

# SICKNESS AND SUFFERING

## Pope Benedict XVI, Shepherd of Truth

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

### “THE MYSTERY OF SUFFERING”

Every year on ... the memorial of the Blessed Virgin of Lourdes, which is celebrated on February 11, the Church proposes the World Day of the Sick. This event ... becomes a propitious occasion to reflect on the mystery of suffering and above all to make our communities and civil society more sensitive to our sick brothers and sisters.

### “AT THE CENTER OF ATTENTION”

If every man is our brother, much more must the sick, the suffering and those in need of care be, at the center of our attention, so that none of them feels forgotten or emarginated.

### “TRUE MEASURE”

...“The true measure of humanity is essentially determined in relationship to suffering and to the sufferer. This holds true both for the individual and for society. A society unable to accept its suffering members and incapable of helping to share their suffering and to bear it inwardly through ‘com-passion’ is a cruel and inhuman society” (Encyclical letter *Spe salvi*, n. 38)



### “CHARGED WITH MYSTERY”

Suffering is always charged with mystery, difficult to accept and to bear.

### “EYES OF HOPE”

... It is precisely through the wounds of Christ that we are able to see, with eyes of hope, all the evils that afflict humanity. In rising again, the Lord did not remove suffering and evil from the world, but He defeated them at their root. He opposed the arrogance of Evil with the omnipotence of His Love.

### “MESSENGERS OF JOY”

Let us follow our Master in readiness to spend our lives for our brothers and sisters..., becoming messengers of a joy that does not fear pain, the joy of the Resurrection.

### TURN TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

When contemplating the wounds of Jesus our gaze turns to His most sacred Heart, in which God’s love manifests itself in a supreme way ... Dear sick people, feel the nearness of this Heart full of love and draw with faith and joy from this source, praying “Water of the side of Christ, wash me. Passion of Christ, strengthen me. O good Jesus, hear my prayers. In Your wounds, hide me” (*Prayer of St. Ignatius of Loyola*).

(Source: Message for the 19th World Day of the Sick, issued 11/21/2010)

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