to numb it with lust or fantasy. With God’s help, we learn to embrace hardship as part of the path to peace and freedom.

This same spiritual maturity is what Jesus points to in this Sunday’s Gospel: “As I have loved you, so you also should love one another.”

Lust taught us to use others; love teaches us to serve and sacrifice. Recovery is not just about abstaining from destructive behavior—it’s about becoming people capable of authentic love. This love begins with God, extends to ourselves, and overflows into our relationships with others. We give away what we have freely received, and in doing so, we witness the miracle of being made new.

As we walk this path of grace, one day at a time, we begin to glimpse the “new heaven and new earth” that Revelation promises—not just in the future, but here and now.

Reflection Questions

- What areas of your life are beginning to feel “made new” through surrender and recovery—even in small or surprising ways?
- When have you tried to face struggle or temptation alone, and how did that compare to relying on God and fellowship for support?
- How is your understanding of love—toward yourself, God, and others—changing as you grow in recovery?

May is the Month of Mary

Deepen your relationship with Jesus through our Blessed Mother with the aid of 'The Recovery Rosary'

- Meditations for individuals and families affected by addictions, compulsions, and unhealthy attachments
- Personalized reflections by CIR community members with various addictions including family members in recovery
- Great for individual use or in a group setting
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Sunday Mass Readings this Week

First Reading: Acts 14:21-27

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 145:8-9, 10-11, 12-13

Second Reading: Revelation 21:1-5a

Gospel: John 13:31-33a, 34-35