

Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time



As family members affected by addiction, we have often lived on the margins—isolated by secrecy, worn down by fear, or defined by someone else's behavior. We have felt powerless to change our loved one, and in the process, we have sometimes lost ourselves. But God's mercy reaches even into the most painful places. He "lifts up the lowly" and restores our peace when we turn our will and our lives over to His care.

In mid-August, we celebrate two feast days that speak deeply to our journey: Saint Maximilian Kolbe (August 14) and the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (August 15). The Gospel for Mary's feast describes her visit to Elizabeth, who greets her with joy and honor (Luke 1:42–45):

Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb.

And how does this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

For at the moment the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy.

Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled.

Mary responds with her Magnificat, praising God for His mercy and for raising up the lowly (Luke 1:46–49):

*My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord;
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior
for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.
From this day all generations will call me blessed:
the Almighty has done great things for me, and holy
is his Name.*

Mary's humility and her unwavering "yes" to God's will—even when it meant uncertainty and suffering—are examples for us. She reminds us that surrender is not defeat; it's the doorway to peace.

Saint Maximilian Kolbe's life also speaks to this truth. At age 12, he had a vision of the Blessed Virgin Mary offering him two crowns—white for purity and red for martyrdom. He accepted both. Years later, imprisoned at Auschwitz, he volunteered to take the place of a condemned man with a family. His life and death show the power of love rooted in faith and selflessness.

In recovery, we are invited to that same trust. We can't control others, but we can surrender our fears and hopes to God. The Big Book reminds us (p. 100):

“When we look back, we realize that the things which came to us when we put ourselves in God's hands were better than anything we could have planned. Follow the dictates of a Higher Power and you will presently live in a new and wonderful world, no matter what your present circumstances!”

Mary and Kolbe both lived in complete trust of God's will, and their example calls us to do the same—one day at a time.

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- How have you experienced God bringing peace or restoration when you've surrendered control?
- What does saying “yes” to God look like in your relationship with your loved one?
- How can you follow Mary's and St. Maximilian Kolbe's example of humility and trust this week?

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First Reading: Jeremiah 38:4-6, 8-10

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 40:2, 3, 4, 18

Second Reading: Hebrews 12:1-4

Gospel: Luke 12:49-53