

## Reflection Questions

- Have you shared anything about your recovery efforts with your family?
  - Were they aware of your behavior beforehand?
  - Did you consult with your sponsor before doing so?
  
- Is there a particular relationship that compelled you to begin looking at the problem of porn and sex addiction?
  
- How would you describe your role within your family system?
  - Can you think of ways that this influences your addiction or recovery?

**27th Sunday in Ordinary Time**



Addiction does not happen in a vacuum and impacts much more than the individual engaging in lustful, compulsive behavior. Furthermore, addictive tendencies often span across generations within families. Therefore, the whole family system is affected and involved in the process of addiction and recovery.

This idea does not need much explanation for those of us whom have struggled through the consequences of addiction. Although different types of compulsive behavior stir up unique levels of mistrust and reaction among our family members, fractured relationships seem to be a common theme among those seeking recovery for all types of addiction. We might think we are only hurting ourselves, but the lingering effects of our behavior, even if only done in isolation, change us and create confusion and fraction among those around us.

This week's first reading is taken from the second chapter of Genesis where we find Adam in hopes of a suitable partner. God creates Eve from the rib of Adam, making her "bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh," describing the intimate union between husband and wife. "That is why a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, and the two of them become one flesh."

The fall of Adam and Eve, along with their eviction from the Garden of Eden, point toward the resounding effects of our behavior on ourselves and our families. Shame, fear, and isolation immediately ensue.

Adam blames his wife, Eve, who in turn sheds blame on the snake that tempted her. Neither are willing to be honest with themselves or God, and their relationship with God and each other suffer. Years later, the first family to walk the earth still had plenty of problems, climaxing when their son Cain killed his brother Abel.

Frustration can come when we begin taking steps to change our behavior. Out of legitimate mistrust and shattered hope for change, those around us are often skeptical when we begin recovery. For years, roles have been shifted to make up for our absence while active in our addictions. Either way, we focus on our side of the street in order to move our families toward wholeness.

Unfortunately, not everyone comes around to embrace spiritual convictions at the same time. As we experience the love of God significantly changing our lives, we wish that others around us could find the same outlet. Sometimes we find ourselves taking a risk and implementing the principles of recovery into our relationships. We may even lose the fear of discussing Jesus openly with others close to us.

Christian marriage, the topic of this week's readings, offers the freedom to detach from the things of this world (false cultural beliefs that fuel lust and sexual deviance) and reflect God to one another. The beauty of this union is expressed in Psalm 128, this week's responsorial psalm:

*Blessed are you who fear the LORD,  
who walk in his ways!  
For you shall eat the fruit of your handiwork;  
blessed shall you be, and favored.*

*Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine  
in the recesses of your home;  
your children like olive plants  
around your table.*

*Behold, thus is the man blessed  
who fears the LORD.  
The LORD bless you from Zion:  
may you see the prosperity of Jerusalem  
all the days of your life.*

*May you see your children's children.  
Peace be upon Israel!*