

# For Families and Parishes – Pastoral Suggestions

[Pope Francis's message](#)

**31<sup>st</sup> World Day of the Sick**, Saturday, 11 February 2023

***“Take care of him” - Compassion as a synodal exercise of healing***

**Homily Idea:** In today’s world, how often do we see or hear the sick experiencing deep loneliness and abandonment? In our families and close-knit circles, we can be particularly confronted by our human fragility and vulnerability, especially when a loved one falls ill or grows older. Pope Francis, in his message for this year’s World Day of the Sick, reminds us that it only “takes a moment of our attention, of being moved to compassion within us” to overcome the throwaway culture and bring loving tenderness to someone in need. The Parable of the Good Samaritan reminds us of our call to approach, listen, and tend proactively to the sick. The Samaritan does not ‘go it alone,’ but asks the Innkeeper for help and says, “care for him.” Face-to-face encounters are essential avenues for the healing ministry of the living Christ. As a faith-filled community, let us not be indifferent to suffering and find ways to pray for and accompany the sick, lonely and abandoned.

## **Suggestions for Prayers of the Faithful:**

For the sick, lonely and abandoned, may the closeness and saving mercy of Christ bring consolation and peace, we pray to the Lord.

For healthcare workers, that in times of discouragement, fatigue, and personal sacrifice, the Holy Spirit will enflame their hearts as a reminder of Christ’s closeness to them, we pray to the Lord.

For families caring for loved ones through illness, loneliness, and old age, may relationships be nurtured, and that leaning on others to share their burden is made more possible, we pray to the Lord.

For volunteers who accompany the sick, may they continue to be valued and cherished in care settings as they listen and provide steady companionship, a reminder of God to those who need it most, we pray to the Lord.

**Prayer for Bulletins, Small Groups or Families:**

***Option 1***

Healing and merciful God, you walked among us, brought healing, and looked with compassion on the most vulnerable. Help us not to reject our human vulnerability, but see it as a condition that welcomes the need and kindness of another person among us. May our families and faith communities become true 'field hospitals' that manifest concrete acts of caring and compassion which knows how to pause, approach, heal, and raise up. Give us grace and courage so that we may never be indifferent to suffering and may always bring your healing ministry to our world. Amen.

***Option 2***

Our Lady of Lourdes, Health of the Sick, we entrust to you all who are sick, those who care for them within their families, through work, research or volunteer services. Inspired by your merciful care, may the Church walk together with the sick as a sign of humanity in which everyone is precious and wherein no one is discarded or left behind. Amen.