

Prayer for National Hospital Week 2021

Call to Prayer

Leader: St. Vincent DePaul reminds that “every ward of a hospital is a chapel wherein Jesus resides.” The places where the sick and wounded are cared for are uniquely sacred spaces. A space that sees new life come into the world. A space that holds tears and joy, hope and despair.

Today, we celebrate National Hospital Week and remember that Jesus is always with us and most especially with the poor, sick and suffering.

Scripture/Reflection

Leader: As we read from the gospel of Luke, I invite you to close your eyes. Imagine yourself in this story. Where are you? Who are you? What do you smell, hear and feel? What do you see from where you stand?

Reader 1 (Luke 5:17-26):

A reading from the Gospel according to Luke

One day Jesus was teaching, and Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there. They had come from every village of Galilee and from Judea and Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was with Jesus to heal the sick. Some men came carrying a paralyzed man on a mat and tried to take him into the house to lay him before Jesus. When they could not find a way to do this because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and lowered him on his mat through the tiles into the middle of the crowd, right in front of Jesus. When Jesus saw their faith, he said, “Friend, your sins are forgiven.”

The Pharisees and the teachers of the law began thinking to themselves, “Who is this fellow who speaks blasphemy? Who can forgive sins but God alone?”

Jesus knew what they were thinking and asked, “Why are you thinking these things in your hearts? Which is easier: to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up and walk’? But I want you to know that the Son

of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.” So he said to the paralyzed man, “I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home.” Immediately he stood up in front of them, took what he had been lying on and went home praising God. Everyone was amazed and gave praise to God. They were filled with awe and said, “We have seen remarkable things today.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Leader: Where do you see yourself in the story? What role do you play in caring for the needs of others? How was this a sacred space?

(Participants may either reflect silently or share aloud.)

Intercessions

Leader: Wherever you were in this story, it takes many hands doing different work to help the hurting heal. In celebrating National Hospital Week, let us now pray for all the hands who create and shape this sacred space. I invite everyone to respond “Lord, bring them strength and consolation.”

Reader 2: For all those who make sure staff and patients are fed, who bring nourishment to their bodies.

All: Lord, bring them strength and consolation.

Reader 1: For all those who work through the night, keeping watch over those seeking rest.

All: Lord, bring them strength and consolation

Reader 2: For the medical staff who care for the sick and wounded, may they remain steadfast in their commitment to their patients.

All: Lord, bring them strength and consolation

Reader 1: For those who care for and clean our hospitals, who ensure elevators work, light bulbs are replaced, floors are cleaned, and beds are made.

All: Lord, bring them strength and consolation.

Reader 2: For the chaplains who offer spiritual care, that souls may be tended to as well as living bodies.

All: Lord, bring them strength and consolation.

Reader 1: For those who care for those who have died, ensuring their bodily dignity as they pass into eternal life.

All: Lord, bring them strength and consolation.

Reader 2: For those who cannot come to hospitals, who are too far away, without resources and insurance, or who are afraid. May God provide for the care of their body and soul.

All: Lord, bring them strength and consolation.

Reader 1: For every person who walks through the door of a hospital, that they know the presence of God.

All: Lord, bring them strength and consolation.

Reader 2: For all those in need of your care, Lord, and for the needs, desires, and thanks in our hearts that go unspoken. *(pause)* We pray...

All: Lord, bring them strength and consolation.

Closing Prayer

Leader: St. Vincent DePaul,

Pray with us for all those whose work in hospitals goes seen and unseen. We pray, Lord, that you may always make your presence known in the work of the hospital, that every person who enters may know they have entered sacred space and are loved in your sight.

May we always find the love to serve those in need, to help them as they heal or to walk with them until they join you in eternal life.

In your name we pray, amen.