

## SOLEMNITY OF THE MOST HOLY BODY &amp; BLOOD OF CHRIST

The journey of recovery invites us into a new way of living rooted in both spiritual principles and a real relationship with God. For those recovering from dysfunctional family systems, this often includes learning how to meet our needs in healthy ways rather than relying on old survival patterns. The Twelve Steps guide us toward honesty, awareness, and healing, while the sacraments offer grace, stability, and nourishment. Recovery becomes something we live each day.

This Sunday, the Church celebrates the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ. In the Gospel, Jesus says, “Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him.” This is an invitation into communion. It is a reminder that we are not meant to live disconnected from God or from one another.

Many of us know what it is like to look for safety, identity, or comfort in ways that were shaped by our early experiences. We may have learned to rely on control, withdrawal, people-pleasing, or emotional numbing. At one time, these patterns helped us cope. Over time, they often left us feeling empty or disconnected.

The Eucharist speaks directly to that experience. Jesus offers Himself as true nourishment. He invites us to receive rather than perform, to be present rather than guarded. In receiving the Body and Blood of Christ, we are reminded that our needs can be met in relationship with God.

This understanding develops over time. In early recovery, it can feel unfamiliar to slow down, to notice our needs, or to trust others. We may still rely on old patterns without realizing it. As

we continue in recovery, something begins to shift. We become more aware of our reactions and more open to new ways of living.

The Twelve Steps support this process. Step One helps us recognize that old patterns are no longer serving us. Steps Two and Three invite us to trust God and turn toward Him. Step Ten encourages ongoing awareness and honesty. These practices help us move from unconscious reaction to intentional living.

Saint Mark Ji Tianxiang offers a powerful witness for those who know what it is like to feel stuck or unable to overcome deeply rooted patterns. He struggled with opium addiction for many years and was denied access to the sacraments because he could not overcome it. This likely carried deep feelings of shame and separation. Even so, he continued to attend Mass faithfully and remained devoted to Christ.

In the end, he died a martyr, proclaiming his faith. His story reminds us that our worth is not defined by our struggles or our ability to change quickly. God sees the heart and honors the desire to remain connected. Healing may be gradual, but faithfulness and openness to God’s presence are never wasted.

Recovery teaches us that growth is gradual. We may revisit old feelings or patterns, but we are no longer trapped in them. We have new tools, new awareness, and support from others.

The Eucharist becomes a place where we bring our whole selves. It is also a reminder that we belong to a larger body. We are not alone in our healing.

The Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ reminds us that recovery is not sustained by effort alone. We need grace. We

need nourishment. In the Eucharist, we receive what we need to continue growing in freedom and connection.

## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- When have you relied on old patterns for safety or comfort, and how have they affected you?

- How are you learning to recognize and respond to your needs in healthier ways?

- What helps you remain open to receiving support from God and others?

## MASS READINGS

**FIRST READING** Deuteronomy 8:2-3, 14b-16a

**RESP. PS.** Psalm 147:12-13, 14-15, 19-20

**SECOND READING** 1 Corinthians 10:16-17

**GOSPEL** John 6:51-58