

Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time



When the life of someone we love becomes unmanageable due to addiction, it often feels like our own life starts to spiral as well. We may find ourselves constantly on edge, over-functioning in an effort to fix or control, or withdrawing in silent resentment and helplessness. 12-step recovery, especially when integrated with the sacraments, gently invites us out of these extremes and offers a new way of living—one that brings peace, balance, and a growing trust in God.

In this Sunday's Gospel, Jesus visits the home of two sisters: Mary and Martha. As He teaches, Mary sits at His feet, fully attentive, while Martha scurries about tending to many tasks. Frustrated, Martha asks Jesus to intervene (Luke 10:40–42):

*"Lord, do you not care
that my sister has left me by myself to do the serving?
Tell her to help me."
The Lord said to her in reply,
"Martha, Martha, you are anxious and worried about
many things.
There is need of only one thing.
Mary has chosen the better part
and it will not be taken from her."*

This story resonates deeply for those impacted by a loved one's addiction. Many of us have lived like Martha—anxiously trying to hold everything together. We've filled the silence with busyness, often confusing productivity with peace. Yet underneath it all, we're burdened with fear, grief, and spiritual exhaustion. Jesus' words to Martha are not a rebuke, but a loving invitation: "There is need of only one thing."

Recovery is indeed a program of action. We are encouraged to show up, set boundaries, attend meetings, and seek help. But when our action is driven by fear or a desire to control the uncontrollable, it only adds to our anxiety. Like Martha, we are reminded that before we can serve or fix anything, we must sit at the feet of Jesus. We must allow ourselves to be still and listen to His voice.

Spiritual discernment helps us act from a place of trust, not panic. The Big Book offers us this wisdom (*Alcoholics Anonymous*, p. 86):

“In thinking about our day we may face indecision. We may not be able to determine which course to take. Here we ask God for inspiration, an intuitive thought, or a decision. We relax and take it easy. We don’t struggle. We are often surprised how the right answers come after we have tried this for a while.”

This guidance helps us shift from being reactive to being responsive. We do not need to control every outcome. In prayer and recovery fellowship, we begin to see that God’s plan is unfolding—even when things feel chaotic or uncertain. He brings order to our thoughts, direction to our steps, and comfort in our waiting.

In the second reading, Saint Paul gives us a powerful reminder of how God uses our pain (Colossians 1:24):

Brothers and sisters:

*Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake,
and in my flesh I am filling up
what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ*

As family members, we carry hidden wounds. But when shared honestly, those wounds can become bridges to healing for others. By sitting with others in meetings, by offering a kind word or listening ear, we allow God to bring good out of our grief.

Mary’s posture at Jesus’ feet is one of surrender. We are invited into that same posture—not to escape our responsibilities, but to root them in peace. With Christ as our center, we are no longer ruled by anxiety. We find serenity not because our loved one is better, but because God is with us, right here, right now.

Reflection Questions

- In what ways have you related more to Martha than Mary through your loved one’s addiction?
- What helps you pause and seek God’s will instead of rushing into action?
- How has God used your experience to bring comfort or guidance to others?

Integrate Faith & Twelve Steps with CIR+

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- **Daily Mass reflections** UbXGUbhfYZYMlcbg
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Sunday Mass Readings this Week

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