

Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time



“Our Savior Jesus Christ destroyed death and brought life to light through the Gospel.” We hear these words from the Second Letter of Saint Timothy during the Gospel Acclamation in this Sunday’s liturgy, summarizing the theme of this week’s readings. To begin, the First Reading from the Old Testament book of Wisdom notes:

*For God formed man to be imperishable;
the image of his own nature he made him.
But by the envy of the devil,
death entered the world,
and they who belong to his company experience it.*

In the darkness of our active lust addiction, we experienced death. This manifests itself through isolation, hopelessness, broken relationships, loss of self-worth, and feeling that we are no longer worthy of anything better. We act out lustfully, hoping for brief moments of comfort. Of course, this cycle of addiction simply reinforces the presence of death.

We have been crafted in the image and likeness of God. Our identity lies in the unmerited grace that we are His beloved sons, regardless of our attempts to cut ourselves off from the Lord. It is possible that our efforts to find comfort are rooted in a desire that only God can fill. As we recognize the limitations and consequences of directing life according to our own will, we put faith in God doing for us what we cannot do for ourselves.

This week’s Gospel Reading celebrates the faithful healing of two individuals. First, a woman suffering from hemorrhages for twelve years:

*She had heard about Jesus and came up behind him
in the crowd and touched his cloak.
She said, "If I but touch his clothes, I shall be cured."
Immediately her flow of blood dried up.
She felt in her body that she was healed of her
affliction.*

Second, a synagogue official named Jairus sought out Jesus to give his twelve-year-old daughter new life:

*Seeing [Jesus] he fell at his feet and pleaded earnestly with him, saying,
"My daughter is at the point of death.
Please, come lay your hands on her
that she may get well and live."*

We might find our own faith woven through these two gospel stories. The hemorrhaging woman spent all the money she had on professional help, but her disease worsened until she had an encounter with Jesus. Jairus was told by members of his own home that his daughter was beyond saving. He advocated for his loved one when she was no longer capable and brought the Lord to save her.

We walk our recovery journey today with the joy of knowing that Jesus Christ loves us, he gave his life to save us, and now he is living at our side every day to enlighten, strengthen, and free us.

- How did death manifest itself during your active experience with lust addiction, sexual compulsions, and unhealthy attachments?
 - How has life been manifested through recovery?
- Can you relate to either of the two stories shared in this Sunday's Gospel Reading—a physical encounter with Jesus that brought healing or an earnest plea that sparked surrender? Explain.

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: Wisdom 1:13-15; 2:23-24

Responsorial Psalm: 30:2, 4, 5-6, 11, 12, 13

2nd Reading: 2 Corinthians 8:7, 9, 13-15

Gospel: Mark 5:21-43