

Twenty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time



Three ingredients that are crucial for recovery as family members impacted by addiction are honesty, open-mindedness, and willingness. When we practice these together, we experience humility, unity, and a shared vision of support and service. Humility in this sense is not about thinking less of ourselves, but about thinking of ourselves less often—freeing us from constant self-concern and fear so that we can be present to God and to others. It is both a seed and a fruit of recovery, something that grows in us as we allow God to order our lives and relationships.

The deepest source of humility for us is not always found in moments of dramatic humiliation or crisis, though those experiences can open our eyes. More often, humility takes root in regular, steady acts of daily conversion: choosing to listen before reacting, making amends when we've spoken harshly, praying for rather than resenting our loved one, or seeking help when we are overwhelmed.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (paragraph 1435) offers a rich description of what this kind of conversion looks like:

“Conversion is accomplished in daily life by gestures of reconciliation, concern for the poor, exercise and defense of justice and right, by the admission of faults to one’s brethren, fraternal correction, revision of life, examination of conscience, spiritual direction, acceptance of suffering, endurance of persecution for the sake of righteousness.”

Saint Monica, whose feast we celebrate on August 27, is a powerful example of humility and perseverance for family members living with the impact of addiction. She endured years of chaos in her marriage and heartache over her son Augustine’s reckless life. Her faithfulness in prayer and her peaceful trust in God’s will sustained her through eighteen long years until Augustine’s conversion. The very next day, on August 28, we celebrate the Feast of Saint Augustine, her son, whose dramatic transformation was the fruit of God’s grace and his mother’s persistent intercession.

This Sunday’s first reading reminds us of the enduring value of humility in every relationship (Sirach 3:17–18, 20, 28–29):

*My child, conduct your affairs with humility,
and you will be loved more than a giver of gifts.
Humble yourself the more, the greater you are,
and you will find favor with God.
What is too sublime for you, seek not,
into things beyond your strength search not.
The mind of a sage appreciates proverbs,
and an attentive ear is the joy of the wise.
Water quenches a flaming fire,
and alms atone for sins.*

In family recovery, it is not the one who knows the most about addiction who experiences the most healing, but the one who is faithful, available, and teachable. Believing we have all the answers—or that we can control someone else's path—blocks the spiritual awakening God desires for us. Humility and daily conversion open our hearts to His transforming grace.

The blessings God gives us in recovery—such as serenity, healthier boundaries, and restored relationships—are not just for our benefit. They are invitations to extend hope to others. The Seventh Step Prayer expresses this posture of openness:

My Creator, I am now willing that you shall have all of me, good and bad.

I pray that you now remove from me every single defect of character

that stands in the way of my usefulness to you and my fellows.

Grant me strength as I go out from here to do your bidding. Amen.

Like Saints Monica and Augustine, we are called to let God's grace do its work in us, to trust His timing, and to allow our own transformation to be a witness to others. In humility, we discover that the most powerful influence we have on our loved ones is often not through control or pressure, but through our own peaceful surrender to God.

Reflection Questions

- How does Saint Monica's example inspire you to practice humility and perseverance in your own family situation?
- In what areas are you being invited to let go of control and trust God's timing?
- How can you use the spiritual gifts you've received in recovery to bring hope to others?

A Day of Hope and Healing

*A virtual recovery summit co-hosted by
Catholic in Recovery and iTHIRST Initiative*

- Special one-day event on **Friday, September 26**
- Join fellow CIR community members from around the world for a day of faith, fellowship, and renewal
- Keynote speakers include Dr. Matthew Breuninger, Dawn Eden Goldstein, and Fr. Sean Kilcawley
- Catholic in Recovery meetings and interactive workshops
- Praise & worship music, prayer, and testimonies of hope
- Register at **catholicinrecovery.com/2025-summit**

Sunday Mass Readings this Week

First Reading: Sirach 3:17-18, 20, 28-29

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 68:4-5, 6-7, 10-11

Second Reading: Hebrews 12:18-19, 22-24a

Gospel: Luke 14:1, 7-14