

## Solemnity of Christ the King



In recovery from the family disease of addiction, we learn that our own personal freedom requires some healthy limits with those we love. Unless we stand in our own integrity, our efforts to serve others may only enable addictive behavior and leave us even more resentful and disappointed.

This weekend, we celebrate the Solemnity of Christ the King as our liturgical calendar winds down. We can look with hope for the return of our King as we see the world through the lenses of service and sacramental recovery. While we may not be the vessel that can deliver healing to our loved one, we can serve others impacted by the family consequences of addiction as we commit to service. Addiction recovery literature emphasizes that service to others who have experienced a similar darkness is a necessary ingredient in the formula for our own serenity and spiritual growth.

This *service imperative* runs parallel with the message offered by Jesus in this weekend's liturgy. Since January, most of our Sunday Gospel Readings have been taken from the Gospel of Mark. Mark's gospel continually expresses the reign of God. Over the past several weeks, Jesus has been attempting to help us understand that he is the Messiah of a different kind of kingdom than most people imagine. When we begin the work of recovery, we begin to see what Jesus can do as he takes leadership of our lives.

This Sunday's Gospel Reading finds Jesus face-to-face with the authorities who will put him to death:

*Jesus answered,  
"My kingdom does not belong to this world.  
If my kingdom did belong to this world,  
my attendants would be fighting  
to keep me from being handed over to the Jews.  
But as it is, my kingdom is not here."  
So Pilate said to him, "Then you are a king?"  
Jesus answered, "You say I am a king.  
For this I was born and for this I came into the world,  
to testify to the truth.  
Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my  
voice."*

As attendants of Christ, we are not tasked with fighting or battling. Rather, he is the one who shed blood for all and invites us to declare the good news to others. As Catholics in recovery, this is not only a part of our Christian calling but also essential to our own joy and freedom.

## FYZWjcb Ei Yghcbg

Perhaps you are in a position where you feel you are most in need—your personal rock bottom. Embrace the hand that reaches out to you and embrace your identity as a beloved child of God, with whom He is well pleased. A new life awaits you, one that you may not be able to envision today.

Our fellowship is rooted in the body of Christ embracing the body of Christ. It is a gift to be in recovery, as few lifestyles offer such genuine opportunities to live under the reign of our Lord. Let us conclude this week's reflection with a prayer of service and thanksgiving (from *The Twelve Steps and the Sacraments*, p. 168-169):

Lord,  
Thank you for never giving up on your pursuit of me.  
Every step of my recovery journey  
has been paved by you,  
and you have crafted me beautifully.  
Please allow me to see the world  
through your lenses  
so that I may be of maximum service to you  
and to those around me.  
May I do for others what your love has done for me.  
In all things, give me a heart that seeks the weary,  
the lonely, and the hopeless  
so that, one day, we may all be united  
in your heavenly kingdom.  
Amen.

- How have you responded to the *service imperative* at the heart of 12-step recovery?
- What regular commitments do you have at a recovery meeting, your church, or elsewhere?
- How has your life been shaped by the service of another person?

### **A Note About Sponsorship**

*Sponsorship is a vital part of our recovery journey and is built on the model of Christian discipleship*

- A sponsor exhibits the qualities we'd like to see in ourselves. He/she guides us through the Twelve Steps and is a regular source of support and accountability.
- People often find a sponsor at meetings, asking someone who has been through the steps to be their sponsor.
- Like being of service, sponsoring others helps us live a happy, joyous, and free life, one day at a time.

### **Sunday Mass Readings this Week**

**1st Reading:** Daniel 7:13-14

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 93:1, 1-2, 5

**2nd Reading:** Revelations 1:5-8

**Gospel:** John 18:33b-37