

A 'TWELVE STEP' LENT

One of the major themes of the Lenten season is that of spiritual renewal and penitence. A preparation for renewing our baptismal promises at Easter will therefore involve taking stock of those areas in our lives that require change and conversion. These are not easily accomplished because, among other things they demand openness, humility and a lot of will power.

Many people who have had to deal with substance abuse addictions have found healing through the Twelve Step program. Originating with AA (ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS), this process has been successful in bringing many to sobriety and a whole new way living. It has since been adopted for addressing other forms of addictive behaviour.

The wisdom behind the Twelve Step approach can be used to carry out our own spiritual inventory as we progress through Lent. Because, to one degree or another, we all have our personal demons to fight, this help to 'spiritual sobriety' can be of great benefit. Each Sunday during Lent, the homily will focus on two of the steps. (For those who have the 2010 Novalis missals please be aware that we will be using the 'A' cycle of Lenten readings because they best work with the themes of the steps.)

The Twelve Step approach, it must be said, is not some magic formula or instant cure. It demands commitment, prayer and courage - the same things that Jesus asks of all of us. To the extent that we are willing to journey along this path, we will experience reconciliation renewal and resurrection ...and an Easter filled with true joy and peace!

Won't you please join us? It could be the most enriching Lent you've ever had.

First Sunday	Step 1	We admitted that we were powerless over the effects of our separation from God - and that our lives had become unmanageable.
	Step 2	We came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore you to sanity.
Second Sunday	Step 3	We made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understand God.
	Step 4	We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
Third Sunday	Step 5	We admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being, the exact nature of our wrongs.
	Step 6	We were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
Fourth Sunday	Step 7	We humbly asked God to remove our shortcomings.
	Step 8	We made a list of all the persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.
Fifth Sunday	Step 9	We made amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so, would injure the others.
	Step 10	We continued to make a personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
Sixth Sunday	Step 11	We sought through prayer and mediation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
	Step 12	Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to others and to practice these principles in all our affairs.