



# World Day of the Sick

February 11, 2010

In 1858, near Lourdes in southern France, Our Lady appeared to Bernadette Soubirous, a young peasant girl. She told the girl to drink from a fountain in the grotto. The water from the still-flowing spring has shown remarkable healing power. Lourdes has become the most famous modern shrine of Our Lady.

In May 1992, Pope John Paul II instituted World Day of the Sick and designated February 11, Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, as the date for its annual celebration.

On this day those who are ill are encouraged to reflect on the Christian meaning of suffering and to recall God's health-giving presence. We are also reminded that God often heals and restores life in unexpected ways.

The day is also meant to recognize the importance of those who care for the sick and elderly, whether in a health care facility or at home. Catholic health care facilities have a unique role in witnessing to this healing ministry.

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## *Activities in 2009*

## *Suggested Activities*

"We placed posters in prominent places in the home, and we used your prayer service for an ecumenical service. During individual pastoral visits we gave out the prayer cards. We also acted on the suggestion to celebrate the Sacrament of the Sick during Mass on February 11."

### *St. Patrick's Home Ottawa, ON*

"A display was set up in the lobby near the chapel with posters, prayers and prayer cards, along with the symbols used for the Anointing of the Sick. A wall display was arranged in the cafeteria. Prayer cards were distributed personally to each resident and patient."

### *St. Joseph's Hospital / Foyer d'Youville Gravelbourg, SK*

"The suggested prayers were used during our daily Mass. Also, we were inspired by the suggested prayer service and organized a group celebration of the Sacrament of the Sick."

### *Foyer Valade Winnipeg, MB*

"Prayer cards were duplicated and made available to patients and staff. We adapted the prayer service outline for use in the facility, and the clip art was used to develop a memo about World Day of the Sick which was distributed to all staff, patients, family members and volunteers."

### *Hotel Dieu Shaver Health and Rehabilitation Centre St. Catharines, ON*



- Distribute a letter proclaiming World Day of the Sick in your organization or parish.
- Publish an article or notice in your newsletter or bulletin.
- Produce prayer cards, explaining the significance of World Day of the Sick and place on breakfast trays for patients / residents.
- Organize a prayer service or ecumenical liturgy to mark the occasion.
- Create a banner for the lobby, cafeteria or chapel.
- Organize a workshop with a speaker or resource people.
- Use this occasion to acknowledge exceptional contributions made by staff / residents / community members.

