

Reflection Questions

- How has the cross of recovery brought deeper healing into your life?
- What does it mean for you to follow Christ in love, sacrifice, and chastity?
- Where are you still tempted to hide, and how can God meet you there?

Virtual Recovery Summit Next Week

*A Day of Hope and Healing:
A Catholic Response to Addiction*

- The global CIR community is partnering with iTHIRST Initiative for an encounter with Christ and each other
- Keynote presentations to be given by Dr. Matthew Breuninger, Dawn Eden Goldstein, and Fr. Sean Kilcawley
- This virtual event will include talks, testimonies, recovery workshops, CIR meetings, praise and worship, and more
- Find more information and register today at www.catholicinrecovery.com/2025-summit

Sunday Mass Readings this Week

First Reading: Numbers 21:4b-9

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 78:1bc-2, 34-35, 36-37, 38

Second Reading: Philippians 2:6-11

Gospel: John 3:13-17

Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross



The cross is the great paradox of our faith. What appeared to be defeat became the path to victory. What looked like shame became glory. On the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, we remember that Christ didn't avoid suffering—He entered into it and transformed it. For those of us in recovery from lust addiction, this is the very path we walk: through brokenness into wholeness, through vulnerability into healing.

Lust promised comfort but delivered isolation. It offered control but led to chaos. We often found ourselves stuck in patterns of hiding, compulsivity, and shame. But recovery teaches us a new way—one of radical honesty, surrender, and integrity. Step Three invites us to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God. This act of surrender is echoed in the cross, where Jesus gave Himself entirely for our redemption.

In this Sunday's Gospel, Jesus speaks of the cross as a source of life (John 3:14–17):

“And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life.

For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him.”

These words carry deep significance for us. Many of us lived under the weight of self-condemnation. We believed we were unworthy of love. We feared exposure, judgment, or rejection. But Jesus tells us plainly: He came not to condemn, but to save. The cross is not the end—it is the beginning of new life. In the Eucharist, confession, and daily surrender, we experience that new life breaking in.

The cross also invites us to live differently. Recovery isn't just about abstaining from behaviors—it's about becoming people of integrity, honesty, and love. We learn to offer our bodies and hearts to God, not as tools of gratification, but as vessels of worship. This takes daily effort. It means reaching out instead of isolating. It means living in the light, even when we feel vulnerable.

As we grow in spiritual maturity, we begin to see that true intimacy is not something we grasp, but something we receive. The love of Christ on the cross teaches us what it means to give ourselves freely, without manipulation or distortion. We are invited into a love that is healing, holy, and whole.

Let us exalt the cross in our recovery—not as a symbol of punishment, but as a sign that grace is always greater than our sin. In Christ, we find strength for the journey, and through the fellowship of others walking the same path, we discover that healing is possible, one day at a time.