

School of Compassion

*The God of all consolation,
comforts us in all our sorrows,
so that we can offer others, in their sorrows,
the consolation that we received from God.*

2 Cor. 1:4



*Photo courtesy of Huy Lam
St. Michael's Hospital, Toronto*

empathy, making us more acutely aware of another person's pain. Suffering can activate our imaginations to help in more creative ways.

In the parable that relates the story of the Good Samaritan (Lk. 10: 29-37), the priest and Levite (who nervously move over to the other side of the road to pass by the half-dead robbery victim) may have never suffered a similar experience. The Samaritan, on the other hand, rejected by mainstream society, probably had often been a victim or at least close to victims. Moved by the sight, he springs into action, first treating the person's wounds, getting him up on his mount, leading him to safety, and financing whatever it took to get him well.

An experience of sickness also makes us particularly open to the presence of God. We discover more clearly our personal mission in life.



An excerpt from
Living With Hope In Times of Illness
Catholic Health Association of Canada

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Shops are filled with *Get Well* cards because that is the hope we carry for ourselves or for those we love who are sick. When we do find ourselves back on the road to recovery, how do we react? Will we forget the hard-earned wisdom, the discipline, the humility learned from our suffering? Will we sink back into mediocrity? Or will we have come to a permanent new level of sensitivity and faith?

Suffering is a school of compassion. Native wisdom states that we understand another person only when "we have walked a mile in his moccasins." Our experience of sickness can soften our hearts with