

Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time



For those of us who grew up in dysfunctional or chaotic homes, our sense of safety, identity, and belonging was often damaged at a young age. We learned to survive by adapting—becoming overly responsible, emotionally guarded, or disconnected from our true selves. The Twelve Steps offer a path not just for sobriety, but for healing the inner child who never felt truly seen or safe. As we move through recovery, we begin to see that the Holy Spirit has been with us all along, gently leading us from survival to serenity, from fear to trust.

This Sunday's second reading from Saint Paul's Letter to the Colossians beautifully echoes the core of our spiritual renewal (Colossians 2:12–13):

Brothers and sisters:

*You were buried with him in baptism,
in which you were also raised with him
through faith in the power of God,
who raised him from the dead.
And even when you were dead
in transgressions and the uncircumcision of your
flesh,
he brought you to life along with him,
having forgiven us all our transgressions.*

While we may not have chosen family dysfunction, we have carried the effects of addiction, abuse, neglect, or emotional immaturity from our families of origin. Many of us lived for years as if we were spiritually dead—numb, anxious, afraid of closeness, and unsure of our worth. Recovery breathes life back into our hearts. It teaches us that we are not broken beyond repair. In Christ, we are raised to new life—not just cleaned up on the outside but transformed from within.

The Twelve Steps help make this transformation possible. We examine the past not to get stuck in blame, but to find the freedom that comes with clarity. We come to believe in a Higher Power who sees us, loves us, and wants to heal us. We share our story with trusted companions, and we learn to forgive—not just others, but ourselves.

In this Sunday's Gospel, Jesus teaches the Lord's Prayer and offers an invitation to deeper trust. He says (Luke 11:9–12):

*“And I tell you, ask and you will receive;
seek and you will find;
knock and the door will be opened to you.
For everyone who asks, receives;
and the one who seeks, finds;
and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.
What father among you would hand his son a snake
when he asks for a fish?
Or hand him a scorpion when he asks for an egg?”*

For many adult children, the idea of God as a loving Father can be difficult. Perhaps our earthly fathers were absent, unpredictable, critical, or unsafe. We may carry those wounds into our image of God. But Jesus gently challenges that narrative. He invites us to believe in a God who is tender, generous, and attentive to our needs. He does not punish us for asking; He blesses us when we come to Him.

The Lord's Prayer offers a daily framework for aligning our hearts with God's. We honor His name, seek His kingdom, ask for what we need today, and extend the forgiveness we ourselves hope to receive. For adult children, this prayer can be a daily act of reparenting—a way of learning to trust again, to believe that we are provided for, protected, and loved.

Forgiveness is central. Step Eight asks us to consider those we have harmed and those who have harmed us. In many cases, our resentment runs deep. But forgiveness doesn't mean forgetting or pretending. It means releasing the grip that past wounds have on our present. When we forgive, we begin to live freely, not defined by our pain but by the healing work of God in our lives.

Recovery invites us to replace the old scripts—"I'm not enough," "It's all my fault," "Love must be earned"—with truth. As we internalize God's love, we gradually become more grounded, more open, and more at peace. And when we fall back into old fears, we return to the Lord's Prayer as a guide back to center.

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- What parts of your upbringing have shaped how you view God today?
- How does the promise of being “raised with Christ” speak to your journey of emotional healing?
- What part of the Lord's Prayer brings you the most comfort or challenge as an adult child of a dysfunctional home?

From Recovery to Wholeness Webinar

*Discover practical ways to heal and thrive
in every aspect of life in recovery*

- Participate live on **Thursday, July 31 at 6p ET/3p PT**
- Jackie Mulligan and Dr. Bridget Vander Woude of Reform Wellness will share how things like sleep, play, nutrition, and functional movement can support recovery
- Free for CIR+ members otherwise \$10 to register
- This and all webinar recordings available on CIR+
- For more info and to register for the webinar visit catholicinrecovery.com/webinars

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First Reading: Genesis 18:20-32

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 138:1-2, 2-3, 6-7, 7-8

Second Reading: Colossians 2:12-14

Gospel: Luke 11:1-13