

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 ultimately resurrection.

For those who love someone struggling with addiction, this journey can feel deeply familiar. Many of us have experienced seasons of hope followed by disappointment or fear. The emotional ups and downs of addiction can leave us wondering what role we are meant to play and how to remain steady when circumstances around us feel uncertain.

Holy Week reminds us that love sometimes involves walking through difficult moments without fully understanding how the story will unfold. The Gospel for Holy Thursday begins with a powerful 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 and suffering are near, Jesus expresses His love in an unexpected way. During the Last Supper He rises from the table and washes the feet of His disciples (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.

In the ancient world this task belonged to servants, yet Jesus willingly performs it for His friends. His example

reveals that love is not simply a feeling but a posture of humility and service.

Family members and friends impacted by addiction often recognize this form of love. Caring for someone in pain can require patience, honesty, and courage. Yet recovery teaches us an important balance. Loving another person does not mean controlling their choices or sacrificing our own well-being. Instead, we are invited to love with humility while entrusting outcomes to God.

Good Friday brings another layer of meaning. The cross reminds us that suffering exists even in the presence of love. Watching someone struggle with addiction can stir grief, anger, confusion, and fear. These emotions are not signs of weak faith. They are part of the human experience.

Jesus does not avoid suffering during His Passion. Instead, He entrusts Himself to the Father while walking through it. In a similar way, family recovery involves learning to surrender what we cannot control. This surrender allows us to focus on our own healing. Attending meetings, seeking support, and setting healthy boundaries can restore clarity and peace. Over time we begin to realize that caring for our own spiritual and emotional health also allows us to love others more authentically.

Holy Week moves gradually from darkness toward light. The Resurrection does not erase the events of Good Friday, but it reveals that suffering does not have the final word.

For those affected by addiction, hope sometimes grows slowly. It appears through small steps found in moments of honesty, healthier relationships, and renewed trust in God's presence.

As we walk with Christ through the Triduum, we are reminded that God is present in every part of the journey. Even in moments of uncertainty, His love continues to guide and sustain us.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- When have you experienced the tension between loving someone deeply and recognizing the limits of what you can control?

- What does healthy surrender to God look like in your current situation?

- Where are you noticing signs of healing or renewed hope in your life 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

