

## Sixth Sunday of Easter



The progress we make in our recovery takes many forms and happens at various rates of change. Sometimes, we can recognize monumental growth taking place in our lives and in the way we respond to events happening around us. At other times, it can feel like we take three steps forward only to take two steps back. In those moments, peace and serenity might seem unattainable given the state of our mental and emotional condition.

It is important to lean on a fellowship of men who share similar experiences in order to avoid complete discouragement. As we reflected last week, we are bound to face obstacles in our spiritual journey. It takes a lot of courage to step into the darkness of our lust addictions, sexual compulsions, and unhealthy attachments, especially as our previous patterns were to avoid and deny the Great Reality deep within us.

At first, we borrow hope from our brothers next to us, knowing that they can relate to our experience. When we were active in lust addiction and compulsive sexual behaviors, many core beliefs were formed that need to be replaced: “I am not worthy,” “I am beyond help,” “I’ll never change,” “I can’t trust others,” “I can’t be loved,” and “I’m too unique,” are just a few of the lies that become ingrained within us until we find spiritual help.

While leaning into the Twelve Steps and sacraments of the Church, we see God propelling us to new heights. Slowly, we become honest with ourselves and our dependence upon the things we thought we absolutely needed begin to loosen. Moments of peace arise. We experience others in recovery loving us until we are capable of loving ourselves.

As we move toward Pentecost and the descent of the Holy Spirit, we hear Jesus offer a word of hope and peace. He speaks truth to the lies that enslave us and shares the power of the Holy Spirit in order to guide us to freedom. We hear Jesus proclaim in this Sunday’s Gospel Reading:

*The Advocate, the Holy Spirit,  
whom the Father will send in my name,  
will teach you everything  
and remind you of all that I told you.  
Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you.  
Not as the world gives do I give it to you.  
Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid.*

## Reflection Questions

The disciples received a similar message from Jesus when he returned to them after his resurrection. While showing his wounds to his afraid and isolated followers, Jesus calmly greeted them by saying, “Peace be with you,” or “Shalom”—a Hebrew term that not only means peace but also implies wholeness, harmony, and completeness.

We have been crafted in the image and likeness of God. Our identity lies in the unmerited grace that we are His beloved sons, regardless of our attempts to cut ourselves off from the Lord. It is possible that our efforts to find comfort are rooted in a desire that only God can fill. As we recognize the limitations and consequences of directing life according to our own will, we put faith in our Lord doing for us what we cannot do for ourselves.

- Looking back on where you were before you found recovery, what changes are most notable in your attitude, behavior, and spiritual life?
- Describe your core beliefs—what they used to be, what happened, and what they are now.
- How have you experienced peace and serenity throughout your recovery journey?

### **Catholic in Recovery Resources Online**

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- Articles published weekly related to various types of addictions, the impact of addiction on families, practical application of the Twelve Steps and sacraments, and more
- Full directory of virtual and in-person meetings available
- Testimonials from CIR participants and opportunities to engage community
- Catholic in Recovery Novena

## Sunday Mass Readings this Week

**1st Reading:** Acts 15:1-2, 22-29

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8

**2nd Reading:** Revelation 21:10-14, 22-23

**Gospel:** John 14:23-29