

Twenty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time



Three ingredients that are crucial for recovery from lust addiction are honesty, open-mindedness, and willingness. Together, these create the environment where humility can grow. Humility is not about shame or self-contempt—it is about shifting our focus away from constant self-centeredness and distorted desires, and learning to live in alignment with God’s will. In recovery, humility is both a starting seed and a maturing fruit, developing over time as we hand more of ourselves over to God’s care.

For many of us, humility was not born from one dramatic collapse, though moments of hitting bottom certainly got our attention. More often, humility has come through the slow, daily work of conversion: telling the truth in places we once lied, choosing accountability instead of secrecy, reaching out to a sponsor when temptation comes, and making amends to those we’ve harmed.

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.”

On August 27, we celebrate Saint Monica, whose humility and perseverance offer a model for us. Though her struggles were different from ours, she endured long years of uncertainty, heartache, and disorder in her home. She never gave up on prayer for her son Augustine, whose life was marked by sexual sin, restlessness, and self-indulgence before his dramatic conversion. The next day, August 28, we honor Saint Augustine, who became one of the Church’s great saints and teachers. His story is proof that no one is beyond the reach of God’s transforming grace.

This Sunday’s first reading speaks directly to the importance of staying right-sized before God and others (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 lust recovery, it's not the most intellectually gifted who find freedom, but those who remain faithful, available, and teachable. Believing we already know enough or that we can "handle it" on our own will keep us stuck. Humility keeps us honest about our weaknesses and open to God's help.

The blessings of recovery—freedom from compulsive lust, restored relationships, emotional integrity—are not just for us. They are meant to be shared through service. The Seventh Step Prayer captures this spirit:

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 invited to live in a way that points others toward hope. Our own transformation—no matter how incomplete—becomes a testimony that God is faithful, that change is possible, and that humility is the doorway to lasting freedom.

Reflection Questions

- How does the story of Saint Augustine's transformation give you hope for your own recovery journey?
- What daily acts of humility help you maintain freedom from lust?
- How can you share the gifts you've received in recovery to serve others this week?

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