

CIR IS MEMBER-SUPPORTED, MISSION-DRIVEN

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CIR Website

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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
FAMILY & FRIENDS RECOVERY

THIRTIETH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

One of the clearest signs of family recovery is that love begins to look different. We may still care deeply about someone who is struggling, but we become less willing to confuse love with rescuing or control. We start paying attention to our own reactions and discover that changing the way we show up can bring greater peace, even when another person has not changed.

In Sunday's gospel, a scholar of the law 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 two commandments give family recovery an important direction. We are called to love the person who is struggling, but not at the expense of our own dignity or relationship with God.

Addiction can pull an entire family into patterns organized around fear. We may spend so much energy anticipating another crisis that our own spiritual life becomes secondary. Recovery helps restore a healthier order. Loving God comes first, and from that foundation we can love another person without trying to become their savior.

Step Ten is especially helpful in this work. Continuing to take personal inventory keeps us focused on what actually belongs to us. We begin noticing when fear has turned into control or when resentment has shaped the way we speak. When we are wrong, we admit it promptly. This does not mean taking responsibility for another person's addiction. It means remaining willing to examine our own behavior instead of making someone else's behavior the only subject of our attention.

Steps Eight and Nine can deepen that healing. Family members sometimes discover that attempts to help have caused harm of their own. We may have shamed, threatened, enabled, or allowed resentment to harden our hearts. Step Eight invites a conversion before any amends are made. We bring those relationships to prayer and ask God to help us see the other person as our neighbor, even if the relationship remains complicated.

Step Nine then asks us to repair what is ours to repair without using the amends as another attempt to manage the outcome. Prayer can help us separate a sincere desire to repair from the old desire to be understood, vindicated, or reassured. We can acknowledge our part honestly while leaving the other person free to respond as they choose. In some relationships, love may still require firm boundaries. Forgiveness and accountability can exist together. This gives love room to become more honest and less dependent on whether the other person responds as we hoped.

The first reading reinforces this practical vision of love. God commands Israel not to exploit the vulnerable or mistreat the stranger (Exodus 22:20–26). Biblical love

is not sentimental. It respects dignity and refuses to use another person for our own emotional security.

Saint Paul praises the Thessalonians because they “turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God” (1 Thessalonians 1:9). Family recovery involves a similar turning. Another person's choices can no longer occupy the place that belongs to God. As that happens, our love becomes steadier and less driven by fear.

Jesus tells us to love our neighbor as ourselves. Family recovery teaches us that both parts belong together. We can care deeply without disappearing into someone else's life. We can make amends for our own behavior while releasing what does not belong to us. Over time, love becomes less about fixing another person and more about becoming faithful, honest, and free in the way we relate.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- Where has fear or concern for someone you love begun shaping your own behavior in ways you need to examine?

- How has taking your own inventory helped you love someone more freely without taking responsibility for their recovery?

- What has helped soften your heart toward a loved one while still allowing you to maintain healthy boundaries?
