



Fr. Richard Lamoureux, AA

Every time I forget an idea I had two minutes ago or get upset with a confrère (it happens often enough), I realize how imperfect and incomplete I am. That especially impresses me when I develop a bad cold and am surprised by the fragility of my body. Most of those experiences I can deal with, but it's the times of debilitating physical suffering that can keep me entirely perplexed, not knowing how to respond or whether there is a response. Why me? What's to be done? Why?

It helps to understand that we were born with a fragile body or that we are always liable to develop a serious disease. It's no fault of our own; we were made that way. We are tempted to deny the illness or blame

ourselves or someone else. We are better off instead simply trusting our own inner strength and surrendering it all into God's hands.

Then there is Saint Paul's suggestion: "In my flesh I complete what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the Church." (Colossians 1.24) Christ's afflictions, that is, his own physical sufferings on the Cross, were assumed by him as an act of love to give us new life. We are invited to join in Christ's act of saving love. Our sickness is not an absurd event in our life. It is in fact a way to unite ourselves more intimately with Christ and his work. The crucifix is the best companion for the one who is ill.

Prayer of Abandonment

Father,

I abandon myself into your hands;
do with me what you will.

Whatever you may do, I thank you:
I am ready for all, I accept all.

Let only your will be done in me,
and in all your creatures.

I wish no more than this, O Lord.

Into your hands I commend my soul;

I offer it to you

with all the love of my heart,

for I love you, Lord,

and so need to give myself,

to surrender myself into your hands,

without reserve,

and with boundless confidence,

for you are my Father.

Amen.

Charles de Foucauld

The Angelus

The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary
R· and she conceived of the Holy Spirit.
Hail Mary, full of grace ...

Behold, the handmaid of the Lord
R· be it done to me according to your word.
Hail Mary, full of grace ...

And the word was made flesh
R· and dwelt among us.
Hail Mary, full of grace ...

Pray for us, O holy Mother of God
R· that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Pour forth, we beseech you, O Lord, your grace into our hearts
that we, to whom the incarnation of your Son
was made known by the message of an angel,
may by his passion and cross be brought
to the glory of his resurrection.
We ask this through the same Christ, our Lord.
R· Amen.

My soul thirsts for you

O God, you are my God, I seek you,
my soul thirsts for you;
my flesh faints for you,
as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.

So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary,
beholding your power and glory.
Because your steadfast love is better than life,
my lips will praise you.

So I will bless you as long as I live;
I will lift up my hands and call on your name.
My soul is satisfied as with a rich feast,
and my mouth praises you with joyful lips
when I think of you on my bed,
and meditate on you in the watches of the night;
for you have been my help,
and in the shadow of your wings I sing for joy.
My soul clings to you;
your right hand upholds me.

Psalm 63

Help and heal the sick!

We pray to you, Master and Lord,
you who fashioned the body, created the soul
and formed our humanity.
You guide, you lead and you save the entire human race;
you reconcile and you appease, because you love humankind.

Look kindly on us, Lord!
Help and heal all who are sick,
take away all illness,
soothe the afflicted.

Give glory to your holy name
through your only Son Jesus Christ,
through whom to you is given
the glory and strength in the Holy Spirit,
now and for ever.
Amen.

Serapion of Thmuis, *Sacramentary* (22)

Pope Francis' Prayer for the Sick

Mary, our Mother,
in Christ you welcome each of us as a son or daughter.
Sustain the trusting expectation of our hearts,
succour us in our infirmities and sufferings,
and guide us to Christ, your Son and our brother.
Help us to entrust ourselves to the Father
 who accomplishes great things.
Amen.

Pain opens a path to self-giving

The unspeakable pain of the Cross pierces Mary's soul (cf. Luke 2.35), but does not paralyze her. Quite the opposite. As the Lord's Mother, a new path of self-giving opens up before her. On the Cross, Jesus showed his concern for the Church and all humanity, and Mary is called to share in that same concern. In describing the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, the Acts of the Apostles show that Mary began to carry out this role in the earliest community of the Church. A role that never ceases.

(From Pope Francis' 2018 Message for
the World Day of the Sick)