

Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time



There are a few key Christian concepts that can be difficult to understand and even more challenging to actually apply. The basic idea that Jesus Christ died for each of one of us is central to our Christian worldview. Yet, how should that inform and influence the way we live? Saint Paul answers this question in his Second Letter to the Corinthians, this Sunday's Second Reading:

*Brothers and sisters:
The love of Christ impels us,
once we have come to the conviction that one died
for all;
therefore, all have died.
He indeed died for all,
so that those who live
might no longer live for themselves
but for him who for their sake died and was raised.*

*Consequently, from now on we regard no one
according to the flesh;
even if we once knew Christ according to the flesh,
yet now we know him so no longer.
So whoever is in Christ is a new creation:
the old things have passed away;
behold, new things have come.*

In the sacramental life of the Church, when we are baptized we open ourselves up to God's loving and healing touch, becoming His beloved sons. This is similar to when we open ourselves up to God from the depths of our addiction. While painful, this allows us to die to the sinful, addicted self and make way for the renewal of the Holy Spirit. As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* details, "Immersion in water symbolizes not only death and purification, but also regeneration and renewal" (CCC 1262).

This spiritual truth is further noted by Saint Paul, who tells us that, "We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life. For if we have grown into union with him through a death like his, we shall also be united with him in the resurrection" (Romans 6: 4-5).

Like baptism, when we admit our powerlessness over lust addiction we undergo the (sometimes painful) process of being submerged into the healing waters of God's love. We die to self as to live anew in Christ.

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In his book *Change or Die*, Alan Deutschman details the three phases required to undergo lasting change in our lives: relate, repeat, and reframe. These steps are exactly what recovery and the Twelve Steps entail. We *relate* by joining a recovery community that offers us hope and encouragement on our journey. We *repeat* by walking alongside our sponsor and others in our community to develop new habits as we work the Twelve Steps. And we *reframe* by gaining a new perspective on our thinking, enabling us to take responsibility and make meaningful and lasting changes to our lives.

Whether we understand our transformation through the spiritual lens expressed by Saint Paul or the human process of relating, repeating, and reframing, let us embrace this new creation. Old things have passed away and new things have come. We ought to view others the same way and connect through the common experience of desperately needing God.

- How have you seen old, self-centered patterns die and be replaced with new, healthy ways of living through your recovery?
- Describe your experience of relating, repeating, and reframing alongside others in recovery.
- Are you open and willing to change?

Catholic in Recovery Retreat

Join us July 30 to August 1 in Wichita, KS for our inaugural Catholic in Recovery retreat!

- Join others from around the United States for a weekend of healing, renewal, and CIR fellowship
- Encounter a variety of speakers, live meetings, prayerful reflection, and sacraments
- For information and to register, visit catholicinrecovery.com/catholic-in-recovery-retreat

Sunday Mass Readings this Week

1st Reading: Job 38:1, 8-11

Responsorial Psalm: 107:23-24, 25-26, 28-29, 30

2nd Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:14-17

Gospel: Mark 4:35-41