
Why a Substance Addiction Ministry (SAM)?

- Addiction is a spiritual illness that disconnects a person: from self, loved ones, and God. Addiction is described as a threefold illness: physical, mental/emotional, and spiritual. **It is the spiritual dimension of this disease that we as church need to address.**
- The rotten fruit of addiction includes broken families, abusive relationships, homelessness, hunger, neglect, poverty, jails, institutions and death.

Why the Church? Pope Francis answers:

“We must hold the hand of the one in need, of the one who has fallen into the darkness of dependency perhaps without even knowing how, and we must say to him or her: You can get up, you can stand up. It is difficult, but it is possible if you want to. Dear friends, I wish to say to each of you, but especially to all those others who have not had the courage to embark on our journey: **You have to want to stand up; this is the indispensable condition! You will find an outstretched hand ready to help you, but no one is able to stand up in your place. But you are never alone! The Church and so many people are close to you.” - Pope Francis, July 24, 2013 speaking on addiction at St. Francis Hospital, Brazil**

Why the parish?

- ***One Body, One Mission*** defines “Formation” as “the element (of the pastoral plan) which promotes a lived faith which is bold courageous and effective.” (p. 38).
- ***The Church Alive***: “A true sign of a vibrant parish is how we welcome the stranger, the alienated, those who feel left aside. What are we doing at the parish level and even the personal level to be a welcoming and serving Church, especially to and for the poor (44, 47, 86-87)?” (p. 21, q. 9).
- Bill Wilson, co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous defined successful recovery as “**Suffering transmuted under grace, into spiritual progress.**” Afflicted and affected Catholics should know they can turn to the parish - and the Sacraments – for support in the pursuit of spiritual progress.

From The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith:

- **Prop. 7** includes “Such a world-wide mission will respond to the action of the Holy Spirit, as in a new Pentecost, through a call issued by the Roman Pontiff, who invites all faithful to visit all families and **bring the life of Christ to all human situations.**”
- **Prop. 44** includes “**The parish, in and through all of its activities, should animate its members to become agents of the New Evangelization, witnessing through both their words and their lives. For this reason, it is important to remember that the parish remains the usual environment for the spiritual life of the parishioners.** The Synod therefore encourages parish visits to families as a way of parish renewal. It sometimes happens that the parish is seen as only a place for important events or even as a tourist center...Along the same line, “pastoral agents” in hospitals, youth centers, factories, prisons, etc., have to bear in mind that the New Evangelization should find a home in these places. **The Church should in fact be present in such places, since Christ showed his preference for the persons found there. As much as lies within their power, all Churches are therefore exhorted to be open to this mission, wherever they are.**”

Why the laity?

- **Prop. 45** includes “The laity cooperate in the Church’s work of evangelization, as witnesses and at the same time as living instruments they share in her saving mission (cf. *Ad gentes*, 41). **Therefore the Church values the gifts that the Spirit is making to every baptized for the construction of the body, and should provide adequate encouragement and training to foster their apostolic zeal in the transmission of the faith.”**
- **NOTE:** There is an extensive recovery community in each vicariate. **Recovery begins when one addict talks with another addict sharing experience, strength and hope.** Many Catholic men and women are hungering for an opportunity to integrate their Catholicism with their recovery and to help others do the same.

What one outcome are we addressing?

- To facilitate and assist entry into recovery.

Boundaries: SAM is not intervention, is not crisis management, is not counseling, and is not therapy.

NOTE: SAM is a ministry of prayer, presentations and personal presence. SAM offers information, in both passive and active formats, which address substance addiction, intending to facilitate and assist entry into recovery for **both the afflicted and the affected**. SAM also provides the pastor, deacon, pastoral associates, and parish social ministers with a network of recovering individuals, couples, and families who are willing to share their experience strength and hope with fellow Catholics.