

Solemnity of Christ the King



We are blessed to experience the hand of Christ working in our lives. Helping others who are in need has become a way of life for us, even when the needy have self-inflicted wounds. 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 lens of service and sacramental recovery.

Addiction recovery literature emphasizes the urgency with which we must take this approach. Pages 14 and 15 of the *Alcoholics Anonymous Big Book* speaks to the solution for all addicts:

“Particularly was it imperative to work with others as he had worked with me. Faith without works was dead, he said. And how appallingly true for the alcoholic! For if an alcoholic failed to perfect and enlarge his spiritual life through work and self-sacrifice for others, he could not survive the certain trials and low spots ahead. If he did not work, he would surely drink again, and if he drank, he would surely die. Then faith would be dead indeed.”

This *service imperative* runs parallel with the message offered by Jesus in this Sunday’s Gospel Reading. Since January, most of our liturgical Gospel Readings have been taken from the Gospel of Mark. Mark’s gospel has a great theme of 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 has shed blood for all and invites us to declare this good news to others. As Catholics in recovery, this is not only a part of our Christian calling but also essential to our freedom, abstinence, and sobriety.

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 stay clean, sober, abstinent, and free.

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