

Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time



Addiction to lust is often characterized by disconnection—from others, from ourselves, and from God. When life feels unmanageable, we tend to respond by seeking relief in compulsive behaviors or numbing distractions. At other times, we attempt to outrun our pain by keeping ourselves endlessly busy. In recovery, we learn to pause, reflect, and invite God into the stillness. The journey invites us to listen more deeply, discern more wisely, and find peace not in doing, but in being present with God.

This Sunday's Gospel recounts a familiar story: Jesus visits the home of Martha and Mary. While Martha hustles to manage the duties of hospitality, Mary sits at the Lord's feet, absorbed in His words. Martha, feeling overwhelmed and unseen, complains to Jesus (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 gentle correction from Jesus speaks directly to our recovery. We may come into recovery driven by guilt or fear, wanting to fix everything we've broken. We may fill our calendars with meetings, spiritual practices, and service work—good things, but easily turned into means of distraction. Like Martha, we become anxious and consumed. But Jesus points us to "the better part": sitting still and listening.

Recovery literature tells us that right action must follow spiritual grounding. Without pausing to seek God's will, even our best efforts can become ego-driven or compulsive. The Big Book offers clear advice (*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 approach is transformative for those of us in recovery from lust. We are learning to wait, to feel, and to act—not out of panic or shame—but from a place of humility and trust.

Sitting at the feet of Jesus means allowing our worth to be redefined. In lust addiction, we often sought validation, affection, or control through fantasy and compulsive behavior. Now, in recovery, we allow God to tell us who we are. We learn to listen for His voice—one of mercy, truth, and peace. When we do, we're less likely to chase after empty affirmations or lose ourselves in busyness.

In the second reading, St. Paul models this transformation (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*

Grace happens when we see that our sufferings can heal others. Freedom happens when we can maintain peace at the feet of Jesus as we listen to Him speak.

As we embrace our healing, our former suffering becomes a source of wisdom and grace for others. What once brought shame can now bring solidarity. When we sit with others in meetings or share our stories, we are helping to fill what is lacking—not in Christ's love, but in the lived witness of His healing power.

Choosing the “better part” means resting in God's presence and allowing His love to heal our broken places. It doesn't mean we abandon action—it means our action flows from surrender, not self-will. We are no longer driven by fear, but led by peace.

Reflection Questions

- Consider and describe how you find balance between action and contemplation in your recovery. Do you tend to cope with discomfort through compulsive behavior or over-busyness? How does that show up?
- What does it look like for you to sit at the feet of Jesus and choose “the better part” today?
- How can your recovery journey offer peace and hope to others who still struggle?

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

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