

Reflection Questions

- What kinds of *field hospital* experiences have you had at your local church where you felt a sense of healing and hospitality?
- Have you experienced moments where your faith seems more like checking off boxes and doing things because they're your duty?
 - What's helped you bounce back from this?
- How does your 'yes' mean 'yes' and your 'no' mean 'no'?

Catholic in Recovery Blog Resources

Visit catholicinrecovery.com/blog to access weekly articles on a variety of topics such as:

- *How to Respond to Anti-Catholic Sentiment in Recovery Meetings*
- *Patrons and Saints to Pray to for Addiction Recovery*
- *The Body Keeps Score: Real Recovery Includes Emotional Healing*

Sunday Mass Readings This Week

1st Reading: Sirach 15:15-20

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 119:1-2, 4-5, 17-18, 33-34

2nd Reading: 1 Corinthians 2:6-10

Gospel: Matthew 5:17-37

6th Sunday in Ordinary Time



Soon after he became the Holy Father, Pope Francis mentioned in an interview that he sees “the Church as a field hospital after battle.” We know by our own personal experience, as well as global trends on addiction and other issues, that we are all wounded and in need of healing. Thus, rather than serving as a dispatcher and handing off the vulnerable, the local church ought to be a beacon of light to anyone seeking to make difficult changes in their lives.

Showing up to be part of a fellowship helps us grow while providing a place for others to come find new life and new perspective. By doing so, we open the doors of the Church to share the saving grace of Jesus Christ. This is not an act that keeps the wonders of Christ focused inward, but rather one that allows our Lord to enter the world for all to be awakened.

This week's Second Reading describes the process of coming together to share about God working in our lives. Saint Paul declares:

Brothers and sisters:

*We speak a wisdom to those who are mature,
not a wisdom of this age,
nor of the rulers of this age who are passing away.
Rather, we speak God's wisdom, mysterious, hidden,
which God predetermined before the ages for our
glory,
and which none of the rulers of this age knew.*

When we put our faith in the Lord, our recovery bears rich fruit and offers freedom from the shackles of addiction and unhealthy attachment. This is a dramatic change from the pursuit of power, pleasure, honor, and wealth which lies at the heart of self-centered addiction. Through humble prayer, we ask God for knowledge of His will and the power to carry it out.

Some of us may have grown up with a faith full of duties and checklists that is void of love and self-sacrifice. Matthew's Gospel, which we will read throughout this liturgical year, paints Jesus as the new Moses, whose mission is not to destroy Jewish Law, but to ground it more firmly in a heartfelt, loving relationship between us and God. As we get into the depths of our recovery, we find a similar transition taking place. Our spiritual progress relies on improved, authentic relationships with the body of Christ, which often demands more than just checking boxes.

From the human point of view, dutifully checking off boxes seems like a much *easier and softer way* to get on God's good side than approaching a neighbor or relative we've been feuding with. Thankfully, the 12 steps move us deeper in relationship with God and others while providing a framework to mend relationships.

Jesus notes that a simple way to maintain loving relationships with others is to, "Let your 'Yes' mean 'Yes,' and your 'No' mean 'No.'" Too often, we abandon the truth and shrink ourselves in front of others while losing our sense of integrity. As a result of our recovery, we gain freedom and a trust in God that makes honesty come a little bit easier.

By authentically sharing our experience, strength, and hope with others in meetings, we join the important movement to help our Church develop a "field hospital" mentality where the wounded are welcomed and offered healing. Our solution rests in Christ and the outpouring of love He makes available every day.