

Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time



We have been clothed in new life with Christ through twelve step recovery and the sacramental life of the Church. We know the emptiness that comes from a life run on our own accord. The spiritual malady that has us turning to lust addiction, sexual compulsions, and other unhealthy attachments tends to manifest itself in the mind and, as a result, has grave emotional and physical consequences.

Before we sought help for these afflictions, we may have professed faith in Jesus but operated under faulty beliefs. The perishable goods that we craved never satisfied and we became more self-exerting in pursuit of a contentment that we could never find. By the grace of God, we have been plucked from this endless cycle and shown a new way.

This Sunday's liturgical readings continue to point toward Jesus Christ as the Bread of Life. All who hunger and thirst will find fulfillment in Him. In addition, we will hear Saint Paul speak to the new life made possible by Christ in this Sunday's Second Reading:

*Brothers and sisters:
I declare and testify in the Lord
that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do,
in the futility of their minds;
that is not how you learned Christ,
assuming that you have heard of him and were
taught in him,
as truth is in Jesus,
that you should put away the old self of your former
way of life,
corrupted through deceitful desires,
and be renewed in the spirit of your minds,
and put on the new self,
created in God's way in righteousness and holiness
of truth.*

Our short-term desires have a tendency to get in the way of our long-term needs. Our path through active addiction is proof and the consequences are destructive. Jesus knows this about human nature and is confronted with this reality after feeding a crowd of 5,000 people. Crowds of followers go to great lengths to find our Lord, but perhaps with questionable intentions.

Jesus proclaims:

*You are looking for me not because you saw signs
but because you ate the loaves and were filled.
Do not work for food that perishes
but for the food that endures for eternal life,
which the Son of Man will give you.
For on him the Father, God, has set his seal.*

Therefore, we turn to Christ as our guide, our Higher Power, and our Savior. Through the process of working the steps (in particular, Step 2), we shift our beliefs and futile thoughts toward Jesus. We can find an intimate encounter with our Lord in the Eucharist, as further explored in John 6 and emphasized by Saint Ignatius of Antioch:

“Every time [the Eucharist] is celebrated, the work of our redemption is carried on and we break the one bread that provides the medicine of immortality, the antidote for death, and the food that makes us live forever in Jesus Christ.”

- What are the futile thoughts and beliefs that challenge your trust in God?
 - How do you overcome unhealthy thoughts with patterns of faith?

- What *perishable goods* do you desire that get in the way of a deeper relationship with Christ?

Recovery Resources Available Online

Visit www.catholicinrecovery.com for recovery resources rooted in Catholic tradition

- Virtual meetings available daily for a variety of addictions
- Find a local in-person Catholic in Recovery Meeting
- Read articles sharing experience, strength, and hope on Catholic Saints, the 12 Steps, and spiritual tools
- Pray the Catholic in Recovery Novena
- Sign up to receive the monthly CIR newsletter
- Shop for materials, CIR merchandise, and more
- Become an Advocate's Circle member to support CIR

Sunday Mass Readings this Week

1st Reading: Exodus 16:2-4, 12-15

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 78:3-4, 23-24, 25, 54

2nd Reading: Ephesians 4:17, 20-24

Gospel: John 6:24-35