

Reflection Questions

- How do you relate the sacramental grace provided by your baptism to the awakening that your life has become unmanageable due to addiction or unhealthy attachments?
- What daily practices help maintain gratitude for the unmerited gift of recovery and faith you've received?
- Have you ever found yourself taking your faith and recovery for granted?

Additional Resources Available Online

Visit www.catholicinrecovery.com for articles and reflections overlapping our faith with the 12 steps

- Supportive articles detailing each step with personal experience and educational advice
- Reflections from fellow Catholics in recovery specific to a variety of addictions and attachments
- Learn more about spiritual tools and resources for overcoming challenges in recovery

Sunday Mass Readings This Week

1st Reading: 2 Kings 5:14-17

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 98:1, 2-3, 3-4

2nd Reading: 2 Timothy 2:8-13

Gospel: Luke 17:11-19

28th Sunday in Ordinary Time



An essential part of Catholic spirituality is maintaining a connection with the brokenness inherent within us. This is not a bad thing. In fact, it reminds us of our need to keep Christ—His life, passion, death, and resurrection—ever present in our lives. When we enter or exit a Catholic church, most of us make it a habit to dip our fingers into the holy water and make the Sign of the Cross.

The simple plunge into these waters is a way to bind us once again with the grace of the Sacrament of Baptism, through which we recognize our powerlessness and the unmanageability of our lives, while giving thanks for the redeeming power of our Savior, Jesus Christ. This is our identity. It is who we are, and it is who God is for us. This week's Sunday Mass readings affirm the unmerited gift that is our baptism and the grace received when we remain committed to our recovery efforts.

This week's Old Testament reading foreshadows the washing of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit:

Naaman went down and plunged into the Jordan seven times at the word of Elisha, the man of God. His flesh became again like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean of his leprosy.

Naaman returned with his whole retinue to the man of God.

On his arrival he stood before Elisha and said, "Now I know that there is no God in all the earth, except in Israel. Please accept a gift from your servant."

Elisha, a prophet and wonder-worker, does not accept the gift. Instead, he acknowledges that the only repayment necessary is to give to others the gift that we have freely been given. Recovery works the same way. Many people get sober or find freedom from their addiction and attachments, although *remaining* in the Light tends to be a challenge. Unless we repeatedly return to the Lord to give thanks through word and action, we are bound to seek the dark comforts which divide us.

The first step is a crucial starting point where the insufficiency of our human resources is clearly understood. Like our baptism, this step is a tangible way to carve space in our lives to surrender to the mercy made available by God's grace. Many of us like to think that we can achieve the work of the divine all by ourselves.

Within this group, there are a handful of people who, after a few unsuccessful attempts, have collected enough data to determine that the best path in life is the one paved by God's will. Others need to be mangled quite a bit before returning to the garments of Baptism or other avenue of deep surrender. This is the message shared by Jesus in this week's Gospel Reading:

As Jesus continued his journey to Jerusalem, he traveled through Samaria and Galilee. As he was entering a village, ten lepers met him. They stood at a distance from him and raised their voices, saying, "Jesus, Master! Have pity on us!" And when he saw them, he said, "Go show yourselves to the priests." As they were going they were cleansed. And one of them, realizing he had been healed, returned, glorifying God in a loud voice; and he fell at the feet of Jesus and thanked him. He was a Samaritan. Jesus said in reply, "Ten were cleansed, were they not? Where are the other nine? Has none but this foreigner returned to give thanks to God?" Then he said to him, "Stand up and go; your faith has saved you."