

Reflection Questions

- How have the four cardinal virtues (prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance) shaped your recovery?
- In this week's Gospel Reading, Jesus declares: "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."
 - How do you relate to this quote?

Monthly Catholic in Recovery Newsletter

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- Monthly testimony from CIR participants
- New meeting announcements
- Resources and articles overlapping the 12 steps and the sacraments

Sunday Mass Readings This Week

1st Reading: Amos 8:4-7

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

2nd Reading: 1 Timothy 2:1-8

Gospel: Luke 16:1-13

25th Sunday in Ordinary Time



As we recover from a state of hopelessness and isolation, regardless of our addiction and unhealthy attachment, we see that all matters in our lives require change. We slowly shed the layers of self-centeredness and replace old patterns with what the Church considers four cardinal virtues: prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance.

Prudence, which guides judgment based on sound reasoning, is gained by leaning on a core group of individuals that can help objectively weigh our decision-making. Fellowship that is rooted in Christ can help cultivate the virtue of prudence, and as we acknowledge the will of God in our lives, we become more in tune with the Spirit, who guides our judgment.

Justice is the result of doing what is right in the face of our fallen nature. Making amends to the people we have harmed—not so that we may hold our head high and feel good about ourselves, but because we desire the well-being of the other—requires justice.

Praying that our neighbor receives all the peace and serenity that we desire for ourselves is a gateway to justice, just as preparing to make amends with a contrite heart unites us with the impact of our dishonesty. The search for justice begins with assessing our conduct on a regular basis and taking measures to keep ourselves from the near occurrence of sin, especially when it becomes habitual.

Fortitude is a cardinal virtue that gives strength to persist through fear and difficulty. It unveils itself when we are tempted to take the easier, softer way in overcoming the root of our addictions and unhealthy attachments. Fortitude strengthens our commitment to go to any lengths to find sobriety while ensuring that our recovery is the foundation upon which everything else in our lives rests.

Temperance is the fruit of recovery. Depending on the addiction or unhealthy attachment we seek healing from, we may call it sobriety. In other cases, temperance may be seen as moderation (though many of us may have forfeited the ability to act out moderately). Temperance can be developed through seemingly small acts, such as refraining from a second cookie or avoiding a second lust-driven glance at someone of the opposite sex. When we practice temperance in other areas of our lives, the urges that fuel our compulsions fade.

The four cardinal virtues contribute to the upright way of living that is strengthened and nurtured through the grace of the sacraments and 12 steps. Penance, amends, and bringing justice to situations that have been filled with havoc shape the way we live and move forward with our lives. They build freedom in a way that, much like a life of virtue, we may have never considered possible for ourselves.

These four virtues underscore the theme of this week's Gospel Reading as Jesus tells the story of a cunning steward. Jesus concludes the story with an important lesson:

*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."*