



# Addictions Healing & Recovery Newsletter

IMPORTANT  
HELPLINES/  
HOTLINES



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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.** Call Parish Office at 856-468-1314
- ◆ **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
- ◆ **Catholic Charities Helpline—856-342-4057:** For more information about these ministries, how to start an addiction healing support ministry or assistance for family member.

## November

is dedicated to All Saints' Day (November 1) honoring the Communion of Saints as our spiritual role models, and All Souls' Day (November 2) emphasizing prayer and hope for the departed on their journey to heaven.



As Catholics, we remember those lost to addiction on All Souls' Day. The tradition includes praying for their souls and offering hope that they are experiencing eternal rest, with specific prayers and devotion sometimes offered to Saint Maximilian Kolbe, a patron saint of those battling addiction.

The Church teaches that addiction is a complex disease with physical, psychological, and spiritual components. The loss of a loved one to addiction brings unique grief due to the stigma, shame, and complicated circumstances often surrounding the death. The Church responds with mercy, seeking to accompany the suffering and offer hope in Christ's unfailing love, believing that no one is beyond God's mercy.

## Ways to Honor Those Lost to Addiction

**Masses and Prayer Services:** Special Masses, prayer services, and candlelight vigils are often held to honor those who have died from addiction, particularly around International Overdose Awareness Day (August 31) or during Recovery Month (September). These services offer a place for grieving families to find comfort and community support.

**The Black Poster Project:** This traveling silent memorial, created by a Catholic parishioner, features large posters with photos of individuals lost to addiction. It is often displayed in Catholic cathedrals and parishes to put a human face on the disease, raise awareness, and help end the associated stigma.

**Prayers for the Deceased:** Catholics use traditional prayers for the dead, such as the "Eternal rest grant unto him/her, O Lord, and may perpetual light shine upon him/her. May he/she rest in peace. Amen".

**Involving Patron Saints:** Catholics pray to specific patron saints for intercession for those who have died or are struggling with addiction.

**Venerable Matt Talbot** is recommended as a patron for alcoholics.





*"Like a city that is broken down and without walls, is a man who has no control over his spirit". - Proverbs 25: 28*

### **Judith's Journey**

In looking for a word to best describe addiction, the word insidious always comes to my mind. I say this because the disease of addiction is crafty, cunning, treacherous and has no mercy. *It brings such pain. It lives in self-doubt and feelings of unworthiness and it dances in our shame. Bringing nothing but suffering, confusion, chaos and ultimately death. With something this horrifying one would think that I would have run away at first contact. Of course, that is just common sense. Addiction will shape shift. It will disguise itself as your best friend, the answer to your social anxiety. It will calm your bad nerves.*

At first it feels like a whimsical retreat. Addiction filled that void inside my soul. A perfect love story if you will. It fed me nothing but lies and confusion and I constantly was left empty and ashamed. It swore me to secrecy. It kept me isolated. It made me feel like I didn't need anyone. It made me angry and it made my resentments soar. It caused heartbreak after heartbreak. Constantly gaslighting me. How did it somehow convince me time and time again that this time everything would be ok. It just really scares me when I think about it now. The full weight of addiction is so heavy and crazy and humiliating.

How could I have thought it would work out somehow? How could I have thought it was the answer to depression and self-doubt? It's just complete insanity. I did nothing to deserve the sacred grace and mercy from God. I am not anybody special. I was just a helpless, lost soul to addiction. My poor spirit was completely crushed. On my knees I screamed in desperation. I begged God to please intervene. My father was listening to my cries and my complete surrender.

He stepped in and slowly rolled back the rock of death from my grave. What happened next was the impossible. The sea of endless shame and disgrace was split so that I could walk right through it. God is using me as a vessel for his message of hope. I will keep on testifying and I will give him all the glory. These gifts are not just for me. Everyone can have this relationship with Jesus and feel his perfect love in their hearts. He is waiting for his lost sheep to find their way home to him.

In all my struggles, where I thought I was being buried alive, is where I was being planted. God has a plan for everyone. Don't ever think you are too far gone. I never thought I could ever stay sober let alone be sober and happy about it. I am just a messenger from Jesus to let everyone suffering know that he loves each and every one of us so much that he was nailed to a cross and died for our sins. He just wants our hearts. My life was missing God. That was the whole in my soul.

The devil himself wouldn't waste his time trying to get us to worship him. He would just rather convince us not to believe in Jesus. That way he keeps us lost, weak and vulnerable to the darkness of evil. God wants us all to feel his love and be seated in hope. He is my backbone. It's the Christ in me that is my strength and freedom from addiction.

My job now is to give my honest testimony the best way I can. If I touch one lonely, hurting person with my story it is all worth it. This is what God asks of me and I am so very honored to serve him in this way. On my knees in a quiet room of sadness, I found your love where I had only pain and agony.

*"You made the moon to mark the seasons, the sun that knows the hour of its setting." - Psalms 104:19*

Written by:  
Judith Quinton Arthur



**W**ith my sobriety, I gained back the freedom and joy I once had.

- Ken R.

### **You Can Live Again**

**Reflection:** Addiction is a form of self-imposed slavery where we hold the keys to our own release. Addiction makes us feel hopeless and its control causes us to forget the person we are suppose to be.

The road to freedom through whatever program or assistance we choose to take advantage of will help take us back to the person God calls us to be and to move forward in freedom.

**Prayer:** *Christ Jesus, help show me the way to total freedom and joy in You..*

