

LEADER

Sacraments presuppose that through ordinary, everyday experiences we touch God. Ordinary bread becomes the Body and Blood of Christ. Ordinary water becomes a source of rebirth and cleansing in Christ. Human touch becomes divine forgiveness. Olive oil brings the compassionate healing of God.

Sacraments invite us to broaden our vision to see all of creation and human activity as a potential sacrament—the concrete encounter of the living God. As co-workers in Catholic health care, we are all invited to embrace this vision of life and to see the potential of our efforts to reveal the presence of God in every human heart. As we begin this day, we call to mind the dignity and the holiness of our work. Every task, every word, every action, no matter how ordinary or routine, can reveal the loving presence of God. We now present ordinary instruments and objects in our day that serve as reminders of the holiness of our work.

FIRST PRESENTER

The white jacket symbolizes to many the physician—one who helps maintain health, cures illness, and brings healing. Each day, as we put on our jackets, or ties, or name tags, may we remember always our identity, as individuals who seek justice and care for all persons in need.

SECOND PRESENTER

The stethoscope is so common and ordinary in medicine. It is synonymous with health care. May this vital tool remind us that we must always listen to the beating of truth in our own hearts. May it teach us to listen to our patients and to one another with compassion, and forbid that we should approach our brothers and sisters with hearts of stone, but instead meet each person with hearts of flesh that beat with love and mercy.

THIRD PRESENTER

The patient chart represents the work of so many—it contains the notes of doctors, nurses, physical therapists, respiratory therapists, chaplains, social workers—and it is an important administrative tool. Each day, as we pick up something as common as a patient chart, may we be reminded that we are members of a vast community of caring. We are many parts of one

A Prayer for Physicians

Bob Smoot
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body. The work of each person is vital in restoring health and treating patients and co-workers with dignity. May we remember that the people we care for are more than their charts—they are our brothers and sisters, whose lives we are privileged to touch.

FOURTH PRESENTER

The mortar and pestle represent the medicines we dispense every day. In something as common as giving medicine, may we be mindful always of the blessings brought through medical advances and the responsibility to use them for the good of all. As we write prescriptions, vaccinate a child, or connect an IV, may we remember that we are providing more than medications or medical procedures—we are pouring on the healing salve of God's love and revealing God's liberating presence.

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Let us pray,
God of all creation,
Giver of all gifts,
Healer of the wounds of sin and division,
Physician of our bodies and souls,
Transform our own minds and hearts
and increase your gifts of faith, hope, and love.
May we grow each day in graciousness.
Help us to be instruments of your healing and a
catalyst for justice in our world.
Grant us wisdom as we seek out ways to improve
our care and to grow in virtue.
Extend your hand of blessing upon all who work
in health care, upon all those we serve, and
especially upon those marginalized in society.
United in our common dignity, may we grow
closer in the human family and build a culture
of life filled with reverence and love for all.
Amen.

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