



DAY for
LIFE

Sunday, 15 June 2025

FINDING MEANING IN SUFFERING

Hope does not disappoint

An invitation to pray for those who suffer and to remain with them
like the Good Samaritan, bearing witness to their
unique and unrepeatable value.

Bishops' Message

Day for Life presents an opportunity to celebrate the dignity of all human life from conception to natural end. The theme for 2025 is 'Hope Does Not Disappoint: Finding Meaning in Suffering'.



For as long as history has been written, the world has never been without struggle and suffering. Through the lens of television and social media, however, the suffering of the whole world appears on our personal devices.

Many of us find it hard to make sense of a world in which suffering seems to press down from every direction: pandemic; war; homelessness; violence in our streets, addiction. Then, often without warning, we find ourselves caught up in the struggle when serious illness comes into our own lives.

Suffering touches every person at some point in their lives. It is often associated with illness, grief, and loss. It is not only caused by physical pain but includes emotional suffering as well as 'soul pain', such as depression and despair. Christians are not immune to this mystery and we often struggle to know how best to respond to it, and where we can find hope.

"Hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us" (Rom 5:5-6). St Paul invites us to see that Christian hope is not just naïve optimism but, rather, an unshakeable trust in the power and presence of God who is with us always. This hope can endure the darkness of human suffering and



even see beyond it. That is because Christian hope is anchored in God who is Love and whose love reaches out to us and lifts us up day after day.

Care for the sick and suffering was central to the ministry of Jesus. Jesus told the parable of the Good Samaritan as a way of explaining what it means to be a “neighbour” to another person. The Good Samaritan is someone who sees and is moved to compassion (while others turn away), who draws close, who “binds up wounds”, who accompanies the person in need, and who continues to care for as long as it is needed. Often the healing Jesus offered was much more than just a physical cure; it included emotional and spiritual healing as well, because for Jesus, the human person is more than just a body needing to be fixed. Jesus invites us to “Go and do likewise” (Lk. 10:29-37).

The alleviation of suffering is good and must always be part of our focus. But there remains, for many people, a suffering that cannot be taken away and has to be endured. How do we make sense of that? The claim that it is better to die than to suffer leads some people to suggest that euthanasia or assisted suicide might be more compassionate. As Christians, however, we follow Jesus who lived his entire life, including his suffering, in the confident hope that His Father loved him and would raise him up, and He did! The cross, which Jesus did not ask for and did nothing to deserve, has become a sign of hope for countless millions of people in every generation.

The death and resurrection of Jesus leads us to believe that, far from being futile or absurd, a life marked by suffering, when it is lived with generosity and patience, is full of meaning. People like Simon of Cyrene (who helped carry the cross), or St. Veronica (who wiped the face of Jesus) literally accompanied Jesus on the Way of the Cross. Modern saints like Thérèse of Lisieux and the soon-to-be first millennial saint Carlo Acutis understood that when we unite our

suffering with the suffering of Christ for the good of the world, it is transformed through his grace. Most of us have known people like them. Far from being the end of hope, their suffering, when accepted and embraced, has shown itself to be a path to growth and ultimately to Resurrection.

This year's *Day for Life* is an invitation to pray for those who suffer and to remain with them like the Good Samaritan, bearing witness to their unique and unrepeatable value. We see this closeness in the generous and fruitful service of healthcare professionals, whose mission continues even when there is no longer any prospect of physical healing. We see it in another way in families, carers and chaplains who support their brothers and sisters who are sick or frail or struggling with the many burdens of life. As Christians, we affirm them and hold out to them the hope of Jesus Christ who does not disappoint us.

Most Reverend John Sherrington

Archbishop of Liverpool

England and Wales

Right Reverend Kevin Doran

Bishop of Elphin

Ireland

Right Reverend John Keenan

Bishop of Paisley

Scotland



Prayers

Prayers that can be used on or around *Day for Life*, celebrated in our parishes on Sunday, 15 June 2025.

Based on the words of Carlo Acutis and Pope Francis

Jesus, You wait for me.

You let yourself be found when I think there is no hope.

I need to set down the burdens of my history, my life, my sins, at Your feet,
to consign to You the weight of my past.

No matter how burdensome, how complicated, how terrible,
it is always possible for me to consign it all to You, my loving and merciful God,
and set out anew of life's journey.

You show me the sick bed can be a holy place,
where charity and love turn away indifference,
and gratitude nourishes hope.

Suffering can make me feel exiled, cut off,
but with You it is a place of encounter,
a school in which I learn to love and be loved, with humility and grace.

Teach me, Lord, so that I may imitate this in my life.

May the true measure of my life be shown in my relation to those sick and suffering.

May I not banish suffering and those who suffer from my surroundings.

May I not exclude those who are frail and housebound.

Like the Good Samaritan, may I have compassion for those who suffer so much more than me.

Like Saint Carlo Acutis Saint Therese, may I have the strength to embrace life's sufferings and offer them to You, for the Pope and the Church.

Give me Your hope so that I may not fear,
because with Your death and suffering comes life – eternal life;
something extraordinary awaits us.



Prayers

More prayers from the tradition of the Church - including suggested Bidding Prayers.

Anima Christi

Soul of Christ, sanctify me.
Body of Christ, save me.
Blood of Christ, inebriate me.
Water from the side of Christ, wash me.
Passion of Christ, strengthen me.
O Good Jesus, hear me.
Within your wounds hide me.
Permit me not to be separated from you.
From the wicked foe, defend me.
At the hour of my death, call me
and bid me come to you
That with your saints I may praise you
For ever and ever. Amen.

Prayer of St John Henry Newman

O Lord, support us all the day long of this
troubled life, until the shadows lengthen,
and the evening comes, and the busy world is
hushed, and the fever of life is over, and our
work is done. Then, Lord, in thy mercy, grant us
a safe lodging, a holy rest, and peace at the last.
Amen.

Prayers of the Faithful (Bidding Prayers)

Hope does not disappoint because God's love is constantly being poured out into our hearts and so with confidence...

We pray for the Church, that she be a beacon of light to all people, shining out the wisdom of God who in His love created each human being in His image and likeness. May this light of hope lead all people safely home to rest in God.

We pray for those in government, that they may work for peace and justice in our divided world. May the spirit of solidarity and care for those in need always inspire political decision-making.

We pray for those who are sick or suffering, that they may draw strength from Our Father, Jesus the Good Samaritan and the Holy Spirit our Counsellor and Comforter. May this spiritual strength encourage patient endurance in the face of difficulties, and give true and certain hope in God's promises to us.

We pray for those who support and promote the *Day for Life* and for the many initiatives funded by the *Day for Life* collections. May they see the fruits of their work in an ever-growing sense of the dignity of every human being from conception to natural death and in an increasing trust in the wisdom of God who is our one true hope.

Almighty God, you who are our wisdom, light and hope, create in us a pure heart for your service, redeem us from the darkness and suffering that surrounds us, and inspire in us the joy of your hope. Through our Lord Jesus Christ your Son, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever.



Day for Life
www.dayforlife.org

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