

# Lenten Devotional 5

Rev. John J. Werner, First Congregational UCC; Jefferson, OH

**Meditation Verses:** [Mark 11:1-11](#)

The stage is set for Jesus' Triumphal entry. The young burro has been found tied at the edge of town. The disciples have gone into Jerusalem during the early morning hours before the sun has risen to its zenith. The sun of the Middle East has not yet to begin blaze down the heat upon the folks gathered during the holy week of the Passover. The town is in full tilt, folks have come from far and wide to celebrate the redemption of God's people. Celebrating the recovery of their identity as a free people who are free to follow God. The scene that we relive each year is a palpable one, many of us can smell the dust on the streets and feel the press of the crowd as branches are cut off the nearby trees and laid at Jesus' feet recognizing that he is the chosen one, the Messiah! Folks have it in their minds that Jesus is the one who has come and set them free.

Often when I meet with folks who suffer with drug misuse disorder I hear a similar story. Life at one time was innocent. But something happened. Folks open up about moments of excruciating trauma. It may be a difficult childhood. The death of a loved one. A divorce. A bad relationship. A molestation by a close family member. A moment when someone feels that they didn't belong. Or even a bad car accident and a person who is addicted is dealing with chronic fatigue and pain. Folks, share with me some of the very same expectations concerning addiction that the people of the Jewish community hoped for on that first Palm Sunday. We are all looking for a savior, we are searching for someone who will free us! Frequently, we may bargain with God, "If I pray or go to church... will you remove the desire for substance x?"

Unfortunately, it's not always that easy and to say so would be disingenuous. The folks who are present in the Gospel narrative of Mark are looking for a liberator, but even Jesus' own disciples didn't want to walk alongside him on the road to Calvary. To begin the steps of recovery we must recognize that we can not do this alone. Each day may be fraught with difficulties. Walking with Christ through the good and the bad experiences and with our faithful communities is how we may experience true redemption through God. It is through the companioning of each other that we begin to have a holy recognition that we are all God's Children!

Being in recovery does not mean that we can pray away our drug use away. It means taking up our cross and following Jesus. It's choosing to not isolate ourselves from good friends, it means attending a good 12 step program and working alongside our sponsor,

visiting with a qualified counselor and removing those things that trigger our addiction. When we do this we begun walking along side Jesus on our, “road to wellbriety.”<sup>1</sup>

As we look towards Easter, the holy day where we see Christ resurrected, may we begin to think about how God is renewing and resurrecting us through the life-giving choices we make. May we follow in the way of the cross taking those 12 steps to freedom, knowing the way of the cross is never easy.

**Recovery Prayer** by Abby Willowroot:

*“Today, I heal my body, my mind, my spirit, my life. Drugs are a part of my past; they are not part of my now, they are not part of my future. Today, I am clean. Today, I am clean and free.*

*Today, I am becoming strong one second at a time, on thought at a time, one action at a time. I am learning how to live and to be the best parts of me today. Today, I am clean and free.”*

If sharing this devotional or sourcing, please reference: Rev. John Werner

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<sup>1</sup> Coyhis, Don L. The Red Road to Wellbriety in the Native American Way. Colorado Springs, CO: White Bison, 2002.