

Solemnity of the Body & Blood of Christ



The twelve steps of addiction recovery and the sacraments of the Catholic Church are rooted in the reality of God's presence with us. While each step and sacrament have ritual and reverence regarding initiation, they are to be continually practiced.

This week, the Church celebrates the Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ. Our Gospel Reading is taken from the 6th Chapter of John's Gospel:

*Jesus said to them,
"Amen, amen, I say to you,
unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and
drink his blood,
you do not have life within you.
Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood
has eternal life,
and I will raise him on the last day.
For my flesh is true food,
and my blood is true drink.
Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood
remains in me and I in him.*

The source of our eternal life is found in Christ. We are given a tangible way to physically remain in his flesh, and we are recently finding increased appreciation for the opportunity to participate in this grace-filled sacrament through receiving the Eucharist at Mass. We might also be coming to realize that we are capable of persevering more than we thought.

Step Ten gives us the tools to stay active in the grace we receive through the Eucharist by *continuing to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it*. There is a spiritual principle of perseverance woven within this step that can be found when we continue to seek union with God. We remain humble, admit our powerlessness over addiction, take an honest inventory, share it with God and another human being, ask Him to remove our shortcomings, and make amends when it will bring healing and justice to situations we've harmed. Instead of reacting to the addict or alcoholic in our lives, we act on our own behalf and care for our own needs.

This may sound like a lifestyle that is unreachable. Perseverance does not come on our own self-will. Remember, you are not alone and will find the necessary support from the strength of God, the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, and the group of individuals you will find walking a similar journey. Even if this is a stage of the twelve steps you have not worked through, there is still a lot of spiritual wisdom found in discussing these principles.

Diving further into the mystery of the Eucharist in his book *Our One Great Act of Fidelity*, Ronald Rolheiser explains:

"We participate in Jesus' sacrifice for us when we, like him, let ourselves be broken down, when we, like him, become selfless. The Eucharist, as sacrifice, invites us to become like the kernels of wheat that make up the bread and the clusters of grapes that make up the wine, broken down and crushed so that we can become part of communal loaf and single cup...

What is supposed to happen at the Eucharist is that we, the congregation, by sacrificing the things that divide us, should become the body and blood of Christ. More so than the bread and wine, we, the people, are meant to be changed, to be transubstantiated.

The Eucharist, as sacrifice, asks us to become the bread of brokenness and the chalice of vulnerability."

Let us come together in the name of Jesus Christ and find unity in his Body and Blood, praying for the willingness to overcome fear and doubt. As we journey together, we recognize the great sacrifice of our Lord as we partake in the Eucharist with each other and share a common solution to our spiritual obstacles, one day at a time.

- Reflecting on recent events and the overall course of your recovery, how have you found yourself persevering through personal challenges?
- What spiritual practices help you remain in the grace you've received from God?
- How do you balance the selflessness asked of you in a recovery program with personal boundaries and self-care?

Going Further: Working Step Ten

Each evening, review your day and connect with the Spirit of God that dwells within you. Pray to be free from self-pity and morbid reflection as you ask yourself:

- Was I resentful, selfish, dishonest or afraid?
- Do I owe an apology?
- Have I kept something to myself which should be discussed with another person at once?
- Was I kind and loving toward all?
- What could I have done better?
- Was I thinking of myself most of the time?
- Was I thinking of what I could do for others?

Sunday Mass Readings this Week

1st Reading: Deuteronomy 8:2-3, 14b-16a

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 147:12-13, 14-15, 19-20

2nd Reading: 1 Corinthians 10:16-17

Gospel: John 6:51-58