

Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time



In lust addiction, many of us lived in secrecy, shame, and spiritual exile. Our thoughts were dominated by obsession and fantasy. Recovery has taught us that God's mercy can reach us no matter how far we've fallen—lifting us up, restoring our dignity, and teaching us to live in truth.

Two feast days in August speak powerfully to our recovery: Saint Maximilian Kolbe (August 14) and the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (August 15). In the Gospel for Mary's feast, Elizabeth greets her with joy (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 purity of heart are everything lust addiction distorted for us. She models integrity and surrender to God's will—showing that obedience and openness to God are paths to freedom.

Saint Maximilian Kolbe also lived this surrender. At 12, he had a vision of Mary offering him two crowns—white for purity and red for martyrdom. He accepted both and remained faithful, even in Auschwitz, where he gave his life in place of another. His example teaches us to persevere in purity and love, regardless of the cost.

In recovery, we are invited to accept God's will daily, trusting Him even when the road is hard. As the Big Book says (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!"

The "new and wonderful world" for us is a life free from bondage to lust—a life of honesty, love, and service.

Reflection Questions

- How does Mary's humility challenge the way you approach recovery?
- What "two crowns" might God be inviting you to accept in your journey of healing?
- How can you trust God with your struggles and temptations this week?

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Sunday Mass Readings this Week

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