

Sixth Sunday of Easter



The progress we make in our recovery takes many forms and happens at various rates of change. Sometimes, we can recognize monumental growth taking place in our lives and in the way we respond to events happening around us. At other times, it can feel like we take three steps forward only to take two steps back. In those moments, peace and serenity might seem unattainable given the state of our mental and emotional condition.

It is important to lean on a fellowship of believers who share similar experiences to avoid complete discouragement. As we reflected last week, we are bound to face obstacles in our spiritual journey. It takes a lot of courage to step into the darkness of our addictions, compulsions, and unhealthy attachments, especially as our previous patterns were to avoid and deny the Great Reality deep within us.

At first, we borrow hope from our brothers and sisters next to us, knowing that they can relate to our experience. When we were active in addiction and compulsive behavior, many core beliefs were formed that need to be replaced: "I am not worthy," "I am beyond help," "I'll never change," "I can't trust others," "I can't be loved," and "I'm too unique," are just a few of the lies that become ingrained within us until we find spiritual help.

While integrating the Twelve Steps and the sacraments of the Church, we see God propelling us to new heights. Slowly, we become honest with ourselves and our dependence upon the things we thought we absolutely needed begins to loosen. Moments of peace arise. We experience others in recovery loving us until we are capable of loving ourselves.

As we move toward Pentecost and the descent of the Holy Spirit, we hear Jesus offer a word of hope and peace. He speaks truth to the lies that enslave us and shares the power of the Holy Spirit to guide us to freedom. We hear Jesus proclaim in this Sunday's Gospel reading (John 14:26-27):

*The Advocate, the Holy Spirit,
whom the Father will send in my name,
will teach you everything
and remind you of all that I told you.
Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you.
Not as the world gives do I give it to you.
Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid.*

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The disciples received a similar message from Jesus when He returned to them after His resurrection. While showing His wounds to His afraid and isolated followers, Jesus calmly greeted them by saying, “Peace be with you,” or “Shalom”—a Hebrew term that not only means peace but also implies wholeness, harmony, and completeness.

We have been crafted in the image and likeness of God. Our identity lies in the unmerited grace that we are His beloved sons and daughters, regardless of our attempts to cut ourselves off from the Lord. It is possible that our efforts to find comfort are rooted in a desire that only God can fill. As we recognize the limitations and consequences of directing life according to our own will, we trust that our Lord will do for us that which we cannot do for ourselves.

- Looking back on where you were before you found recovery, what changes are most notable in your attitude, behavior, and spiritual life?
- Consider and describe your core beliefs—what they used to be, what happened, and what they are now.
- How do you experience peace and serenity through your recovery journey?

Attend a CIR Retreat this Year

Renew & Strengthen your recovery, enliven your faith, and connect with fellow CIR community members

- June 7: Oconomowoc, WI - Redemptorist Retreat Center
- June 21-22: Hanceille, AL - Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament
- October 17-19: Menlo Park, CA - Vallombrosa Center
- Experience healing through the sacraments, personal testimonies, CIR meetings, workshops, and fellowship
- **Find more information and register at www.catholicinrecovery.com/events**

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First Reading: Acts 15:1-2, 22-29

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8

Second Reading: Revelation 21:10-14, 22-23

Gospel: John 14:23-29