

THE SICK AND SUFFERING

Pope Francis, Shepherd of Truth

Notable quotations from Pope Francis and official teachings
of the Roman Catholic Church

“WISDOM OF THE HEART”

Wisdom of the heart means serving our brothers and sisters. Job’s words: “I was eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame”, point to the service which this just man ... offered to those in need. His moral grandeur found expression in the help he gave to the poor who sought his help and in his care for orphans and widows (Job 29: 12-13).

“GENUINE FAITH”

Today too, how many Christians show, not by their words but by lives rooted in a genuine faith, that they are “eyes to the blind” and “feet to the lame”! They are close to the sick in need of constant care and help in washing, dressing and eating.. This service, especially when it is protracted, can become tiring and burdensome.

NOTEASY

It is relatively easy to help someone for a few days but it is difficult to look after a person for months or even years, in some cases when he or she is no longer capable of expressing gratitude.

“GREAT PATH”

And yet, what a great path of sanctification this is! In those difficult moments we can rely in a special way on the closeness of the Lord, and we become a special means of support for the Church’s mission.



“HOLY TIME”

Wisdom of the heart means being with our brothers and sisters. Time spent with the sick is holy time. It is a way of praising God Who conforms us to the image of His Son, Who “came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many” (Mt 20:28).

“OUR WORLD FORGETS”

Occasionally our world forgets the special value of time spent at the bedside of the sick, since we are in such a rush; caught up as we are in a frenzy of doing, of producing, we forget about giving ourselves freely, taking care of others, being responsible for others,. Behind this attitude there is often a lukewarm faith which has forgotten the Lord’s words: “You did it unto Me” (Mt. 25:40).

SOLIDARITY WITHOUT JUDGMENT

Wisdom of the heart means showing solidarity with our brothers and sisters while not judging them... True charity is a sharing which does not judge, which does not demand the conversion of others; it is free of that false humility which, deep down, seeks praise and is self-satisfied about whatever good it does.

LOOK AT JESUS

Job’s experience of suffering finds its genuine response only in the cross of Jesus, the supreme act of God’s solidarity with us, completely free and abounding in mercy.

TURN TO MARY

O Mary, Seat of Wisdom, intercede as our Mother for all the sick and for those who care for them! Grant that, through our service of our suffering neighbors, and through the experience of suffering itself, we may receive and cultivate true wisdom of heart.

(Source: Message for World Day of the Sick, 12/3/14)

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