

IMPORTANT
HELPLINES/
HOTLINES



If you are having thoughts of suicide, if you need mental health-related crisis support, if you are worried about someone else, PLEASE CALL OR TEXT **988** or visit the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline chat to connect with a trained crisis counselor

PARISH SUPPORT GROUPS

- ◆ **Calix Society—The Church of Incarnation** 240 Main St. Mantua—**EVERY Monday—ZOOM—8PM**
- ◆ **Community Connections The Church of Incarnation**, 240 Main St., Mantua—**EVERY Saturday—In-Person & ZOOM—9:30 AM**
Contact: Bill Dougherty at 609-617-9959
- ◆ **For more information about these ministries or how to start an addiction healing support ministry in your parish, call JoAnne Farrell at 856-342-4057.**

Addictions Healing & Recovery Newsletter

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Finding Joy & Peace in Recovery

For Catholics in addiction recovery, following the principles of 12-step recovery groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous and Overeaters Anonymous is vital during the Christmas and New Year's holiday season. Equally important — and in fact part of the 12-step approach — is turning directly to God for help amid the threat holiday indulgence poses to sobriety. “Double up on your prayer life,” said Edmundite Father Thomas F. X. Hoar. “The second step (of the 12 steps) says that ‘we came to believe a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.’ I think a lot of times people in recovery skip over that.”

Sacramental grace is essential to lasting sobriety, said Father Douglas McKay, founder of the Philadelphia-based Our House Ministries, a Catholic recovery ministry, a papal “missionary of mercy” and rector of the Malvern Retreat House in Malvern, Pa.



“I’m always trying to get people to go to adoration, to confession, to Communion — even to become a daily communicant, especially during these trying times, these tempting times,” he said. The Eucharist is the greatest source of strength for sobriety, he said. “The Blessed Sacrament — that’s where all the blessings are flowing,” said Father McKay. “We can’t do anything without the Lord. He’s the vine and I’m the branch. And apart from him, I can do absolutely nothing. But in him, I can conquer all my temptations.”

Why Christmas in Recovery Is Worth Celebrating

The Christmas season in recovery is about finding joy in moments that truly matter. Maybe it’s a quiet dinner with a close friend, a heartfelt conversation with a sponsor, or simply waking up on December 26th feeling proud of staying sober. A sober Christmas teaches individuals in recovery to appreciate moments of clarity, connection, and purpose. It’s not always easy, but it’s always worth it.

Prayer: *Christ the King, come into my heart and occupy every aspect of my life and recovery.*



Judith's Journey & Reflection

"And she shall bring for a son, and thou shall call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins." - Matthew 1:21

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." - Luke 2:14

Jesus died on the cross for our sins so that we would get to know him. He doesn't give us gifts to make us feel great about ourselves. He gives us precious gifts so that we get to know Him. He saved my life so that I can help others get to know Him. So that if Jesus can restore my life from such terrible addiction and indescribable grief, He can do that for anyone who is willing to trust in Him. Jesus has restored my broken heart with His divine mercy. I feel a quiet, steady joy in normal everyday life that was unimaginable to the old me.

There was a time, for many years that everything was hard. Waking up was hard and I dreaded the next coming day. Nothing relieved me of this except abusing substances. Then even that turned on me. I felt like I was in an insidious set up and could not for the life of me see a way out. As long as I was breathing, I had to keep trying. Not for myself but for my unmeasurable love for my son, Danny. I wanted so badly to be the mother he deserved. I needed him to know just how much I adore him. God gave me a chance to redeem my soul so I can be the best mother and example for my son. Most of all, I pray that now I am showing my son how to know Him. Through my devastation and struggles to my recovery, I want to show my son how much Jesus loves us all. To show him that everything I went through was God's plan to show me how to know Him. I feel so incredibly blessed to finally get to know my Savior.



I write this with tears in my eyes and an overflowing love in my heart that I can't help but smile. This is something so precious and I never knew it existed. There is nothing that compares to Jesus' unwavering love for His children. I know I am forever safe in His arms and that now I know why I am on this earth. I want to show everyone how much they are loved. I want to help suffering people, people with closed minds, that shut down on their morals just to exist easier in this world. I understand the pain and struggle more than anyone could know. I have lived in complete hell and thought that was just how life was. I slowly shut down my emotions and my spirit all but disappeared. My mind and my heart were shrinking to where I couldn't see clearly and I did all this harm one compromise at a time.

Today Jesus nourishes my soul every day. He is ALWAYS there and ALWAYS has been. I always believed in Him, but not until I lay my broken self at His feet and begged for His mercy and forgiveness that I truly got to know Him. Jesus is the light of the world and always delivers once I changed my ways and let Him take control. What a relief I feel. Something so magnificent that I never knew existed. I am so in love with all that God has done with my life!

This month we celebrate our Savior's birth! There is no other more divine gift we could receive. Let us all receive this most precious gift and make room for Jesus in our lives. He wants nothing more than for us to open up and invite Him in so that we His children can get to KNOW HIM! I wish everyone a Blessed and Beautiful Christmas! Oh, come let us adore Him!!

"For unto you is born this day, in the city of David a Savior which is Christ the Lord." - Luke 2:11

"Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift." - I Corinthians 9:15

By: Judith Quinton Arthur



Catholic  Charities
South Jersey

www.catholiccharitiessouthjersey.org