

PRAYERS IN THE PEW™ MONTHLY

FAITH IN ACTION CALENDAR / HIGHLIGHTS

SATURDAY SEP 14	Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross
THURSDAY SEP 19	St. Januarius, Bishop and Martyr
SUNDAY SEP 29	Feast of the Holy Archangels

Faith Formation Companion to Prayers in the Pew™

→ MONTHLY SYNOPSIS ←

September 2024 – The month of September is full of magnificent feast days of saints, so let us, like them, make every attempt to be faithful to our Eucharistic devotions and to be mindful of the sick and underprivileged in our midst. It's not politicians who make the greatest contributions to culture – it's people who strive to be saints!

PRAYER FOR THE SICK

It is a little-known fact that the Catholic Church is largely responsible for what today we call *hospitals*. The Latin word *hospes* means “guest” or “traveler”, and it was the work of the Church – from the very beginning – to provide hospitality and charity to those who were in need of it.

What was the motivation for Christians to provide healthcare to others? Simply, the words of Jesus: *“For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me”* (Matthew 25:35-36).

Many great saints like St. Basil, St. Jerome, and St. Cyprian established hospitals in their areas for care of the sick and suffering. The Council of Nicea (325 AD) even ordered that every city which had a cathedral should also have a hospital.

Over time, lay and religious orders formed in the Church that were dedicated exclusively to the care of the sick such as the Knights Hospitallers, the Alexians, some branches of the Benedictines, Franciscans, Carmelites, the Missionaries of Charity, and others.

If we are not a healthcare professionals, we may not be able to care for the sick directly, but we can at times visit them as one of the corporal works of mercy, and we can all pray for those who are ill. The Church gives us a simple *Prayer for the Sick* in the following words that

we may pray any time we are concerned about the health and wellbeing of another:

Father in heaven, grant N. comfort in his/her suffering. Give him (her) courage when afraid, patience when afflicted, hope when dejected, and when alone, assure him (her) of the prayerful support of your holy people. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Since sickness is part of a fallen world and will always be with us, we often need to ask for peace of heart to deal with it. Many times illness is stronger than we are. In times of sickness, problems, or upheaval, we should recall St. Paul's consoling words to the Philippians: *“Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God. Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus”* (Philippians 4:6-7).

BIBLE BASICS



John 16:33 I have told you this so that you might have peace in me. In the world you will have trouble, but take courage, I have conquered the world.

Romans 8:28 We know that all things work for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE

Let us challenge ourselves this month to reach out to those around us who are sick or suffering, especially those who are in the hospital or grieving the recent loss of a loved one. The simplest gestures of support are best, even if just a word of kindness and sympathy. Most importantly, we should try to include them in our prayers and Mass intentions so that they may receive the spiritual consolation the Church provides.

CALENDAR OF FAITH | September

SEP 3 Tue	St. Gregory the Great, Pope and Doctor
SEP 8 Sun	Feast of the Nativity of Mary
SEP 9 Mon	St. Peter Claver, Priest
SEP 12 Thu	Feast of the Holy Name of the Blessed Virgin Mary
SEP 14 Sat	Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross
SEP 15 Sun	Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows
SEP 16 Mon	Sts. Cornelius, Pope and Martyr, and Cyprian, Bishop and Martyr
SEP 17 Tue	St. Robert Bellarmine, Bishop and Doctor
SEP 19 Thu	St. Januarius, Bishop and Martyr
SEP 21 Sat	St. Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist
SEP 23 Mon	St. Padre Pio, Priest
SEP 26 Thu	Sts. Cosmas and Damian, Martyrs
SEP 28 Sat	Sts. Lorenzo Ruiz et al., Martyrs
SEP 29 Sun	Michael, Gabriel and Raphael, Archangels
SEP 30 Mon	St. Jerome, Priest and Doctor

THE SCHOOL OF SAINTS



"Suffering is a great grace; through suffering the soul becomes like the Savior; in suffering love becomes crystallized; the greater the suffering, the purer the love." ~ **St. Faustina**

"Earth has no sorrow that heaven cannot heal."
~ **St. Thomas More**

FAITH FUNDAMENTALS



The Corporal Works of Mercy

The term "corporal" signifies bodily needs, so these works of mercy signify anything that helps people overcome their material sufferings of this world. The Church's description of the Corporal Works of Mercy comes directly from the famous passage of the Sheep and Goats in Matthew 25, where Jesus claims that "whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me" (Matthew 25:40).

The parable names six merciful actions, and the Church adds a seventh – to bury the dead – since it was a paramount religious observance of the Jews. Here is the Church's list of the seven Corporal Works of Mercy:

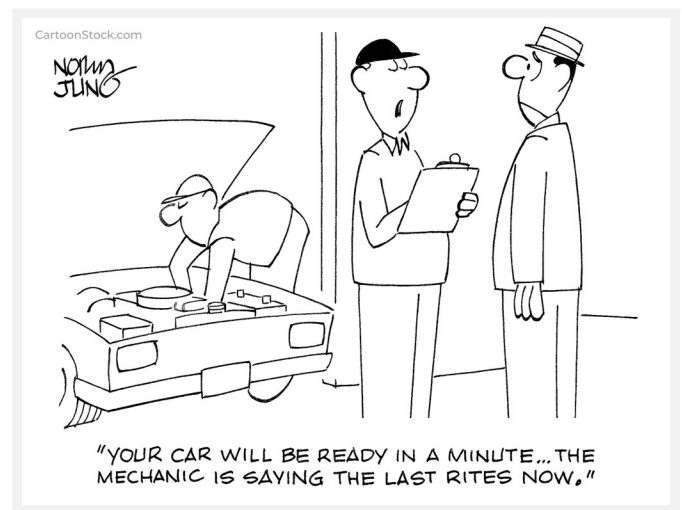
1. To feed the hungry
2. To give drink to the thirsty
3. To clothe the naked
4. To visit the imprisoned
5. To shelter the homeless
6. To visit the sick
7. To bury the dead

We can never practice these good works too often.



1501 In illness, man experiences his powerlessness, his limitations, and his finitude. Every illness can make us glimpse death. Illness can lead to anguish, self-absorption, sometimes even despair and revolt against God. It can also make a person more mature, helping him discern in his life what is not essential so that he can turn toward that which is. Very often illness provokes a search for God and a return to him.

Pope St. John Paul II, *Salvifici Doloris* (n. 12) – Suffering must serve for conversion, that is, for the rebuilding of goodness in the subject, who can recognize the divine mercy in this call to repentance.



Back to Basics Featured Prayer

Prayer for Grace in Suffering

Dear Lord, by allowing me to experience this affliction, so that I may share Your suffering on the Cross for sin, You take a sublime chance that I might either draw closer to You for comfort, or turn away from You in my misery. O my Savior, grant me that precious grace to offer up my pain, as You did in Your passion, to atone for sin.

Help me to imitate Your patience, and to turn my complaints into offerings for my sins, or for those of others, as You see fit. In this time of distress and pain, I ask, I seek, and I knock for the grace of endurance, perseverance, and above all, trustful submission to Your divine will, for my good and Your glory.

(This prayer is taken from the Hope for Healing Edition Prayer Card soon to be released. Please visit SitStandKneel.com for the online version of this newsletter and all our prayer cards.)