

World Day of the Sick 2020

*“Come to me, all you who labour and are burdened,
and I will give you rest” (Mt 11:28)*

The World Day of the Sick is sponsored by the Vatican’s Pontifical Council for Health Pastoral Care. The World Day of the Sick is observed annually on the feast day of Our Lady of Lourdes 11 February, to give thanks and recognition to those working in the health care ministry, to provide an opportunity for reflection on the Church’s teaching on health care, to pray for those who are sick and those who care for them.

Catholic Health Australia is pleased to provide you with a resource that you may wish to use to develop a liturgical celebration for the World Day of the Sick within your facilities and services.

A summary of the message of Pope Francis is included to complement the full message previously circulated.

Rites of Introduction

*A suitable hymn may be sung**

Leader: Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.
All: **Who gives us comfort and hope in all our suffering.**

Leader: Like people of all faiths, Christians value physical and emotional life and health. Human life is valued as a gift from God. Consequently, we stand as ready stewards to respond to the reality of sickness in the world. We do so as a Catholic community when we establish a variety of health care services, inclusive of the poor and most

vulnerable in our society. In this way the healing ministry of Jesus is continued and we reflect a consistent ethic of life, which requires of us a commitment to preserve, protect and promote the physical health and well-being of all people, and companion them in their last days.

We come together on this special day in the name of the Christ to celebrate our role in being bearers to, and witnesses of, the healing presence of God.

Leader: With confidence and trust in God’s providence and love let us pray:

Reader 1: Lord Jesus, you invite us to come to you with our burdens.

All: **Lord, have mercy**

Reader 2: Lord Jesus, you healed the sick and made them whole. Christ, have mercy

All: **Christ, have mercy**

Reader 3: Lord Jesus, you give rest and comfort to those who place their trust in you.

Lord, have mercy

All: **Lord, have mercy**

Leader: In faith let us pray:
God of consolation, your Son Jesus Christ took on our human condition and knew suffering and pain in his life. Grant peace and comfort to all who suffer illness and pain and help them experience the healing presence of Jesus your Son.

All: **Amen**

Liturgy of the Word

(These readings may be used in part or in whole)

First Reading: Romans 8: 18-30 *or* Acts 28:7-10 *or* 2 Cor. 4:10-18 *or* 2 Cor. 12:7-10 *or* James 5:13-16

All then read together Psalm 33:

**I will never stop thanking God,
With constant words of praise. My soul
will boast of God; The poor will hear me
and be glad.**

**Join me in praising the Lord,
Together tell of God's name.
I asked and the Lord responded,
Freed me from all my fears.**

**Turn to God, be bright with joy;
You shall never be let down.
I begged and God heard, Took my
burdens from me.**

**God's angel defends the faithful,
Guards them on every side.
Drink in the richness of God,
Enjoy the strength of the Lord.**

**Live in awe of God, you saints:
You will want for nothing.
Even if lions go hungry, Those
seeking God are fed.**

Gospel: Matthew 11:28-30

A brief reflection may be shared on the Scriptures, and on the experience of human suffering and sickness. Those gathered may be invited to contribute.

Intercessions

Leader: Let us address our needs to God.

Others may offer the intercessions

1. For all people who suffer pain and illness, and are in need of God's healing...we pray R/ **Hear us, O God**
2. For clinicians, pastoral carers, social workers and aides...we pray R/Hear us, O God
3. For all who provide service to the work of hospitals and aged care facilities...we pray R/**Hear us, O God**
4. For family caregivers who give so much of themselves to loved ones... we pray R/**Hear us, O God**
5. For all those gathered here in faith, and for our hidden needs for healing and wholeness... we pray R/ **Hear us, O God**

Leader: With confidence and trust we pray in the words Jesus taught us

All: **Our Father.....**

Leader: Tender and merciful God, you watch over us with unfailing care; keep us in the safe embrace of your love. Through your healing presence, make whole all who are suffering. Give them strength, courage, hope and peace. Minister to them through the compassionate service of others. And fill those who serve the sick with new hope, generosity and joy for the good they do in your name.

All: **Amen**

Concluding Rite

Leader:

We pause to ask for God's blessing.

May God the Creator who made us bless us.

May God the Redeemer send his healing among us. May God the Sanctifier move within us and give us eyes to see with, ears to hear with and hands that your work might be done. May we walk in the word of God as models for all.

