



In recent years, the following prayer has been prayed many times by parishioners and friends of this parish for loved ones facing serious illness. You may like to pray it for a friend or family member in your own circles, inserting their name where 'N' appears.

A prayer for a loved one who is ill

Father,
Your love surrounds
and sustains us;
each day of our lives;
in the good times and bad,
in suffering and in health.

United in prayer
we bring before you now
our friend 'N'.
We ask you to fill him/her with the
power of the Holy Spirit
to strengthen him/her
to face the path ahead
as he/she confronts this illness with
hope and confidence.
We ask you to guide the doctors,
comfort 'N's family,
gift 'N' with good friends,
heal him/her of every trace of this
illness, and restore 'N' to full health.

We trust Father that you hear our
prayer and that you are responding
even now in loving and hopefilled ways.
We make this prayer through Jesus
Christ. Amen.

**Mary, Our Lady of Dolours,
pray with us for 'N'.**

**Note: a copy of this prayer
is available to take home -
see basket at the front of
the church today.**



Journey to wholeness

The Healing Power of the Sacrament

As with all the sacraments, the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick invites us into a sacred encounter with Jesus and his body, the people of the Church, becoming one with him.

Anointing of the Sick

When a Catholic is seriously ill, or is facing surgery or hospitalisation, the Church offers an anointing of the person with oil in a sacred ritual of healing called Anointing of the Sick.

This rite is one of the seven Sacraments of the Church. The sign of the sacrament is the laying of hands followed by an anointing on the forehead and hands with the oil of chrism, accompanied by the words:

'Through this holy anointing may the Lord in his love and mercy help you with the grace of the Holy Spirit. May the Lord who frees you from sin, save you and raise you up.'

The biblical roots of this sacrament are clear (e.g. see Mark 6:13; James 5:14-15) and it has been practised since the earliest days of the Church. It is part of our way of continuing the healing ministry of Jesus. The healing offered by the anointing is forgiveness of sins, hope, inner peace, sometimes physical healing, and an assurance of God's steadfast care, even in death.

In the past this sacrament was kept strictly for those close to death. However, since the Vatican II renewal of the 1960s the Church has encouraged more frequent use of this sacrament for serious health issues which are not necessarily life threatening. As with all the sacraments, this anointing has significance for the whole Church community. It reminds us of our call to wholeness. It deepens our awareness of our call to be a sign of salvation to the world. Wherever there is brokenness and pain, we are to be instruments of Christ's healing touch.

This Sunday the Church celebrates World Day of the Sick 2009.

Today, as in the days of Jesus, we bring our sick members to Christ that he will especially touch their lives with hope and healing. For the seventeenth year running, the Church celebrates a World Day of the Sick.

Please pray for all our sick sisters and brothers in our midst, and for those bed-ridden or unable to be here today. We remember with gratitude their courage and faith, their families and carers. We pray for doctors, nurses, paramedics and all health and medical personnel dedicated to their care. They are the healing hands of Christ!

Think about it

Do you believe that Jesus can heal?
Who has been a friend to you on your own healing journey?

Pray Act

Teach your children about the healing power of Jesus in everyday situations as they arise. E.g. let's say your child falls over and grazes his/her knee. As well as applying the appropriate medical and emotional aide, lay hands and pray for healing. Although this is not the Sacrament, it is an expression of our faith community's healing way of life which gives the Sacrament its proper context. The 'big' symbols of our parish church are connected with the 'little' symbols of our homes.

Further Reading

"On the Christian Meaning of Human Suffering", Landmarks leaflet no.9
Limited copies available from church foyer.

15 Feb 2009

Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time,
Year B