

This week the Church enters the most sacred time of the year. The Holy Triduum begins on Holy Thursday, continues through Good Friday, and culminates in the joy of Easter. These days invite us to walk slowly with Christ through His final hours—through service, suffering, surrender, and resurrection.

For many adult children of dysfunctional homes, this journey can resonate deeply. Growing up in unstable or unpredictable environments often meant learning to navigate intense emotional experiences. Moments of closeness or peace could quickly give way to conflict, disappointment, or fear. These early experiences sometimes shape how we respond to relationships and challenges later in life.

Holy Week invites us to reflect on how God meets us even in those complicated parts of our story. The Gospel for Holy Thursday begins with a striking description of Jesus' love for His disciples (John 13:1):

Before the feast of Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to pass from this world to the Father. He loved his own in the world and he loved them to the end.

Knowing that betrayal lies ahead, Jesus chooses to serve His disciples by washing their feet (John 13:4–5):

He rose from supper and took off his outer garments. He took a towel and tied it around his waist. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and dry them with the towel around his waist.

This act of humility shows that love does not rely on power or control. Instead, it is expressed through service and compassion.

For adult children of dysfunctional homes, control can sometimes become a survival strategy. As children we may have learned to monitor the moods of others, avoid conflict, or take responsibility for situations beyond our control. These patterns once helped us cope, but they can become burdens when carried into adulthood.

Recovery offers an opportunity to develop healthier ways of living. Through meetings, prayer, and honest conversations, we begin recognizing patterns that no longer serve us. We learn that our worth is not defined by our ability to manage everyone else's emotions.

Good Friday brings us face-to-face with suffering. The Passion reminds us that even Jesus experienced betrayal, misunderstanding, and abandonment. Yet instead of responding with resentment or control, He entrusts Himself to the Father.

For many people in ACDH recovery, learning to trust God in this way can feel like a new experience. It means allowing ourselves to acknowledge pain while believing that our story is not defined by those wounds.

As the Triduum unfolds, the darkness of Good Friday eventually gives way to the hope of Easter. The Resurrection reveals that God can bring life out of circumstances that once seemed hopeless. Recovery reflects this same mystery. As we continue showing up in supportive communities and seeking spiritual growth, we begin experiencing new freedom. Old fears loosen their grip, healthier relationships develop, and our understanding of ourselves begins to change.

Holy Week reminds us that healing is a journey rather than a single moment. By staying close to Christ through each

stage of the Triduum, we discover that God is present even in the parts of our story that once felt overwhelming. In that presence, we gradually learn that the wounds of the past do not have the final word.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- Where are you noticing God helping you respond to life with greater peace or clarity than you once did?

- What does practicing trust in God look like for you when old fears or control patterns begin to surface?

- Where are you experiencing new freedom or healthier boundaries in your relationships today?

HOLY THURSDAY EVENING MASS READINGS

FIRST READING Exodus 12:1-8, 11-14

RESP. PS. Psalm 116:12-13, 15-16bc, 17-18

SECOND READING 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

GOSPEL John 13:1-15

