Pope Francis, in his message for the 22nd World Day of the Sick, which is held on February 11 each year, remarked: “When we come together, with tenderness, with those who have need of care, we carry the hope and the smile of God in contradiction to the world.” Emphasizing the themes of faith and charity, the Pope entrusts this day to Mary, the mother of the crucified and risen one, in order to help the sick to live their suffering in communion with Jesus Christ, and to support those who care for them.

Mary and St. John, who stood with her at the foot of the Cross, take us back to the sources of faith and charity, to the heart of God who is love, and remind us that we cannot love God if we do not love our brethren.

Lord, grant your healing grace to all who are sick, injured or disabled, that they may be made whole. Through your loving presence, may all who are lonely, anxious or despondent find comfort and hope. Restore those who are in mental distress to soundness of mind and serenity of spirit.

Bless physicians, nurses and all others who minister to the suffering, granting them wisdom, skill, compassion, faith and charity.

Lord, help us to remain with fortitude beside your Cross. Strengthen all who serve in the ministry of Catholic health care with the virtues of faith and charity, that by their service the health of the community may be promoted and your creation glorified. We pray through the intercession of Mary, Our Lady of Lourdes. Amen.