



www.CatholicCharitiesSouthJersey.org

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

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.

Addictions Healing & Recovery Newsletter

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Lent



March is dedicated to St. Joseph, the spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary and foster father to Jesus Christ. He is model of faith, humility, and silent obedience to God's plan. The Solemnity of St. Joseph is celebrated on March 19th.



St. Joseph is a powerful patron for addiction recovery, regarded as a model of virtue, obedience, and a "destroyer of demons" who aids in spiritual battles. He offers strength to overcome addictions by fostering, obedience to God's will, and peace, helping individuals find stability, repair relationships, and find new purpose in sobriety.

Lenten Journey & Sobriety

Lent offers a powerful journey for those healing from addiction. It invites turning away from unhealthy attachments, practicing surrender to a Higher Power, and finding hope in healing from addiction.



A Season of Sacrifice: Choosing to abstain from alcohol or substances during Lent aligns with the religious tradition of giving something up, allowing for a re-evaluation of one's relationship with alcohol.

Recovery as a Journey: The 40-day, wilderness-like nature of Lent mirrors the recovery process—a time for spiritual, emotional, and physical detoxification.

Focus on Transformation: Lent is not just about giving up, but taking on, such as replacing isolation with connection and shame with grace.

Spiritual Support & Community: Many, including those in recovery, find strength in shared faith-based approaches, such as attending Recovery Stations of the Cross, which can reinforce commitment

Set Intentions: Use this, time to define what you are letting go of and what you are welcoming into your life.

Engage in Spiritual Disciplines: Focus on prayer, meditation, and reading, which can strengthen your resolve.

Seek Support: Utilize community, whether through church, recovery groups, or counseling, to stay grounded.

By embracing the sobriety of the Lenten season, you can transform it into a time of deep, personal renewal.



“My God, My God why have you abandoned me?” - Matthew 27:46

Judith's Journey

The dreadful pain I carried in my drug/alcohol addiction had many different layers. It wasn't just me (the addict) that carried the burden and the pain. My addiction had a huge impact on those who love me. As I consistently stay sober and grow, I see things differently and I realize how my addiction rippled out from me onto everyone around me. My loved ones had to watch in horror as my addiction spiraled more and more out of control. This nightmare was ongoing for many years and it was destroying everything in its path.

I would try to stop only to fail myself and everyone around me over and over again. My shame became unbearable and was flipping into more anger and more desperation. I was trying not to explode but the pressure was so great and I couldn't push it down anymore. It became too big. Like the top flying off of a pressure cooker. Everything kept getting worse and my life was completely out of control for a long time. To think about the ripple effect that the darkness of addiction created is terrible. I hurt so many people. It is something I had to take accountability for and let that pain become my teacher.



I can't help thinking of what kind of a ripple effect my recovery is making on my loved ones. What kind of ripple effect will come from me sharing my testimony? How about me consistently staying sober? How about if I share to as many people as possible how much Jesus loves them? How about if I tell of the miracles happening in my soul and in my life?

How about if I testify that Jesus completely loves every imperfect part of us? How about my message being that God makes the impossible possible? I wholeheartedly believe that both my addiction and my recovery were given to me to tell my story of redemption to whoever is suffering. To give a suffering fellow new hope. To say that I understand your pain.

You are worthy of the never-ending perfect love of Jesus. He only wants our hearts and for us to take accountability and give his love and understanding to others. There is a seat for everyone at his table. Don't worry, there is nothing he hasn't heard or seen before. He gives his everlasting mercy to anyone who gives their heart to him. His life was not pretty. He did not wear precious jewels and he did not live in a castle. He was not wealthy.

He was born and lived not in material riches but in a love so rich that he died for us. He stood in truth even while he was tortured and so brutally crucified. He carried our sins and died for us. Truth does not have to hide. The dark gets nervous when a new heart turns to Jesus. I pray I always keep my eyes on Him. I pray for everyone in agony of addiction or depression that Jesus may hold you in the palm of his hand.

“He himself bore our sins in his body upon the cross, so that, free from sin, we might live for righteousness. By His wounds you have been healed.” - Peter 2:24



Written by: Judith Quinton Arthur

Take heart! Stand up! He is calling you! - Mk 10:49

Reflection: The same words that a blind man heard from the crowd because of the presence of Jesus we need to hear too. Jesus is calling you, me, all of us to Himself. That is reason alone never to lose heart. How often do we, in unguarded moments, get down on ourselves, and doubt if we can continue on? Take care! Jesus will never abandon you and is with you each step of the way.

Prayer: *Lord Jesus, when I begin to lose heart, help me continue on my journey of healing.*



OUR MISSION: Catholic Charities of South Jersey is a faith-based agency rooted in the Gospel and in the social teaching of the Catholic Church. We provide social services to, advocate for, and empower the poor, oppressed, or vulnerable. We do this on a non-discriminatory basis throughout the six southern New Jersey counties. Providing hope since 1936 – serving the poor and vulnerable with dignity and respect.

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