

# WORLD DAY OF THE SICK

## *John Paul Speaks*

*Notable quotations from Pope John Paul II and  
official teachings of the Roman Catholic Church*

### **10TH ANNIVERSARY**

For some years February 11, the day on which the Church commemorates the apparition of Our Lady of Lourdes, has fittingly come to be associated with an important event: the celebration of the *World Day of the Sick*. The year 2002 marks the tenth such celebration...

### **“INTENSE PRAYER”**

The World Day of the Sick will begin with a moment of intense prayer for all who are suffering pain and infirmity. In this way we will express our solidarity with those who suffer, a solidarity arising from our awareness of the mysterious nature of suffering and its place in God’s loving plan for every individual.

### **“A FUNDAMENTAL FACT OF HUMAN LIFE”**

Seeking new and effective ways to alleviate suffering is a valid quest, but suffering nevertheless remains a fundamental fact of human life... Medical research and treatment neither wholly explain nor fully overcome suffering.

### **JESUS IS THE ANSWER**

In order to discover the fundamental and definitive meaning of suffering “we must look to the revelation of divine love, the ultimate source of the meaning of everything that exists” (*Salvifici Doloris*, 13). The answer to the question of the meaning of suffering has been “given by God to man in the Cross of Jesus Christ.”

### **REDEMPTIVE SUFFERING**

As God and man, Christ has taken upon Himself the sufferings of humanity, and in Him human suffering itself takes on a redemptive meaning. In this union between the human and the divine, suffering brings forth good and overcomes evil.

### **“A NEW HORIZON OF MEANING”**

In expressing my profound solidarity with all those who are suffering, I earnestly pray that the celebration of the World Day of the Sick will be for them a providential moment opening a new horizon of meaning in their lives.

### **“COMFORT AND HOPE”**

The Christian response to pain and suffering is never one of passivity. Urged on by Christian charity, which finds its supreme expression in the life and works of Jesus, Who “went about doing good” (*Acts* 10:38), the Church goes out to meet the sick and suffering, bringing them comfort and hope. This is not a mere exercise of benevolence, but is motivated by compassion and concern leading to care and dedicated service. It ultimately involves the unselfish gift of self to others, especially to those who are suffering.

### **MARY AND THE SICK**

I pray that Mary, Health of the Sick, will continue to grant her loving protection to all who are wounded in body and spirit, and will intercede for those who care for them. May she help us to unite our sufferings with those of her Son as we journey in joyful hope to the safety of the Father’s House.

(Source: Message for World Day of the Sick, issued, August 6, 2001)

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