

Reflection Questions

- Do you have a prayerful relationship with Mary?
 - If so, how does it influence your recovery?

- Can you recall how you were/are greeted with honor and respect by others in recovery?

- How do you maintain closeness and connection with your fellows in recovery outside of meetings?

More Resources Available Online!

Find helpful articles that will strengthen your faith and recovery journey by visiting www.catholicinrecovery.com.

At least once per week, we share articles on a variety of topics, including personal stories, education, and reflections related to the 12 steps and the sacramental life of the Catholic Church.

Sunday Mass Readings This Week

1st Reading: Jeremiah 38:4-6, 8-10

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 40:2, 3, 4, 18

2nd Reading: Hebrews 12:1-4

Gospel: Luke 12:49-53

20th Sunday in Ordinary Time/ Feast of the Assumption



As people in recovery, we have experienced life on the spiritual fringes. Therefore, we can praise God for keeping us within His grip throughout our journey. God is full of surprises, and has a deep love for the lowly whom He raises up. We celebrate the Feast of the Assumption of Mary on Thursday, August 15. The Gospel Reading for this special holy day describes Mary's visit to her cousin Elizabeth, who is pregnant with John the Baptist. Elizabeth greets Mary:

*"Blessed are you among women,
and blessed is the fruit of your womb.
And how does this happen to me,
that the mother of my Lord should come to me?
For at the moment the sound of your greeting
reached my ears,
the infant in my womb leaped for joy.
Blessed are you who believed
that what was spoken to you by the Lord
would be fulfilled."*

As we honor the Feast of the Assumption of Mary, we celebrate that the mother of Jesus was *raised* by God's side, in proportion to her humility, shown by her acceptance of God's will for her. Mary responds to Elizabeth:

*"My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord;
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior
for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.
From this day all generations will call me blessed:
the Almighty has done great things for me
and holy is his Name.
He has mercy on those who fear him
in every generation.
He has shown the strength of his arm,
and has scattered the proud in their conceit.
He has cast down the mighty from their thrones,
and has lifted up the lowly.
He has filled the hungry with good things,
and the rich he has sent away empty.
He has come to the help of his servant Israel
for he has remembered his promise of mercy,
the promise he made to our fathers,
to Abraham and his children forever."*

Mary is the model of humility, or *lowliness*, as Saint Luke puts it. We can look to her and see the virtue claimed by working through the 12 steps of addiction recovery. We can be raised regardless of how far we have fallen, and we greet each other with honor and respect when we put aside our self-absorption to step into the shoes of a new group member or someone reaching out for help.

Mary travels to visit her cousin and engages in the first Christian fellowship. Pope Francis describes this as significant and an image for what we are called to bring to our families and communities as he addressed a crowd in Rome a few years ago:

"The coming of Jesus, through Mary, created not only a climate of joy and fraternal communion, but also a climate of faith that brings hope, prayer, and praise. We want all this in our homes today, too. Celebrating Mary assumed into heaven, we want her to once again bring us, our families, and our communities that immense gift, that unique grace which we must always ask for before the other graces that also are important to us: the grace that is Jesus Christ!"

Freedom and joy await us as we engage in fellowship together. Mountains of shame which separate us are no match for an attitude of honesty, openness, and willingness. Together, we can do great things. This Sunday's Second Reading echoes this stance:

*Since we are surrounded by
so great a cloud of witnesses,
let us rid ourselves of every burden and sin
that clings to us
and persevere in running the race
that lies before us
while keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus,
the leader and perfecter of faith.*