May the angel of peace watch over us and lead us at last by God's grace to the Kingdom.

All: **Amen**

Leader: The Lord be with you.

All: And with your spirit.

Leader: May our gracious God bless you, + the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

All: **Amen**

The Leader (lay or ordained) may then trace the sign of the cross on the foreheads of the sick who are present. A suitable hymn may be sung to conclude or accompany this action.

** Come to me. Gregory Norbert.*

Be Not Afraid. Bernadette Farrell

I Have Loved You. Michael Joncas

O God, Nothing Can Take us From Your Love. Christopher Walker

Shepherd Me O God. Marty Haugen

The Cry of the Poor. John Foley

The Lord is My Shepherd. Traditional

Pope's message for World Day of the Sick – A summary provided by Robin Gomes, Vatican News

“Come to me, all you who labour and are burdened” is the theme of the World Day of the Sick, to be marked on 11 February. In caring for the sick, Pope Francis is encouraging in healthcare workers the human warmth and personalized approach of Christ, the Good Samaritan.

Pope Francis is urging the human warmth and personalized approach of Christ, the Good Samaritan, in healthcare professionals, workers and volunteers.

Jesus' mercy for all

Christ's words of solidarity, comfort and hope, the Pope explains, is for the very many simple people, the poor, the sick, sinners, those who are marginalized by the burden of the law and the oppressive social system... The mercy and comforting presence of Jesus, he says,

embraces people in their entirety, each person in his or her health condition, discarding no one, but rather inviting everyone to share in His life and to experience His tender love.

The Pope explains that Jesus does so because He Himself became frail, endured human suffering and received comfort from His Father. Only those who personally experience suffering, the Pope argues, are able to comfort others.

Warmth and personalized approach

The Pope notes that sometimes human warmth is lacking in our approach to those suffering incurable and chronic diseases, psychological diseases, situations calling for rehabilitation or palliative care, numerous forms of disability, children's or geriatric diseases... "What is needed is a personalized approach to the sick, not just of curing but also of caring, in view of an integral human healing."

In addition to therapy and support, he says, they expect care and attention – "In a word, love". "At the side of every sick person, there is also a family, which itself suffers and is in need of support and comfort."

Church – the "inn" of the Good Samaritan

Those who are sick, the Pope says, attract the eyes and heart of Jesus. He says, "Christ did not give us prescriptions, but through His passion, death and resurrection He frees us from the grip of evil." In this regard, he says, "The Church desires to become more and more the "inn" of the Good Samaritan who is Christ (cf. Lk 10:34), that is, a home where you can encounter His grace, which finds expression in closeness, acceptance and relief."

The Holy Father acknowledges the key role that healthcare workers, such as physicians, nurses, medical and administrative professionals, assistants and volunteers play in caring for the sick. As men and women with their own frailties and illnesses, these healthcare workers show how true it is that "once Christ's comfort and rest is received, we are called in turn to become rest and comfort for our brothers and sisters".

"Yes" to life and human person

In serving the ill, Pope Francis urges healthcare professionals that "the noun 'person' takes priority over the adjective 'sick'. He urges them to "always strive to promote the dignity and life of each person, and reject any compromise in the direction of euthanasia, assisted suicide or suppression of life, even in the case of terminal illness."

"Let us remember that life is sacred and belongs to God," he says; "hence it is inviolable and no one can claim the right to dispose of it freely." "Life must be welcomed, protected, respected and served from its beginning to its end: both human reason and faith in God, the author of life, require this."

"In some cases," the Pope points out, "conscientious objection becomes a necessary decision if you are to be consistent with your "yes" to life and to the human person," thus "safeguarding of the truest human right, the right to life". "When you can no longer provide a cure, you will still be able to provide care and healing,

through gestures and procedures that give comfort and relief to the sick.

Attacks on healthcare

Pope Francis laments that during wars and violent conflicts, healthcare professionals and facilities are attacked, and in some areas, political authorities attempt to manipulate medical care for their own advantage, thus restricting the medical profession's legitimate autonomy.

Noting that many across the world have “no access to medical care because they live in poverty”, the Pope urges healthcare institutions and government leaders not to neglect social justice.

The Holy Father concludes his message thanking all healthcare volunteers who serve the sick, often compensating for structural shortcomings, while reflecting the image of Christ, the Good Samaritan, by their acts of tender love and closeness.

