



PRAYER FOR SPIRITUAL CAREGIVERS

It is a cry that we hear every day in our Catholic hospitals and nursing homes: "I want to see." In some circumstances, it is a cry for physical sight that has been taken away by age or accident. But in many circumstances, it is a cry for meaning and insight as persons suffer spiritual crises spurred by ill health and disaster. What is the meaning of life with disability? Is there purpose in my pain? How could a good God allow this to happen? What happens after I die?

Spiritual care is not unique to Catholic hospitals and nursing homes, but it is integral to their identity. Catholic teaching lifts the importance of honoring the whole person — both body and spirit — seeing the two as integrally connected. It would be impossible for us to offer Catholic health care without dedicating colleagues to spiritual care. They go by many different names — chaplains, pastoral caregivers, spiritual companions and more. Most are professionals who've prepared for their ministry with years of study and certification. Others are generous volunteers from the local community. All help us to fulfill our mission in an explicit way. And today we give thanks for their presence in our midst.

Bless these women and men whom you have called to serve you as spiritual companions of the infirm and suffering. Make them ministers of the "sight" that we all need in our lives in times of trial. We ask this in the name of Jesus, the healer, who attends to both body and spirit.

Amen.