

Invitation to congregation for the Blessing:

The Importance of Health Care and Its Link to the Ministry of Jesus

“Within our Catholic faith tradition, health care is a ministry of the Church, continuing Jesus’ mission of love and healing today.

The ministry of health care brings together people of diverse faiths and backgrounds, who together serve as ‘Good Samaritans,’ stopping along the way to show the compassion and love of Jesus.

Those who serve in the ministry of health care are involved in preventative, acute and long-term care, specialized therapeutics, home care, parish nursing, end-of-life care, spiritual care, supportive counselling and the immense service of volunteerism. Still, others serve in health care to support, run, maintain, and administer personnel, buildings and equipment, institutional and technological systems. Others are in the community reaching out to the poor, visiting the lonely, and tangibly caring for the needs of the less-abled. And lest we forget - the many unpaid caregivers of their loved ones in their own home are also part of health care.

Ultimately, Catholic health care ministry is an activity of the whole Church – responding to human suffering and caring for the well-being of the whole person.

Together, we build a faith community that is continuing the healing ministry of Jesus.

So, at this time I invite ALL those who work and serve in health care to stand (or come to the front).....”

The Blessing:

- ***NOTE: There could be an accompanying action or gesture, for instance having the whole group sprinkled with holy water, or blessing their hands.***

Loving Father and giver of all life,
You are our support and you are always with us.
Hear our prayers for all support workers who are
 on duty every day, caring for those who are suffering,
 those who are weak and in need of perpetual help.
Blessed be the hands that have touched life and suffering.
Blessed be the hands that have embraced the sick with compassion.
Blessed be the hands that have released anger and fear.
Blessed be the hands that have cleaned beds and disposed of wastes.
Blessed be the hands that have reached out and have been received.
Blessed be the hands that have comforted the dying and held the dead.
And blessed be these hands to whom we commend all of the sick,
 the suffering and the aged.
Give strength and courage to our caregivers
 to be instruments of your everlasting love
 for all those who are in need of your protection.
We ask this in the name of Christ the Healer, your Son and our Lord, who
lives with you and the Holy Spirit, God forever and ever. Amen.

Prayers of the Faithful:

- **NOTE: Below are suggested Prayers of the Faithful. Please consider using some of these....**

Presider: As we gather to honour World Day of the Sick, we turn towards our Holy Father in trust and offer Him the following prayers and petitions:

Lector: Our response is: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

- For all who hold and teach the Catholic faith: may they ever-more closely unite themselves with Jesus Christ, the High Priest, as they seek to serve those entrusted to their care. We pray to the Lord: **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- For the sick and hospitalized: may they feel the healing power of Christ and find comfort and hope in His constant presence. We pray to the Lord: **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- For all Catholic healthcare workers: may they be a light to others and a testament to the Word as they live their faith and care for their patients. We pray to the Lord: **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- For all students in the healthcare professions: may their studies be motivated by pure desires to be the hands of Christ and to offer healing and hope to those who are ill. We prayer to the Lord: **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- For those who do not have adequate access to healthcare: may we respond to their needs with love and compassion and seek creative solutions to bring healing to all. We pray to the Lord: **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- For the vulnerable and marginalized in society, including those with mental and physical illness: may they always be treated with dignity and respect as children of God. We pray to the Lord: **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- For administrators and government leaders: may they work to enact legislation and policies compatible with the fundamental ethical and social teachings of our Church, defending the sanctity of human life from conception to natural death. We pray to the Lord: **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- For hospital chaplains and those who care for the spiritual needs of the sick: may they offer words of wisdom and truth and be a warming presence to all those who are ill. We pray to the Lord: **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- For these prayers and for those special intentions held in the silence of our hearts. We pray to the Lord: **Lord, hear our prayer.**