

CIR IS MEMBER-SUPPORTED, MISSION-DRIVEN

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CIR Website

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Venmo

CIR ANNOUNCEMENTS

UPCOMING 2027 CIR RETREATS — SAVE THE DATES!

CIR retreats create space to step away from daily distractions, deepen your relationship with God, and experience recovery through prayer, fellowship, the Twelve Steps, and the sacramental life of the Church.

DELRAY BEACH, FL January 30–31

St. Vincent Ferrer Catholic Church

TRAPPIST, KY March 12–14

Abbey of Gethsemani

MALVERN, PA April 9–11

Malvern Retreat House

ONTARIO, CANADA July 23–25

Queen of the Apostles Renewal Centre

Scan the QR code or visit catholicinrecovery.com/events to learn more.



MASS READINGS

FIRST READING Exodus 22:20–26

RESP. PS. Psalm 18:2–3, 3–4, 47, 51

SECOND READING 1 Thessalonians 1:5c–10

GOSPEL Matthew 22:34–40



CIR WEEKLY MEETING REFLECTION
ACDH RECOVERY

THIRTIETH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

For many adult children, the command to love our neighbor can sound familiar. We learned early to pay attention to what other people needed, and some of us became very good at keeping peace or making ourselves useful. The harder part of Jesus' command can be the final two words: "*as yourself.*" Recovery invites us to consider whether the love we offer others includes the same dignity and care we are learning to receive for ourselves.

In Sunday's gospel, a scholar asks Jesus which commandment is greatest (Matthew 22:34–40). Jesus answers, "*You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.*" Then He adds, "*You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*" These loves belong together. Loving another person does not require abandoning ourselves, and caring for ourselves does not make us selfish.

Family dysfunction can distort both sides of that command. We may have learned that love means keeping everyone comfortable or accepting responsibility for emotions that are not ours. Others may have protected themselves through distance and found it difficult to trust anyone enough to be known. Recovery gives us room to examine these patterns without turning them into fixed identities.

Step Four can be especially useful here. A searching and fearless moral inventory helps us look honestly at the ways fear, resentment, and old family roles still shape our relationships. The purpose is not to produce another list of reasons to criticize ourselves. It is to see more clearly where the past is still directing the present.

Step Five moves that truth into relationship. Sharing what we have discovered with God and another person interrupts the isolation that often surrounds shame. We may discover that something we have carried as a personal defect was once an adaptation to a difficult home. At the same time, we can take responsibility for how that pattern affects people today. Both truths can be held together.

Steps Eight and Nine may eventually invite us to repair relationships where our own coping patterns caused harm. Before any amends, Step Eight asks for willingness. We can bring a difficult person to prayer without pretending the relationship was healthy. Seeing someone as our neighbor does not require returning to a role that erases our needs. In fact, loving our neighbor as ourselves may require us to practice a new kind of honesty in which our own dignity is no longer negotiable.

The first reading helps clarify this. God commands His people not to exploit the vulnerable or mistreat the stranger (Exodus 22:20–26). Christian love protects dignity. It does not ask the vulnerable person to remain available for further harm.

Saint Paul praises the Thessalonians because they “*turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God*” (1 Thessalonians 1:9). Adult children may need to turn away from an old dependence on approval as the measure of whether we

are okay. When God becomes the steadier center, we can tolerate another person’s disappointment without immediately assuming we have done something wrong.

Jesus’ command gives us a healthier vision of relationship. We can love generously without disappearing. We can tell the truth without becoming cruel, and we can receive care without first proving our usefulness. The Steps help us recognize where old patterns need healing and give us practical ways to repair what belongs to us.

Over time, love becomes less driven by fear and more rooted in freedom. We learn that our neighbor deserves dignity, and so do we. Both are held within the love of God.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- Where do you still confuse loving someone with keeping them comfortable or taking responsibility for how they feel?

- How has honest inventory or sharing with a trusted person helped you understand an old family pattern with greater clarity and compassion?

- What has helped you practice loving your neighbor as yourself, without abandoning either their dignity or your own?
