

Holy Week



This week we enter into the summit of the liturgical year—Holy Triduum—which spans from the evening of Holy Thursday to Easter Sunday. We celebrate the evening mass of the Lord's Supper on Thursday, mourn Christ's death on Good Friday, and rejoice in the Resurrection during the Easter Vigil and on Easter Sunday. Before we revel in the empty tomb, it would be prudent to prayerfully reflect upon the last days of Jesus.

The closer Jesus gets to the cross, the more his expression of love for the people he calls "his own" grows. The Holy Thursday Gospel Reading begins:

*Before the feast of Passover,
Jesus knew that his hour had come
to pass from this world to the Father.
He loved his own in the world and he loved them
to the end.*

Fully aware of what would be coming next, including betrayal from His own friends, Jesus rises from the table and shows what love looks like.

*He took a towel and tied it around his waist.
Then he poured water into a basin
and began to wash the disciples' feet
and dry them with the towel around his waist.*

At the center of Christian faith stands the belief that Jesus Christ sacrificed his own life to atone for the sinful and self-centered behavior that has plagued humanity since our inception. His model of perfect love includes not only sacrificing his life for us, but washing the feet of his disciples so that we may know we are loved and capable of loving.

He asks us to do the same for our fellow brothers and sisters impacted by a friend or family member's addiction. Recovery fellowships maintain this kind of outward-looking love that seeks service to those who are still struggling. We cannot "fix" the addict in our lives, but we can share experience, strength, and hope with people who know the heavy burden of family addiction.

Jesus repeatedly said that he had not come to be served but to serve. He washes the feet of the disciples with the cloth of divinity, backing his words with action. The same cloth will dry the water of new life poured out upon the newly baptized this Easter. We welcome them into the Church, eager to serve as Christ calls us to.

*So when he had washed their feet
and put his garments back on and reclined at table
again, he said to them,
"Do you realize what I have done for you?
You call me 'teacher' and 'master,' and rightly so,
for indeed I am.
If I, therefore, the master and teacher,
have washed your feet,
you ought to wash one another's feet.
I have given you a model to follow,
so that as I have done for you, you should also do."*

An important way for us to maintain freedom from the family disease of addiction is to carry the message of hope to others. Anything done to help a relative or friend of an addict/alcoholic is considered service: reaching out to a member in despair, sharing our story at meetings, forming groups, participating in public outreach, financially supporting meetings and accompanying a new member to a meeting.

We are also invited to allow Christ to wash our feet as we remain still and know that He is God. Jesus loved his disciples as friends by getting to know them, praying with them, seeing goodness and beauty within them, and drawing it out by pouring more love and service into them. We can count it a blessing that God is turning family addiction into something that draws us closer to Him and the path of His Son.

- How have you experienced Christian service from others in recovery and/or in the Church?
- How has service to other relatives and friends of an addict/alcoholic brought transformation in your life and in your recovery?
 - What helps you find balance between self-sacrifice and taking on another's problems?

Holy Week Blessings

On behalf of the Catholic in Recovery team and community, we wish you and your family a blessed Holy Week.

We are grateful to walk through Christ's life, death, and resurrection together. We recognize our recovery is a gift that can only be bestowed by God, who sacrificed everything for us out of love.

Holy Thursday Evening Mass Readings

1st Reading: Exodus 12:1-8, 11-14

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 116:12-13, 15-16bc, 17-18

2nd Reading: 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

Gospel: John 13:1-15