

Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord



Jesus spent significant time journeying with his disciples before approaching his fateful death. Over the course of three years, twelve ordinary individuals were called by name, taught by Christ, shared meals together, and witnessed our Lord offer tender healing to those who sought him. They knew him because they spent time with him, not because they were theologians or biblical scholars.

Throughout the Easter season, the first readings in our liturgies are taken from Acts of the Apostles, giving us an opportunity to see the Holy Spirit working through a group of men and women who were empowered by Christ. Peter, who turned his back on Jesus as he was being put to death, had a radical conversion of spirit and led many to Christianity. We can see our own path woven through the stories of the apostles who, after having a firsthand encounter with Jesus, were filled with joy, freedom, and hope.

It is prudent that we learn from the apostles' eagerness to serve as we make ourselves available to our brothers and sisters desperate for hope and freedom from the bondage of addictions, compulsions, and unhealthy attachments. Spending time in Scripture, we can see how the apostles' boldness brought Christian faith to all corners of the globe.

We celebrate the Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord this Sunday. The Gospel reading reveals the last moment of Jesus' resurrected life with His disciples, giving us a vision of what we can expect when we, too, reach the end of our earthly life if we keep the faith (Luke 24:50-53):

*Then he led them out as far as Bethany,
raised his hands, and blessed them.
As he blessed them he parted from them
and was taken up to heaven.
They did him homage
and then returned to Jerusalem with great joy,
and they were continually in the temple praising
God.*

Whether embarking upon our first month of recovery or counting decades, we get an opportunity to return to the truth that is God's word. In our recovery from alcoholism, drug addiction, compulsive eating behaviors, gambling, lust and love addiction, internet and technology addiction, codependency, and other unhealthy attachments, we get the unique opportunity to experience a past that keeps us moving toward a brighter future. We know the depths and darkness of what the world has to offer, and today we choose a life rooted in Christ.

God is our answer. As faithful Catholics, we get to experience Him in the sacraments of healing and forgiveness. He surrounds us in the body of Christ, which makes up our fellowship. We are in the world but not of the world, and we can make a home here while remaining in God and seeking to do His will. While doing so, we look forward to the day when we'll share in Christ's joy completely.

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- How has 12-step recovery helped you form a personal relationship with Jesus Christ?
- How has desperation fueled your recovery, and how do you remain committed when that desperation fades?
- How do you experience hope, freedom, and joy in recovery? Contrast that with your experience while active in your addiction, compulsion, or unhealthy attachment.

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 1:1-11

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 47:2-3, 6-7, 8-9

Second Reading: Ephesians 1:17-23

Gospel: Luke 24:46-53