1st Sunday of Advent

Catholic in Recovery

This Sunday marks the start of a new liturgical calendar with the season of Advent. This is a period to prepare ourselves for the coming of the Lord. As the days grow darker, we are reminded of the Light that awaits our faithful anticipation of the Lord's coming, celebrated at Christmas. At the same time, we are to prepare our souls for the second coming of Christ the King.

In our modern culture, this time of year is spent preparing our homes for family celebrations and emptying our pocketbooks to bring joy to those we love. There are a variety of ways we prepare for the communal events that the next month promises. Are we putting in the same kind of eager effort to ready ourselves to meet Jesus?

Recovery offers a daily re-focusing of our motives and behavior. Meetings like these give us the opportunity to live each day successfully using the spiritual principles of addiction recovery and our sacramental understanding of Jesus Christ as our savior and higher power.

Yesterday is but a memory and tomorrow is only a vision. However, each day well-lived makes every yesterday a memory of happiness and each tomorrow a vision of hope. Look well, therefore, to this day.

As we get closer to Advent, we draw near to our Lord, the Giver of Life. Often, this requires letting silence and stillness into our day, amplifying the intensity with which our heart beats for Him. Perhaps this includes shedding some repeated behavior that has kept us from being intimate with God and others. The more stuff we add to our lives, the more we must take time to free ourselves from attachments to anything but God. As we will proclaim in this week's Responsorial Psalm, "Lord, make us turn to you; let us see your face and we shall be saved."

While we embrace the stillness, darkness, and silence of Advent, we are to remain hopeful. As a result, we see an overlap between the initial phases of the liturgical calendar and the twelve steps of addiction recovery. Both ask us to identify with our own inherent powerlessness and need for a savior. Upon this realization, we are filled with hope that Christ can bring the change we desperately desire or keep us moving on the path of spiritual progress.

This Sunday's First Reading describes the hope of Christ and reliance we have on the Lord, even in the midst of our own human limitations. Hear the words of the prophet Isaiah as they both declare God's Lordship and the hope of His return:

You, Lord, are our father,
our redeemer you are named forever.
Why do you let us wander, O Lord, from your ways,
and harden our hearts so that we fear you not?
Return for the sake of your servants,
the tribes of your heritage.
Oh, that you would rend the heavens and come down,
with the mountains quaking before you,
while you wrought awesome deeds
we could not hope for,
such as they had not heard of from of old.
No ear has ever heard, no eye ever seen,
any God but you
doing such deeds for those who wait for him.

It has been said that, in recovery, what we go looking for, we go looking with. Let the Lord guide you on this journey, and allow you to share what you find with those in your midst.

Reflection Questions

o How are you spiritually, emotionally, and mentally preparing for the holiday season and all that it brings?

o What helps you stay living in today while making plans for tomorrow?

o What are you grateful for?

Happy Thanksgiving!
On behalf of the Catholic in Recovery community, we wish you and your family a blessed Thanksgiving

Although the past year has brought many hardships, we are grateful for the opportunity to connect with you via virtual meetings, new local groups, and friendships that are being formed around CIR. Please know that you can reach out to others in the community throughout the holidays as we encourage you to share contact information with others in the group.

Sunday Mass Readings this Week

1st Reading: Isaiah 63:16b-17, 19b, 64:2-7
Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19
2nd Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:3-9
Gospel: Mark 13:33-37