

Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time



As we recover from lust addiction, we come to see that wholesale change is necessary if we are to be free. Old patterns of secrecy, fantasy, and selfishness kept us trapped in isolation. Recovery requires us to live according to new principles that bring joy and freedom. The Church names four such cardinal virtues: prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance.

Prudence guides us into sound judgment. In recovery, this grows as we lean on a fellowship of people who understand lust's hold and can remind us to choose honesty over secrecy. As we pray and seek God's will, prudence becomes a safeguard that helps us discern temptation from truth and leads us toward integrity.

Justice compels us to do what is right in the face of our brokenness. Lust distorted our relationships, and recovery calls us to repair what we can. Justice means making amends to those we've hurt and seeking their well-being, not just our relief. It is also expressed in praying for others to have the same peace and freedom we long for ourselves.

Fortitude gives us the strength to persist through fear, temptation, and discomfort. Lust always promised the easier, softer way. Fortitude helps us resist shortcuts and instead commit to the hard work of change—staying accountable, resisting fantasy, and remembering that our spiritual health is the foundation for everything else in life.

Temperance teaches us moderation and self-restraint. For us, this is expressed as sexual sobriety, but it also extends into other areas of life where compulsivity may surface. By practicing small acts of delayed gratification—turning away from lust, pausing before reacting, using technology responsibly—we find that the urges fueling our compulsions fade, and we grow in freedom.

These virtues, practiced daily, create a new way of living grounded in honesty, service, and grace. Through the sacraments, prayer, and the Steps, we are shaped into people who can live free and love well.

This Sunday's Gospel underscores this call to integrity (Luke 16:10–13):

*The person who is trustworthy in very small matters
is also trustworthy in great ones;
and the person who is dishonest in very small matters
is also dishonest in great ones.
If, therefore, you are not trustworthy with dishonest wealth,
who will trust you with true wealth?
If you are not trustworthy with what belongs to another,
who will give you what is yours?
No servant can serve two masters.
He will either hate one and love the other,
or be devoted to one and despise the other.
You cannot serve both God and mammon.*

Recovery demands full surrender. We cannot serve both lust and God. Each day we are asked to choose—will we serve the fleeting desires of the old self, or will we trust the God who calls us into lasting freedom?

Reflection Questions

- How does practicing prudence help you face moments of temptation?
- In what ways does justice call you to repair relationships harmed by lust?
- What does it mean for you to “serve God, not mammon” in your recovery today?

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: Amos 8:4-7

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 113:1-2, 4-6, 7-8

Second Reading: 1 Timothy 2:1-8

Gospel: Luke 16:1-13