

Holy Week



This week we enter into the summit of the liturgical year—Holy Triduum—which spans from the evening of Holy Thursday to Easter Sunday. We celebrate the evening mass of the Lord’s Supper on Thursday, mourn Christ’s death on Good Friday, and rejoice in the Resurrection during the Easter Vigil and on Easter Sunday. Before we revel in the empty tomb, it would be prudent to prayerfully reflect upon the last days of Jesus.

The closer Jesus gets to the cross, the more his expression of love for the people he calls "his own" grows. The Holy Thursday Gospel Reading begins:

*Before the feast of Passover,
Jesus knew that his hour had come
to pass from this world to the Father.
He loved his own in the world and he loved them to
the end.*

Fully aware of what would be coming next, including betrayal from His own friends, Jesus rises from the table and shows what love looks like:

*He took a towel and tied it around his waist.
Then he poured water into a basin
and began to wash the disciples' feet
and dry them with the towel around his waist.*

At the center of Christian faith stands the belief that Jesus Christ sacrificed his own life to atone for the sinful and self-centered behavior that has plagued humanity since our inception. His model of perfect love includes not only sacrificing his life for us, but washing the feet of his disciples so that we may know we are loved and capable of loving.

He asks us to do the same for our fellow brothers and sisters. Recovery fellowships maintain this kind of outward-looking love that seeks self-sacrifice in order to care for those who are still struggling. Jesus loved his disciples as friends by getting to know them, praying with them, seeing goodness and beauty within them, and drawing it out by pouring more love and service into them.

Previous to this, Jesus repeatedly said that he had not come to be served but to serve. He washes the feet of the disciples with the cloth of divinity, backing his words with action. The same cloth will dry the water of new life poured out upon the newly baptized this Easter. We welcome them into the Church, eager to serve as Christ calls us to.

*So when he had washed their feet
and put his garments back on and reclined at table
again, he said to them,
"Do you realize what I have done for you?
You call me 'teacher' and 'master,' and rightly so, for
indeed I am.
If I, therefore, the master and teacher,
have washed your feet,
you ought to wash one another's feet.
I have given you a model to follow,
so that as I have done for you, you should also do."*

The best way for one addict to maintain freedom is by reaching a hand out to another. Bearing the burden of others—particularly the guilt that we know so well—aligns us with the mission of Christ and gives us a platform to do the will of God. We can count it a blessing that God has turned our addictive behavior and lustful compulsions into something that draws us closer to Him and the path of His Son.

Reflection Questions

- How have you experienced Christian service from others in recovery and/or in the Church?

- How has self-sacrifice and service for others brought transformation in your life and in your recovery?
 - If service to others has been challenging, what action can you take to begin making progress?

Holy Week Blessings

On behalf of the Catholic in Recovery team and community, we wish you and your family a blessed Holy Week.

We are grateful to walk through Christ's life, death, and resurrection together. We recognize our recovery is a gift that can only be bestowed by God, who sacrificed everything for us out of love.

Holy Thursday Evening Mass Readings

1st Reading: Exodus 12:1-8, 11-14

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 116:12-13, 15-16bc, 17-18

2nd Reading: 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

Gospel: John 13:1-15