

# Opening Our Hearts to Those in Need

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## CALL TO PRAYER

LEADER: The mission of Catholic health care is a ministry of care to those who are afflicted and those who seek abundant life. The health ministry of the church brings healing, hope and joy and embraces the people of the community as they move through life's passages toward new life in God. Today we pray for God to bless us so that through our work we may continually grow in love for God and our neighbors.

## READING I

From *Deus Caritas Est*

READER: In his first encyclical, *God is Love*, Pope Benedict XVI recognizes that there is a need beyond professional training for formation of the heart. Here are his words: "Those who work for the church's charitable organizations must be distinguished by the fact that they do not merely meet the needs of the moment, but they dedicate themselves to others with heartfelt concern, enabling them to experience the richness of their humanity. ... Love of neighbor will no longer be for them a commandment imposed, so to speak, from without, but a consequence deriving from their faith, a faith which becomes active through love."

*Pause for reflection.*

## READING II

Luke 10:25-28 (*The New American Bible*)

READER: There was a scholar of the law who stood up to test him and said, "Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus said to him, "What is written in the law? How do you read it?" He said in reply, "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself." He replied to him, "You have answered correctly; do this and you will live."

*Pause for reflection.*

LEADER: Let us pray together.

ALL: Lord of Life, open our hearts to our neighbors and their needs. May we continually grow in love and compassion, as we respond wholeheartedly to the call to serve in this healing ministry. Unite us with a common passion for the well-being of every human being. May your Holy Spirit inspire us to treat every life as a sacred gift and every encounter a sacred moment. Holy God, we praise you forever and ever. Amen.



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